



SEKHUKHUNE
District Municipality

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Office of the Executive Mayor

SPEECH DELIVERED BY MMC BAATSEBA LESHABA ON BEHALF OF THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF SEKHUKHUNE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY CLLR JULIA LATA MATHEBE ON THE OCCASION OF EPWP INDUCTION ON WEDNESDAY, 15 JUNE 2022, VLEISBOOM.

Programme director,

Thank you for inviting me to speak at this important occasion, the induction of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Of course, I am here representing the Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality Cllr Julia Lata Mathebe who could not be here due to other work commitments, but none the less sends her warm regards to each one of you present here today.

Programme director,

According to the national department of Public works and infrastructure, the South African Government introduced the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a means of creating jobs. The primary focus of the programme is to provide an income for the poverty stricken and to reduce the country's high unemployment rate, while creating much – needed public infrastructure and

improving service delivery. To maximise work opportunities, the early stages of the programme emphasised labour – intensive methods in the infrastructure sector. Since then, municipalities have since found innovative ways to implement the programme in the Social, Environmental, Cultural and, non – state sectors.

This remains truth, because even in our district municipality, we have EPWP aligned workers across our various units within our departments. We have EPWP aligned workers in our finance department, Local Economic Development department and many others.

The programme provides an important avenue for labour absorption and income transfers to poor households, in the short to medium term.

EPWP projects employ workers on a temporary or ongoing basis with government, contractors, or other non – governmental organisations under the Ministerial Conditions of Employment for the EPWP or learnership employment conditions.

Programme director,

The EPWP creates work opportunities in four sectors, namely infrastructure, non – state, environment and culture and social as I have mentioned in my opening by –

- Increasing the labour intensity of government – funded infrastructure projects
- Creating work opportunities through the non – Profit Organisation programme and Community Work programme
- Creating work opportunities in public environments and culture programmes

- Creating work opportunities in public social programme

Thus far, EPWP has created over 4 million work opportunities at a cost of just over 2 billion rands.

Throughout its four phases, covering the years 2004 to 2024, the EPWP has experienced a number of implementation challenges including underperformance, poor or incomplete reporting, non – compliance, lack of consistency demands from participants for permanent employment.

Programme director,

During our presentation of the 2020/2021 Annual Report across the district, as a district municipality we have created 2 494 jobs through the EPWP. And, to break down the numbers for you – 1399 which represents 57% were male, 1095 of which represents 43% were female and 11 were people with disability. This statistic shows that as a municipality we value this EPWP programme. We recommit ourselves to working hard and in partnership with the provincial department of Public Works Roads and Infrastructure to continue with this programme and to lobby for more people to be employed by this initiative.

Keeping in line with the same faith, The Department of Public Works has announced an increase in minimum wage for all workers in the Expanded Public Works Programme from R 88.00 to R92.31. This revised minimum wage refers to a wage rate per day and per task performed, that is national, provincial and municipal level. The EPWP minimum wage increases annually in line with the inflation rate. So, this notion that EPWP workers from big cities, towns and metropolitan areas are payed more than those in rural areas is to true. This government led by the African National Congress does not divide our

people according to their social status or background. We as the ruling government are for equality, non – racialism and non – sexism. We are a government for all South African regardless of race, gender, and believes. So rest assured, that all EPWP workers receive the same amount of pay for the same amount of work done!

We know and appreciate your calls for the EPWP wages to be increased. We take note of the rise in food and fuel prices. Dialogue between the Department of Public Works and the Treasury is constantly ongoing in this regards.

Programme director,

I wish to congratulate and send my best wishes to all the participants in this induction. Many have applied but you have made it. Don't take that lightly, use the opportunity wisely, work hard, with passion to serving your district and changing the socio – economic status of the poorest in our district. I wish you all well in this induction and it's been a pleasure being with all of you today.

I thank you.