



MY DISTRICT TODAY



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Outcome 9: Responsive, accountable, effective and efficient Local Government System.

The Community Works Programme (CWP) brings change to Vanzylrus community

By: KJ Foutie, GCIS Kuruman

Unemployment is one of the most critical problems we face as a society today. Millions of people are poor and cannot provide for themselves and their families because they cannot find work and earn an income. Vanzylrus, a small community in the Kgalagadi, 180 km northwest of Kuruman is one of the hard-hit areas. The Government's CWP intervened to bring about change in the lives of the Vanzylrus residents.

The CWP is a key initiative to mobilise communities to provide regular and predictable work opportunities locally. This is a ward-based programme. The idea is to identify useful work ranging from one or two days a week, to one week a month, initially targeting the poorest wards. The aim is to implement the CWP in at least two wards per local municipality. The CWP was established to provide an employment safety-net, giving people a basic level of income security through work programmes.

The CWP introduced a cleaning project, which is expected to run for two years in Vanzylrus. According to Elisha Chimana, a project coordinator based at the Joe Morolong Local Municipality in the Northern Cape, the project employed 34 people to assist the community, which rely totally on government's social grants for an income.

Ms Keolebogile Thupe, a 25-year-old mother of one child could not hide her enthusiasm as she spoke of how the project changed her life, by going to bed

with the knowledge that she was going to work the following day. Ms Thupe is one of the many young people who are struggling to find employment after matriculating. "My mother does not work and therefore the income makes a big difference to our family," she said with a smile. In addition to earning an income, the beneficiaries will be able to add the experience to their CVs when the project finishes, which could also improve their chances of finding employment elsewhere in the future.

Through the project, the graveyard, police station, community hall, school and hostel premises remain spotlessly clean, while people are employed, earn an honest income and add dignity to their lives.



Some of the community members employed through the Community Works Programme in Vanzylrus ready to start the day's work.

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Outcome 7: Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities and food security for all.

Food for Waste putting food on the table for hundreds of Bitou residents.

By: Jethro Grootboom

An innovative Expanded Public Works Programme Project in the Bitou Municipality in the Plettenberg Bay region, Food for Waste, provides food security for hundreds of residents in the area for at least the next two years. Food for Waste involves beneficiaries collecting waste and being rewarded with food parcels. The Food for Waste concept has several advantages, which include compensating communities with food; assuring food security; protecting the vulnerable by providing a reasonable period of employment while beneficiaries have free time to pursue other economic activities.

In 2008 government launched the War on Poverty Campaign as an interim programme to stimulate service-delivery efforts directly to the very poorest households in South Africa, those living in conditions of abject poverty.

The aim of the campaign is to institutionalise the fight against poverty by raising the profile of government's anti-poverty initiatives, reaching out to more people, making maximum impact on the poor in the shortest possible time and thus ensuring that the broader society appreciates and joins the fight against poverty.

The Food for Waste Project serves to alleviate the people of Bitou's poverty. At the initial stages of the project a meeting was called where details of the project were explained to the unemployed.

A hundred beneficiaries in seven wards were identified and each signed a one-year contract with the Bitou Municipality. The project will reduce unemployment and put food on the table for many families.



Outcome 7: Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities

Farming keeps hunger at bay

By: Ndlovu Collins

While other people whine of rising poverty in the face of the high unemployment rate in the country, Robert Shihari and Rainer Maluleke of Homu-14, a village in Giyani, have started up their own farming project to help offset the challenge.

Living in a village where land is in abundance, they managed to secure a six-hectare plot from their local chief where they plant tomatoes, green peppers, onions, cabbage and other vegetables that are in high demand.

In just a year after they started, the project has grown to a point where they had to employ an additional three full-time workers to help them cultivate the farm.

According to Shihari, the project manager, they also employ seasonal workers to help them during harvest times. "We have another 10-hectare plot, which needs to be deforested and could provide employment for up to 25 people," he said.

"Our intention is to farm pigs as well, so that we will not have waste on the farm – all the damaged tomatoes and other crops would be fed to the pigs," he continued, saying that this would promote recycling on the farm, which would be advantageous to them.

Rainer Maluleke and her partner in business, Robert Shihari, working on their farm.

Shihari said their current target market is the hawkers that ply their trade locally. "We sell them one crate of tomatoes at R80, which in turn, gives them more than R200 profit when they sell it on the streets."

However, just like any other small farmers with no access to financing from commercial banks, their dream of becoming a commercial farm could take ages to be realised since they would need more funds to finance the extension of their six-hectare farm to 16 hectares.

"Finance is the backbone of the farming industry. The more a farm grows, the more expensive the labour and the equipment to cultivate it becomes. Our dream cannot be realised without funding," he said.

According to him, they need, at least R350 000 to deforest and cultivate the other remaining 10 hectares. Only then they would be able to raise money to implement other projects since the farm would produce more when it is bigger than at its current size.



Three workers employed by the project busy working on the farm.



Robert Shihari playing with his dog at their farm project.





Outcome 1: Improved quality of basic education.

Career Expo a Youth Development Initiative

By: Sikelela Zokufa

About 2 000 learners braved the Cape Town cold weather on Saturday, 21 July 2012 to attend the Khayelitsha Career Expo, organised by the Department of Public Enterprises through the department's Youth Economic Participation (YEP) Initiative in partnership with the Khayelitsha Development Forum.

All state-owned companies, which include Denel, Transnet, Eskom, South African Airways, SA Express, Broadband Infraco and the South African Forestry Company were represented. Their stalls showcased the employment that they could offer learners. Among the stakeholders was the National Youth Development Agency that also exhibited its services to the learners.

The YEP Initiative seeks to achieve its objectives by implementing a four-pronged strategy consisting of the following key focus areas: skills development,

employment creation, entrepreneurship and corporate social investment.

Dressed in their school uniforms, the learners listened attentively to each speaker and were given the opportunity to ask questions to the representatives of these state-owned companies.

A pleased Grade 11 learner from Masiyile High School, Nomalungisa Lonzi said, "I did not know what I am going to do after I passed my matric, not having a hint of how to access the bursaries and internships. I am very happy to get this opportunity which has opened my mind."

Thembinkosi Josupu, chairperson of the South African Youth Council encouraged youth not to look down on Further Education and Training (FET) colleges. He said youth must not be discouraged when they do not qualify for university entry.

He added, "Learners should approach these FET colleges and enrol for courses, which will empower them with scarce skills. Our government is investing much in FET Colleges for skills that will enable learners to become both employable and be job creators."

Nomi Nkondlo from the Department of Public Enterprises told hundreds of young people that there is no formula for success. "The only way to succeed is to use the opportunity that is given to you, be willing to learn and believe in yourself," he said.

Unemployed youth were encouraged to be independent and get information from government institutions and programmes such as Thusong Service Centres.

