



the dpw

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EPWP exceeds set target...

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By Oupa Segalwe

MIDRAND: Government's ambitious poverty eradication initiative, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), has reached and surpassed its target a full year before the set deadline.

When the programme was launched in May 2004, it aimed to draw significant numbers of the unemployed into productive work with an objective of creating a million job opportunities by 2009.

However by the end of April this year, the programme had already created 1 077 801 job opportunities, way ahead of its scheduled March 31, 2009 time limit, says Public Works Minister Thoko Didiza.

"With another twelve months left in the lifespan of the programme, I can confidently say we have outdone ourselves in implementing this important national programme," Didiza said.

She was addressing guests during the presentation of the 2nd Annual Kamoso Awards held at Gallagher Estate on Thursday night (July 17, 2008). The awards recognize excellence in EPWP implementation across municipalities, provinces and state-owned entities.

Didiza said in the last financial year alone, the programme created 439 099 work opportunities, going beyond its annual target of creating around 280 000 opportunities.

Out of these 439 099 job opportunities, the EPWP exceeded the 30% target of employing young people by 10%, bringing it to 40% and the 40% target of employing women by 7% (47%).

With regard to training, which forms a critical part of the programme, Didiza said per-person days set aside for training during 2007/2008 were 2 082 155, achieving about 54 of the annual target of at least 3 800 000.

In terms of the Codes of Good Practice for Special Public Works Programmes as gazatted by the Department of Labour, beneficiaries should receive at least two days of training out of every 22 days worked.

Minister Didiza is expected to release the official verified figures of the programme some time next month (August).

She said her department was busy working on proposals for the implementation of the second phase of the programme, which will influence the adaptation of the programme and set targets for the next five years to 2014.

“Cabinet has given us the go ahead to develop these proposals and to present the details by January 2009,” she explained.

ENDS

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