



Government has in the past five years achieved its goal of tackling poverty and unemployment through the creation of EPWP work opportunities for poor and unemployed South Africans

Article Michael Mokoena
Pictures Emmanuel Jiyane



As we come to the end of fifth administration of the current government, the Department of Public Works is humbled and proud to announce that the government has made significant progress towards its endeavor to eradicate poverty through the creation of short- to medium-term EPWP work opportunities. Since the launch of EPWP Phase 3 in 2014, the Government of South Africa had by December 2018 created 4,3 million EPWP work opportunities..

The Deputy Director-General (DDG) for EPWP, Mr Stanley Henderson stated that that despite the challenges experienced by the Programme, such as poor reporting by public bodies, “the EPWP continued to change the lives of millions of our people for the better”.

Henderson added that “these numbers are not mere statistics, but they represent our people whose lives were changed for the better as a result of participating in the EPWP.”

Providing more analysis on the EPWP numbers, Mr Henderson explained that majority of participants in EPWP in the past four and half years were women.

“The general annual participation of women in the EPWP stood at just above 69%. This was followed by youth participation which stood at around 46%.”

DDG Henderson explained that in the past five years, the Programme succeeded in delivering key assets and services that contributed to the development and upliftment of communities.

The overall performance of the Programme by December 2018 is as follows:

Financial Year	EPWP Work Opportunity Created
2014/15	1 103 983
2015/16	742 179
2016/17	779 251
2017/18	900 234
April to December 2018	845 162
Total from April 2014 to December 2018	4 370 809

A range of community beneficial services rendered through the EPWP included:

- Home community-based services – thousands of community members across the country are benefiting from home community based care services that are rendered by EPWP caregivers. These EPWP caregivers conduct home visits to care for the elderly and the ailing. They also ensure that those on lifesaving medication are eating well and taking their medication accordingly.
- Firefighting services – communities in the Western Cape have benefited from community work of extinguishing veld fires that annually ravage a number of areas in the province.
- Pharmacy assistant services – community members who collect their medication at some state healthcare institutions have experienced a reduction in the time it takes for them to get their medication as a result of the work done by EPWP pharmacy assistance at those health facilities.
- Early Childhood Development – 81 692 children across the country benefited from the care by EPWP ECD practitioners since the introduction of the phase 4 in 2014.
- School assistant services – These school assistant practitioners work with teachers to help children who are having a problem with specific subjects.
- Community safety services – Communities in various provinces have benefited from reduced crime as a result of EPWP community safety practitioners who work with the police and community policing forums to fight crime.

In terms of community beneficial assets delivered through the EPWP, DDG Henderson pointed to the following:

- Mdwaka Dam Project – the dam has connected over thousands of households within the villages around the Mbashe Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape to clean tap water. EPWP participants worked as general workers in this project.
- Vuk'uphile programme – the Vuk'uphile is one of the flagship EPWP sub-programme that is aimed at developing emerging contractors. Through this programme, community assets such as bulk water infrastructure and public walkways (pavements) have been delivered to communities.
- Road maintenance – a total of 40 000 kilometers of roads across the country has been maintained using the EPWP programme in the past five years. Today these maintained roads continue to provide the much needed economic support to those communities.
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In terms of what has been achieved in the past five years on building institutional capacity of the Programme, DDG Henderson pointed to the formulation and successful adoption of the EPWP Recruitment Guidelines.

“The development and approval of the EPWP Recruitment Guidelines was a milestone for the EPWP. These Recruitment Guidelines are meant to formalise the process that must be followed by all EPWP implementing bodies during recruitment of participants in the EPWP,” Mr Henderson said.

EPWP to launch the fourth Phase of the Programme

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Phase IV is scheduled to commence from 1 April 2019. The target for this phase is the creation of 5 million work opportunities, over the period 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2024. The programme will target the participation of 60% women, 55% youth and 2% persons with disability.

Mr Henderson explained that “the EPWP Phase 4 will continue to build on the rich and solid success of the past 15 years.” He stated that one of the key components of EPWP Phase 4 is adapting the Programme to the realities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. “The Programme must explore new opportunities in the realm of the new global technology.”

The objective of the EPWP Phase IV is: “To provide work opportunities and income support to poor and unemployed people through the labour-intensive delivery of public and community assets and services, thereby contributing to development.” Other key components of the EPWP Phase 4 are:

- strengthen the monitoring of the core EPWP principles to improve compliance to the EPWP guidelines;
- expand the programme through replication and improvement of programmes across all sectors;
- enhance the EPWP coordination and institutional arrangements including the Public Employment Programme Inter-Ministerial Committee (PEP-IMC);
- strengthen impact evaluation of the EPWP and ensure greater transparency and accountability through the introduction of Social Audits; and
- strengthen partnerships with the private sector and technical vocational/community education colleges

Subsequent to the National launch Provinces will do their own launches.



Use the training you have attained to lift yourselves out of poverty, EPWP graduates advised

Article by Michael Mokoena

Pictures by Maanea Maselesele



Participant's testimonials

Ms Yvonne Mohami is one of the participants who graduated from the Programme. She successfully completed a certificate in Plant Production. "The training has given me insight into agricultural food production. I will continue to use the skills that I have attained from the Programme to not only better myself but also to contribute in the development of my community," Ms Mohami said.

Another participants, Mr Elliot Mbatha, said participating in the EPWP has given him skills that he is using today to improve his life. "Being part of the EPWP is like being enrolled in a school because there are many short courses that one can take up. Through the various courses I have attended in the Programme, I have managed to hone my public speaking and motivational speaking skills," Mr Mbatha said.

Mr Mbatha added that the EPWP stipend that he received assisted him to get married.

The Deputy Director General (DDG) of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), Mr Stanley Henderson has urged EPWP participants to use the skills they received from the Programme to improve the socioeconomic conditions of their communities. Speaking at the EPWP graduation ceremony that was held on 28 February 2019 in Johannesburg, DDG Henderson urged the 215 graduating participants to use the skills they acquired to drive development in their communities.

The graduating participants successfully completed courses in Early Childhood Development, Plant Production, Environmental Practice and Community House Building and this training was accredited by various Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs).

Mr Henderson also used the ceremony to highlight the importance of the EPWP in the socioeconomic development of communities. "Our country has a huge unemployment problem. Although the EPWP is not a panacea to the unemployment crisis, the Programme continues to lift the poor and unemployed community members out of poverty through the creation of short to medium term work opportunities."

"The Programme also deliver various community beneficial assets and services," Mr Henderson said.

Mr Henderson also called on communities to use EPWP projects to combat the scourge of women and children abuse.

Ms Bongwe Mculu from the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) encouraged the EPWP graduates to use the skills they have gained from the Programme to lift themselves and fellow community members out of poverty.



The City of Polokwane appoint EPWP Vuk'uphile Learner Contractors to deliver community assets

Article by Michael Mokoena

Pictures by Michael Mokoena



The Deputy Director for EPWP Vuk'uphile Learner Programme in the Department of Public Works, Mr Osborne Neluvhalani explained that the Department's contribution to the project included appointing service providers to assist in the mentorship of the contractors and linking the contractors with the banking institution as well as facilitating the training of the contractors by CETA appointed Training Service Provider.



The City of Polokwane in Limpopo has appointed a total of 20 EPWP Vuk'uphile Learner Contractors to deliver community assets in the city. The 10 learner contractors and 10 Learner supervisors will be responsible for the delivery of assets such as local roads in the Seshego and Mankweng area. Some of the participants will be erecting the fence at the municipality's two electricity sub-stations.

In 2018/19 financial year, these learner contractors and learner supervisors were trained in Supervision of Construction Processes course through the Construction Education Training Authority (CETA) accredited Training Provider appointed by the Department of Public Works.

Handing over the sites where the contractors started working at by the end of February 2019, the City's Executive Mayor, Councillor Thembi Nkadimeng urged the participants to do their best to deliver quality assets.

"We are excited to be working with you (Vuk'uphile contractors) to deliver vital public assets to our people. I urge you to do the best you can to deliver quality assets that this community will be proud of. You must remember that our people will judge the success of this Programme through the delivery of assets that improve the quality of their lives," the Executive Mayor said.

She urged contractors to use the monies allocated to the Programme wisely.

"You must always keep in mind that all the work we do is for our people. Therefore do not misuse the money that is meant for the project, I also wish to advise you to never use your hard earned money on things that will not assist you to grow your businesses," the Executive Mayor added.



EPWP supported NPO deliver community beneficial services to the residents of Mpumalanga

Article by Emmanuel Jiyane

Pictures by Emmanuel Jiyane



Ms Faith Shoshoe is one of the participants in the project who joined the NPO in 2003 as a care giver. In 2016, Ms Shoshoe was promoted to become an Administrator for the Centre and her work include providing administration support and supervision of care workers.

Ms Shoshoe received training in Home Community Based Care and Ancillary NQF level 5 which was funded by the Department of Health. "I still wish to further my studies and become a qualified nurse".

The Thandanani Home Based Care (HBC) is a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) which is supported by the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and is located in Barberton under Mbombela Local Municipality in Mpumalanga.

The objectives of the NPO is to provide home based care services to the vulnerable groups of community, raise awareness about HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and other diseases. The project also promote and support measures for the prevention of health and social problems in the community. The NPO provide Participants with income and skills as they deliver community beneficial work.

Local schools and churches also work with the NPO to identify orphans who need assistance in acquiring birth certificates, food parcels and school uniform. They are then referred to the relevant stakeholders for addressing those issues.

In 2018, the NPO was voted as the Best Home Community Based Care project by the community of Barberton during the awards ceremony which was hosted by the Barberton Community Radio Station.

"I also encourage unemployed community members to join the EPWP because I believe that the skills provided through the Programme can assist them to become employable." "She added that she was happy being part of the Programme.



EPWP Tourism Safety Monitors in Mpumalanga receive training

Article by Emmanuel Jiyane

Pictures by Emmanuel Jiyane



The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants working as Tourism Safety Monitor (TSM) in Mpumalanga have received training in tourism guide at NQF level 5. This training was accredited by the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (Cathseta) and funded by EPWP through the National Skills fund (NSF).

Six participants have been placed at the Samora Machel Monument and Museum in Mbuluzi in Nelspruit to execute a range of activities including providing vital information to tourists who visit the area and also work with the local police to ensure the safety of the tourists. The Tourism Safety Monitor (TSM) is one of the EPWP Social Sector projects which is implemented by various public entities in Mpumalanga including the provincial department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison (DCSSL).

The participants were recruited from various district municipalities such as Gert Sibande, Ehlanzeni and Nkangala.

Participant testimony

The 43-year-old Ms Makhosini Kubhayi from Mbuluzi near Nelspruit has been in the Programme since 2010. "I love my work because it gives me an opportunity to interact with people from all over the world who visit our community. "Since I worked in this project my life has changed for the better. I have recently completed a computer literacy course and I am certain that the skills that I have acquired will give me a better chance to find work when I exit the Programme,"



EPWP participants provide social care services to children at Ithuteng Pre-school in Mpumalanga

Article by Michael Mokoena

Pictures by Michael Mokoena



A total of 50 Expanded Public Works (EPWP) participants of Ithuteng Pre-school which is administered by the Independent Development Trust (IDT), play a vital role in providing social care services to children who are attending Ithuteng Pre-school in Kwa-Guqa in Mpumalanga.

These participants execute a range of activities at the pre-school such as teaching, facilitating extra mural activities, cooking and conducting the general upkeep of the facility. "We have over 100 children at our school and these EPWP participants are assisting us a lot with the care of these children," the principal at the school Ms Grace Mahlalela said.

One participant - Ms Nqobile Dlamini - said being part of the EPWP has given her a range of skills that she can use to find work once the project implementation comes to an end.

"I studied Office Management at Tshwane University of Technology and after completing the course I battled to find work because many organisations want experience from prospective employees. I can safely say that working here has given me the experience that I need to find work in the formal sector."

She added that part of her work at the pre-school included teaching basic computer skills to the children and assisting in general administrative work at the school.

The Ithuteng Pre-school project is a sub-project of the EPWP Non State Sector.

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