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**Department of Public Works**  
North West Provincial Government  
Republic of South Africa

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## **28 hopefuls to hone skill in construction business**

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Public Works (North West) will in the next three months kick-start a two-year Small Micro Medium Enterprise (SMME) learnership programme, under the auspices of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) aimed at developing at least 28 aspirant and budding entrepreneurs in the province.

More than 100 candidates interested in the programme gathered at the provincial head office in Mafikeng today for the first briefing session held in the area.

The session, which sought to inform the potential candidates about the nature of the programme, was the first of four that will be held in different regions across the province by the end of this week.

National Director of EPWP Economic Sector Carmen Abrahams said the programme, which forms part of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) economic sector, aims develop entrepreneurial skills within the construction sector.

"We are targeting 85% historically disadvantaged individuals, 50% women and 50% youth, but more focus will be on empowering women," said Abrahams.

The programme, to be carried out by the national and provincial Public Works departments in collaboration with ABSA bank, department of Labour and the Construction Education and Training Authority (CETA), comprises two parts of theoretical and practical training.

Application forms were distributed during the briefing session for interested individuals to apply.

One of the hopefuls, Mogomotsi Bosigo (26) from Mafikeng welcomed the move by the department, saying it represented an opportunity for unemployed young people to change their economic status.

"Skills development among young people is critical and it gives me great pleasure to say if I'm selected to participate in the programme I could plough those skills back into my community at a later stage," he said.

Abrahams said on completion of the programme, successful candidates would have gained, among others, the following:

- Experience in running a construction company;
- Financial track record including a bank account, overdraft facility and asset finance;
- National Construction Contractor NQF Level 2;
- Registered Closed Corporation; and
- Knowledge on risk management

The development of SMME has been identified by government as critical for the achievement of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (Asgi-SA) objectives.

Asgi-SA aims to speed up economic growth to 6 percent by 2010 and to halve unemployment by 2014.

