

**THE IMPACT OF EXTENDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMMES ON
POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN THE BUSHBUCKRIDGE MUNICIPALITY
IN THE MPUMALANGA PROVINCE**

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DECLARATION

I declare that the mini-dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of MASTER OF DEVELOPMENT has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.



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15/12/2011

DATE

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the existence of Extended Public Works Projects (EPWP) and beneficiation in the village of Croquetlawn and Tsemamarhumbu village of Mkhuhlu in the Bushbuckridge Municipality. Many rural households live in situations of high unemployment and abject poverty, especially in the rural neighbourhoods of South Africa. The introduction of labour intensive projects of government in infrastructural development, under the auspices of the Department of Public Works, has brought a great relief in redressing unemployment and poverty in the country. While the provision of these short-term based jobs is life-saving, the question is whether or not these projects (EPWP) will provide a sustainable solution to unemployment and poverty with the skills and information they provide to the employees.

The methodology used in this study was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. A small sample size of 40 people was selected using purposive sampling, targeting mainly beneficiaries of EPWPs, Municipal officials, CBOs, traditional leaders (indunas) and Ward Councillors. It is worth pointing out that the study findings indicated the positive impact of the EPWPs on beneficiaries; even though challenges were still enormous.

At the delivery or grassroots point, the institutional arrangement of the Programme is virtually weak and non-existent in most instances resulting in poor governance. It is recommended that during the programme design stage, institutional arrangements and mechanism must be improved by the involvement of community structures to enhance good governance. It is recommended that gender mainstreaming forms part of the project management and programme design. This implies that vulnerable people such as women and orphaned children are given a special status in the programme. The programme design should also in the main address human basic needs related to infrastructural projects. Labour intensive programmes can create a greater demand for local products and services than do high technology programmes which may heavily rely on imported technology and equipment.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABSA	-	Amalgamated Banks of South Africa
ANC	-	African National Congress
ASGISA	-	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative
CBO	-	Community Based Organisation
CH & DW	-	Community Health and Development Worker
CMIP	-	Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Grant
DBSA	-	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DEAT	-	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
DME	-	Department of Mineral and Energy
DOH	-	Department of Health
DPLG	-	Department of Provincial and Local Government
DPW	-	Department of Public Works
DTI	-	Department of Trade and Industry
DWAF	-	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
ECD	-	Early Childhood Development
EPWP	-	Extended Public Works Programme
ETDPSETA	-	Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority
GDS	-	Growth Development Summit
HCBC	-	Home Community Based Care (HCBC)
HSRC	-	Human Sciences Research Council
HWSETA	-	Health and Welfare Sector Education Authority
MGD	-	Millennium Development Goals
MTEF	-	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NDOT	-	National Department of Transport
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
PES	-	Payment for Ecosystem System
RDP	-	Reconstruction and Development Programme
WFW	-	Working for Water

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1. Introduction

History has shown that labour-intensive methods of work have, for a long time been used to create remarkable infrastructure. Labour intensive programmes can create a greater demand for local products and services than do high technology programmes reliant on imported technology and equipment. Thwala (2008: 103 – 104), argues that investment in infrastructure has a huge potential to redress the high unemployment and poverty levels in South Africa and also to correct the skill deficits in disadvantaged communities. She further points that commitment to alleviation of poverty has become very high on the government agenda and will stay one of the focal points of government. This is motivated by the fact that, currently around 24% of the population lives on less than \$1 a day, below the poverty line defined by the World Bank (2007).

McCutcheon in Thwala (2008: 104) argues that the levels of unemployment have been rising steadily over the years hence the need for labour intensive Public Works Programmes in South Africa. Statistics South Africa (2003) concurs by saying that the level of unemployment was 7% in 1980, 18% in 1991 and 28% in 2003. Thwala (2001) further maintains that the high unemployment rate can undermine democracy if it is not reduced. She continues to say that over the past 25 years, several projects were initiated in South Africa to counter unemployment and poverty. From a theoretical perspective, there are reasons for considering that properly formulated employment creation programmes based on the use of labour-intensive methods can be established to construct and maintain the required physical infrastructure, thus creating employment, skills and institutional capacities. The initiation of the National Public Works Programmes followed a mandate provided by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) in 1994 to link reconstruction with development through an infrastructural

programme, as a key area where special measures to create jobs could link to building the economy and meeting basic needs to redress apartheid-created infrastructural disparities (African National Congress, 1994). One of the qualifying RDP statements points out the need to “co-ordinate with and link to other job creation and labour-intensive construction initiatives” (African National Congress, 1994:6). For that reason, commitment to the alleviation of poverty was very high on the government agenda and stays one of the focal points of government.

The United Nations Millennium Declaration laid out a series of goals to which most countries, South Africa included, are committed. One of them is to halve absolute poverty (defined, in the absence of a national poverty line, as being below \$1(US)/day). Meth (2004) in the year 2000, the UN Millennium Declaration added dates and specific targets to the Copenhagen exhortation. Ten participating governments committed themselves:

To halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the worlds people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger and, by the same date, to halve the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water.

South Africa was committed to the Copenhagen Programme of Action – the Minister of Social Development reaffirmed in the year 2000, South Africa’s commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. However, It is not clear what base year the state has in mind for setting its poverty reduction goal. If poverty has been increasing, the year 2000 may be a more attractive base year than 2002, or 2004. Development may be found reaffirming this in the year 2000. One aspect of this is the difficulty of estimating the value of the ‘social wage’ (social spending) to poor individuals and households. Meth (2004) argues that the assumption that a shared commitment to poverty eradication will somehow produce agreement on even the most basic of the steps that has to be taken is shown to be naïve. This is followed by an overview of the steps that government

has taken to gauge the extent of the poverty problem in South Africa, and of its attempts to monitor progress in the fight against these social problems. Widespread criticism of government's failure to stem an alleged increase in poverty and inequality, its numerous policies and programmes notwithstanding, has provoked a defensive response, visible in official publications and speeches by senior politicians. This polarisation bodes ill for the fight against poverty. The difficulties are, however, formidable. Having mapped out the minefield through which the estimator must travel, some estimates of the numbers of poor people in South Africa are presented. These form the basis of an attempt to gauge the size of the problem of halving, by the year 2014, the proportion of South Africa's people that is poor. In the academic world, the Millennium Development Goals (with their dollar-a-day definition of the income part of absolute poverty) are beginning to attract increasing attention. The goal itself has come under scrutiny by Kanbur (2004), as it has the likelihood of countries achieving it (Hanmer and Naschold, 2003).

In the Programme of Action published after the Copenhagen gathering, there is a guideline for developing a precise definition of poverty. Absolute poverty, it says, is a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to social services." (Paragraph 19, Chapter 2). Meth (2004) adds that poverty is apparent to the human eye and is profiled by shacks, homelessness, unemployment, casual labour, poor infrastructure and lack of access to basic services. According to Meth (2004), poverty has existed for generations both in developed and developing nations, and in spite of the multiple interventions, the progress in eliminating this problem remains elusive. In many of the developed nations, welfare has become residual through the restrictions of benefit that have contributed to the intensification of poverty. Since the genesis of the democratic dispensation, the South African government has developed policies, which have focused on poverty alleviation, improving economic growth, relaxing import controls and reducing the

budget deficit. In spite of the pro-poor policies, South Africa remains one of the highest in the world in terms of income inequality (World Bank Report, 2006). Almost half of the population continues to live under a poverty datum line (Adelzadeh, 2006). There are estimates that just over twenty two million people in South Africa live in poverty Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA, 2005). Poverty in South Africa has racial, gender, spatial and age dimensions. The concentration of poverty, therefore, lies predominantly on black Africans, women, rural areas and black youth. Poverty accompanies unemployment. The unemployment rate is 26.7% or approximately four and a half million people in South Africa (StatsSA, 2005). According to Stevens (2003), women are disadvantaged in the labour market as they are likely to be unemployed or to be in poorly remunerated work because of gender stereotypes. Makgetla (2004) observes that black women are still more likely to be unemployed, to be paid less than men when employed are, and to perform unpaid labour. Seventy percent of the unemployed people are in unskilled labour. After 1994, the governments of South Africa's fiscal policies have been devoted to making a difference in the lives of the poor. Government through the social security system can directly affect poverty levels. The EPWP was created with the purpose of job creation, infrastructure development and service delivery, training and skills development (DBSA, 2005:30). Most of the jobs that have been created are located in construction. Since its inception, 300 000 jobs have been created, the majority of which are in the rural areas and mostly for women (Budget Speech, 2007). Meth (2004) argues that the idea of EPWP is to improve unemployed people's prospects by creating learnerships, life skills and on the job training. The targets that are set for the EPWP programme, with respect to people with disabilities, are that 20 000 people should be employed by 2009. The issue of poverty and unemployment continues to remain a challenge for the government. Padayachee in McCord (2005: 566) suggests that between 1995 and 2002, using the expanded definition of unemployment, the economy created over 1.6 million jobs. Furthermore, between the same period, the number of new entrants to the labour market increased by about 5 million people. The 2007 National Budget Speech,

indicates that only 500 000 jobs are being created. This is inadequate in the growing space over the last decade. Padayachee in McCord (2005: 566) suggest that the numbers have almost doubled in the period from 1997 to 2001, and then rapidly declined by almost a million workers over the period February 2001-February 2002. South African unemployment is in the main a structural problem, not a cyclical problem, and thus the policy's response needs to address the type of unemployment that prevails in the labour market. The Development Bank Report (DBSA) (2005: 94) observes that unemployment in South Africa is clearly chronic rather than acute, yet the EPWP offers short-term, temporary employment only, and characterises the unemployment problem as transient, pending the rising tide of employment resulting from economic growth. The criticism of EPWP is that the average duration of these EPWP jobs is four months (McCord, 2004). There is a small number of learnerships available, limited training (8-12 days), but people obtain life skills training. A further criticism is that the supply of unemployed low and unskilled workers exceeds the demand for work. EPWP will not provide sustainable employment. EPWP will not provide long-term employment, and thus is not a credible response to the unemployment crisis (McCord, 2006).

1.2. Background to the study

In Bushbuckridge, water supply is a dominant problem, especially in rural areas where 61% of houses does not meet RDP standards. About 60% of the households do not have access to portable water, 16% rely on tap water, while 10.7% rely on boreholes and 3% on natural water (spring and rivers). Sources of water supply to settlements and townships are still not reliable. On certain days, taps are dry in the townships whereas some settlements need to contend with dry taps for days. The same challenges linked to water supply problems, poor sanitation, particularly in the densely populated settlement clusters and dispersed small settlements. Approximately 80% of the households in the municipal area use pit latrines, 84% of the population do not meet RDP sanitation standards. The extensive use of unlined pit latrines poses a potential pollution threat to the

surface and ground water resource. The water and sanitation supply in the majority of the rural areas in the Bushbuckridge is below RDP standards. However, a number of formal townships are well serviced with sanitation services (www.bushbuckridge.gov.za).

The Municipality is well provided with electricity. More than 60% of the households are electrified; however, other areas utilise gas, paraffin, candles and solar panels. Electricity supply within the municipality is of acceptable standards. The provision of electricity in some areas needs to be upgraded, especially in rural areas, where interruptions of electricity supply occurs regularly. The improvement of existing infrastructure, therefore, needs to be addressed, whilst certain communities still need to be electrified (www.bushbuckridge.gov.za). During implementation of water and sanitation projects, temporary and permanent employment for 3 800 people was created. Skills are transferred to the local communities during the construction phase. The skills that are transferred are then utilised in other projects. The improvement of the standards of living and social upliftment of the people cannot be quantified. Water provision also results in the prevention of the outbreaks of diseases. Time wasted fetching water from the river or stream can now be used for other activities. Agricultural activities including improvement in nutrition and poverty alleviation is one of the benefits of the provision of water (www.bushbuckridge.gov.za).

According to Magadlela (2001: 14), the Working for Water (WFW) programme as a labour-intensive alien vegetation clearing has a vast impact on poverty alleviation. Its local objectives include the development and economic upliftment of local communities through the creation of short-term employment, training, opportunities and skills development, as well as through the development of mutually beneficial community and business partnerships that recognise social and economic empowerment and conservation objectives. The programme has recognised the gender characteristics of poverty around the country, and gives preference to poor women in female-headed households, such as single mothers

in rural areas and informal settlements, to earn income through working in the alien clearing projects. Participants from Bushbuckridge state that they thought it was preferable for WFW to employ people on a full-time basis than a larger team of people working on a part-time basis. The rationale for this decision was that people would earn enough to assist people in the community who are unemployed. A forty-three-year old Frida Nkosi who is a disabled single mother of four children who are dependent on her for food, shelter and clothing states;

Working is good. The job is wonderful for us because we are now able to buy food, clothes and send our children to school. Since I started working in the WFW programme, I have not gone through a day with only one meal for my family. My life has improved greatly ever since I started working. One thing that I would like to change in this job is the payment system. I would prefer to be paid every month since we are only paid after completing the allocated task—this sometimes takes about two months to get the claims through. Lastly, I would like to be employed on a full-time basis.

It is evident that EPWP's labour-intensive programmes serve as a climbing ladder to better employment opportunities. It is not meant to provide permanent jobs but to provide skills and information to the temporary employees this will assist them to obtain better and permanent jobs (Magadlela 2001: 14).

This study will examine some past African experiences in relation to Public Works Programmes, and then outline the potential contribution which employment creation programmes could make to alleviate unemployment problem. It also probed into the strategies for achieving results. The study then describes the problems that are experienced in South Africa hitherto in relation to employment creation through Public Works Programmes.

1.3. Statement of the problem

In Bushbuckridge, water supply is a big problem particularly in rural areas. The majority of households do not have access to potable water. Many rural households live in situations of high unemployment and abject poverty. Despite the availability of Extended Public Works Programmes in Bushbuckridge since 2003 that aim at alleviating poverty in the area, high poverty levels still prevail among people in the area. EPWP enhances workers with entrepreneurial skills and offers employment opportunities through labour-intensive projects. However, this study endeavoured to investigate the impact of EPWP on poverty alleviation in Bushbuckridge municipality of Mpumalanga province. Statistics South Africa (STATSSA, 2007) provides evidence to the effect that poverty is still prevalent in this municipality.

1.4. Aim of the study

The purpose of the study is to assess the impact of EPWP on alleviating poverty within the Bushbuckridge District Municipality.

1.5. The objectives of this study are:

- 1.5.1. To evaluate the effectiveness of Expanded Public Works Projects on poverty alleviation.
- 1.5.2. To analyse the perception and attitudes of people in the Bushbuckridge Municipality about the EPWP programmes.
- 1.5.3. To survey the beneficiaries of these projects and their socio-economic status.
- 1.5.4. To assess the effect of these projects on skills development.
- 1.5.5. To recommend probable solutions to the problems.

1.6. Research questions

- 1.6.1. To what extent are the EPWP projects effective in alleviating poverty in the Bushbuckridge Municipality?
- 1.6.2. What are the perceptions and attitudes of people towards these projects in the municipality?
- 1.6.3. What are the socio-economic benefits of these EPWPs to the local communities?
- 1.6.4. How effective are these projects in developing skills of the people within the municipality?

CHAPTER TWO

2.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.2. Introduction

This chapter examines what the literature says about labour intensive programmes and their ability to create jobs in the endeavour to alleviate poverty in poor communities of South Africa.

This chapter covers the review of literature on Extended Public Works Programme.

2.2.3. The history of Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in South Africa

According to Phillips (2005:16) asserts that labour-intensive public works programmes are not a new phenomenon and have been carried out in many countries for many years. There is a huge diversity in these programmes. Some focuses on relief, while others focus in economically efficient employment creation, resulting in the delivery of good quality, and cost-effective public services. The International Labour Organisation supports economically efficient public work programmes in many developing countries, which include 24 African countries. Through the EPWP, employment opportunities were created in government-funded infrastructure projects, environmental and cultural programmes, and social programmes involving home-based care and early childhood development.

The centre-piece of the EPWP is a large-scale programme of using labour-intensive methods to upgrade rural and municipal roads, municipal pipelines, storm-water drains and paving, as well as fencing of roads, community water supply and sanitation, maintenance of government buildings, housing, schools and clinics, rail and port infrastructure, electrification infrastructure, and so on,(Mbeki, 2004).

According to Phillips in Samson (2007), the programme will spend at least R15-billion on labour-intensive jobs over the next five years. This, he said, would translate into the building of 37 000km of roads, 31 000km of pipelines, 1 500km of storm water drains and 150km of urban sidewalks. Those taking part in the programme receive training funded and arranged by the Department of Labour, as well as a stipend of R35 a day on average, depending on the nature of the project.

Phillips in Samson (2007) further argues that government spends billions of rand creating and maintaining civil infrastructure (roads, water pipelines, etc.). Under the EPWP, labour is used instead of machines where it is technically feasible and economically viable. Stocking and Lande (2009) state that employment can provide an escape from poverty, provided workers have decent pay and conditions and an opportunity to learn and progress.

In the first year, 3 483 projects were implemented employing some 223 000 people. This is 175 000 more people than would have been employed if this was not done labour-intensively and is equivalent to 71 000 person years of work. It is under these projects that people who would otherwise have been out of work earned approximately R823-million. The programme does not necessarily absorb all unemployed people, but adds to the range of initiatives designed to tackle unemployment. Mbeki, speaking at the launch of Gundo Lashu last year (2010), said the success of the programme would depend on strong partnerships between the government, labour, business and communities. The programme, Mbeki said, focused on the unemployed, particularly those who were marginalised from the mainstream of the economy. "We want workers to gain skills while they are employed and increase their capacity to continue working elsewhere once they leave the programme," he said. Although funded through the department of public works, the EPWP will involve all spheres of government and state-owned enterprises and will look to the private sector for additional support. The Business Trust, an initiative of South African companies in partnership with the government, has set aside R100 million for the programme. In addition, ABSA, one of the

country's major banks, has offered to provide financial assistance to contractors taking part in the programme.

Phillips in Samson (2007: 245) points out that public works programmes have featured as a critical part of government's job creation efforts since the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), and various programmes, which have been put forward since 1994. The government of South Africa acknowledges this fact that the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), which consolidates and expands on preceding public works programmes, was announced in president Mbeki's February 2003 state of the nation address, and subsequently agreed to by all parties at the June 2003 Growth and Development summit (GDS) (EPWP, 2005). Phillips (2004) further argues that the EPWP is intended to provide poverty and income relief, bring the unemployed into productive work, and provide participants with training to assist them in moving into productive employment. One million 'work opportunities' are to be created by the EPWP in its first 5 years (Mbeki, 2004). It is repeatedly claimed within government documents, such as EPWP newsletter and speeches that the work experience and training received in EPWPs will help workers move from the second to the first economy (McCord 2004b). McCord (2004) astutely observes that prolonged negotiations between government, labour and the private sector on the EPWP had a profound effect on the form and nature of the programme. Government and business were ideologically opposed to increasing long-term public sector employment. When public works programmes create 'second economy' conditions, the union movement rejected the creation of 'second-class' public works employees with lower wages, benefits and labour protection, as they argued that this would contribute to the development of a two-tier labour market. It was, therefore, agreed that minimum wages for EPWPs would be reduced, but that the employment would be short-term and workers would be given training as compensation (McCord 2004:10).

The training component and the assumption that it will enable workers to find employment after the end of the EPWP are central to the casting of the EPWP as a mechanism to reduce unemployment. For, as McCord notes, the 'EPWP is fundamentally a supply-side intervention, since the direct labour market impact of the EPWP in terms of the number of jobs 'created' is extremely limited, and the average duration of employment on the programme is only 4 months' (McCord 2005:565). To date, the most incisive critiques of the EPWP have been developed by McCord in a series of publications rooted in extensive empirical and documentary analysis (2004a, 2004b, 2005). McCord's primary intervention is to establish that there is a fundamental mismatch between the goals and rhetoric of the EPWP and the South African context within which it is being implemented. McCord highlights that while similar public works programmes have been effective in addressing transitional unemployment often encountered in developed countries, 'as a short-term policy instrument the EPWP is not an appropriate response to the chronic labour market crisis [in South Africa]' (McCord 2004:8).

She further emphasises that while there is a need for intermediate and high level skills in the South African economy, the EPWPs will not provide workers with this level of skills. Learnerships remain the preserve of contractors and will only be accessible to a tiny fraction of EPWP workers. The 8 days of formal training planned for most workers on EPWPs focuses primarily on life skills, and McCord found that many workers who have participated in EPWPs did not know whether or not they had even received training (McCord 2005:568–572). Due to the structural nature of unemployment, few workers have been successful in securing other employment after the EPWPs, that Working for Water and Working for Wetlands keep workers on for multiple years rather than returning them to unemployment (McCord 2005:576). As the training component is so limited, wages so low, and employment brief, McCord concludes that while EPWP employment may temporarily decrease the depths of poverty experienced, it will have little impact on the number of people living below the poverty line, unemployment or future labour market participation (McCord 2004:12).

McCord (2004:12), therefore, disagrees with the assertions that the EPWP, as currently formulated, will provide a bridge between the second and first economies and assist the unemployed in moving into secure, formal sector employment. However, she does not extend her analysis to explore whether the EPWPs, which she evaluates, shed any light on the theoretical conceptualisation of the two economies. Prior to reflecting on what analysis of public works programmes can reveal about the relationship between the first and second economies, it is useful to briefly review current critiques of this theoretical construct.

Nafziger (1994: 49) asserts that as compared to global unemployment levels, South Africa is facing an extreme situation with regard to unemployment, with levels significantly in excess of those found in other developing and developed countries. Coetzee, Graaf, Hendricks & Woods (2001) concur by arguing that South Africa's labour market situation has been regarded as one of high unemployment and negligible job creation.

This Day newspaper published an article under the title: *Mbeki promises a million new jobs*, which read:

A million unemployed people will get jobs over the next five years because of a dramatically expanded government public works programme: The EPWP is a nation-wide programme that will draw significant numbers of the unemployed into productive employment, so that workers gain skills while they are gainfully employed, and increase their capacity to earn an income once they leave the programme.

The programme would help to move people off social grants into public employment. In February 2004, in Parliament the President of the Republic of South Africa Thabo Mbeki made an announcement in his State of the Nation Address that the programme would create at least one million opportunities in its first five years. Islam (2006: 2) concurs with the minister of finance's statement by saying that the benefits of growth often do not reach the poor, and hence the need for targeted interventions, for example, through microfinance, and similar micro-level programmes aiming at the poor.

Makwane Road Construction employed an average of 684 people were employed per month over the construction period, while 1 414 jobs were created in this period. In August 2006 the monthly employment figure on the contract peaked at 1 001. The project was unbundled into 19 smaller contracts; in order to accommodate the maximum training potential 27 locals were registered on the contractor development programme as learner contractors. They were registered on the national database for the National Certificate in Construction Contracting labour-days. At the end of the contract, about 221 000 labour days had been created and approximately R10 million paid in wages for money spent in the community, by the community. All plant and equipment was hired within the community and approximately R11 million was spent on plant and material purchases.

2.2.4. EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME IN DIFFERENT SECTORS

According to President Thabo Mbeki in his State of the National address, the ambitious Expanded Public Works Programme is set to develop the social and economic infrastructure, build human resources, boost enterprise and alleviate poverty (Mbeki, 2004). Implementation of EPWP is through four lead departments, which are Department of Environment and Tourism, Department of Water Affairs and Forestry and Department of Arts and Culture. These departments managed to utilise their poverty relief funding for the financial years 2001-2004 for the following departmental functions; tourism infrastructure and product development; environmental conservation; waste management and coast care. Teklu and Asefa (1999: 432) aver that EPWP's target is the poor and the vulnerable, as their earnings, together with social protection, should allow them to achieve a sustainable and acceptable standard of living. EPWPs also concentrate on creating work opportunities through labour-intensive public funded projects, either in infrastructure projects, environmental protection projects or the social service sector. An amount of R715 million, allocated to the department for this

programme, was utilised to create 19,910 jobs. As training is a requirement in EPWPs, 268,920 training days were given. A total of 1024 Small, Medium and Macro Enterprises were also created (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2004).

2.2.4.1. The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF)

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry managed to use its poverty relief funding for the financial years 2001-2004 for departmental functions such as the Working for Water, Working on Fire and Working for Wetlands programmes. These entailed removal of invasive alien plants, rehabilitation of wetlands and veld and forest fire management. An amount of R950 million was allocated from the departmental resources, including R22 million through the Department of Labour. These funds were utilised to provide 38,403 jobs years and 362,870 training days. A total of 1000 SMMEs were also created (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2004).

The Department of Agriculture utilised its R120 million allocation in the Land Care Programme and the Special Programme for Food Security during the 2001-2004 financial years which are addressing the degradation of natural resources and improving the socio-economic status of rural communities, as well as to ensure food security. A total of 4000 job years were created, 63, 000 training days were given and 36 SMMEs were created, (DEAT Plan, 2004). Environment and Culture sector has clustered its programmes into a number of core programmes, namely Sustainable Land Based Livelihoods, Working for the Coast, People and Parks, Working for Tourism and Working on Waste. These are briefly discussed further below.

2.2.4.2. Department of Environment and Tourism (DEAT)

The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism managed to use its poverty relief funding for the financial years 2001 to 2004 for the following departmental functions: tourism infrastructure and product development; environmental conservation; waste management and coast care. An amount of R715m, allocated to the department for this programme, was utilised to create 17,910 jobs. As training is a requirement in EPWPs, 268,920 training days had been set aside for this purpose. The sector had created 1024 Small, Medium and Macro Enterprises (SMMEs) by the year 2004, (DEAT, 2004).

2.2.4.3. Department of Water Affairs and Forestry

A second division is the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. This department managed to use its poverty relief funding for the financial years 2001 – 2004 for departmental functions such as the Working for Water, Working on Fire and Working for Wetlands programmes. These entailed removal of invasive alien plants, rehabilitation of wetlands and veld and forest fire management. An amount of R950 million, was allocated to the department for this programme, together with R271.2 million, allocation from other departmental resources, including R22 million through the Department of Labour. These funds were utilised to provide 38,403 job years and 362,870 training days. This sector also created a total of 1000 SMMEs, (DEAT, 2004).

2.2.4.4. Department of Arts and Culture

The Department of Arts and Culture managed to use its poverty relief funding for the financial years 2001–2004 for departmental functions such as craft production, community arts and music, cultural infrastructure and tourism and heritage development. An amount of R97m had been allocated and utilised to create 2870 job years, both temporary and permanent. Unaccredited training was given,

resulting in 161,763 training days. The department created 150 SMMEs, (DEAT, 2004). The Department of Agriculture utilised its R120 million allocation in the Land Care Programme and the Special Programme for Food Security during the 2001–2004 financial years which are addressing the degradation of natural resources and improving the socio-economic status of rural communities, as well as attempting to ensure household food security. In total, a target of 4000 job years were envisaged, 63,000 training days were given, and 36 SMMEs were created (DEAT,2004). Along the lines of these lead departments, the EPWP programme is divided, into the four sectors, namely, environment and culture sector, infrastructure sector, social sector and economic sectors.

2.2.4.4.1. Environment and Culture Sectors

The Environmental Sector plan is a joint plan of the Departments of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Water Affairs and Forestry, Arts and Culture and Agriculture. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism is the lead department. The plan aims to create 201 703 jobs through under programmes such as the Department of Agriculture's Land Care programme; the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism's People and Parks, Coastal Care, Sustainable Land-based Livelihoods, Cleaning up SA, Growing a Tourism Economy programmes; and the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry's Working for Water, Wetlands, and Fire programmes.

Henderson (2005), states that the Environmental and Culture sectors aim to create work opportunities in the public-funded environmental programmes. Furthermore, these sectors also has significant potential to keep expanding its existing programmes and create new programmes providing environment-related services. This programme will result in 200 000 hectares of land cleared of aliens, 40 rehabilitated wetlands, 20 fire protection associations, 700 kilometres of coast cleaned with adequate infrastructure,10 000 hectares of rehabilitated land, 32 waste management programmes and 150 historical and community tourism

projects. The average duration of employment for environmental projects is approximately six months (EPWP, 2005).

Programmes under this sector are outlined below. Currently, Working for Water Programme is a public agency under the jurisdiction of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) with the mandate of controlling invasive alien plant infestation. What is particularly unusual about the programme is that it was initiated and is funded primarily as a poverty relief public works programme. This is reflected in its goal of sustainably controlling invasive alien species by 2020 “in order to contribute to economic empowerment, social equity and ecological integrity” the WFW programme has an annual budget of more than R400 million (RSA, 2003) which is the largest single natural resource based poverty relief and public works expenditure in the country. The government's total expenditure on all national and provincial parks and related activities in 2001/2002 was R728million (RSA, 2003).

The bulk of the funding over the last 11 years has been generated through poverty relief programmes (the Reconstruction and Development Programme, then the Special Public Works Programmes, which evolved to become the Expanded Public Works Programme). The poverty relief programmes are funded in clusters. WFW forms part of the Environmental and Social Cluster. DWAF has also contributed substantial amounts to the programme, using funding allocated to the Department by the National Treasury from tax revenue. The National Treasury budgets are allocated to the departments responsible for programmes in three-year cycles, known as Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEF). Budgets are based on three main criteria: the functional priority, for example, water conservation, biodiversity, productive potential of land, the impact on poverty relief and economic empowerment, and the department's capacity to spend the budget effectively and efficiently. Some international aid funding was raised for WFW during its early years. Although it played a catalytic role, it made up only a small proportion of the total budget.

Water management agencies also entered into formal partnerships with WFW under which they contributed to funding the programme. DWAF's water trading account (funds raised from water charges) provided another source of income. The funding from this source is focused on the control of invasive alien plants with acknowledged negative impacts on water resources (Turpie, Marias and Blignaut, 2008). For some years, WFW reported matching funding spent by the forestry industry through an informal partnership through Forestry South Africa (a non-governmental agency representing commercial forestry). Since the partnership ended, the programme has not recorded this expenditure, although private sector companies continue to clear. Likewise, other sources of funds come and go for various reasons, but they remain minor contributors.

WFW effectively acts as a conduit for the provision of ecosystem goods and services, predominately water supply, through the control of invasive alien plants and the provision of unskilled job opportunities, using predominantly taxpayers' money. Whether this is justifiable or not, in terms of the spread of the taxpayers versus the beneficiaries of clearing is uncertain, although it should be noted that water savings in one area with geographically widespread ramifications, and biodiversity benefits are also likely to have more than localised benefits. Though this form of transfer payment does not constitute the creation of a market for the provision of ecosystem goods and services in the strict sense, it does constitute a payment for the service delivery. While much of the earlier work has been done exclusively within national and provincial parks, most (66%) of WFW's activities over the latter years (2001–2006) was outside of these conservation enclaves, contributing greatly to conservation and ecosystem health on unprotected land (Hobbs, 2004). Turpie, et al (2008), contend that the WFW programme has focused primarily on projects that improve water delivery and not on ecological restoration per se. This inherent shortcoming has spawned two new programmes, Working for Wetlands and Working for Woodlands, which are engaged in restoration of those habitats. The wetlands programme is largely motivated by the impact on biodiversity as well as hydrological services. The woodlands

programme is geared towards carbon sequestration services. The Working on Fire initiative is another offspring of the WFW programme: it promotes and is actively involved in the responsible and safe use of fire as an environmental management intervention.

2.2.4.4.1.1. Sustainable land based livelihoods

Sustainable Land Based Livelihoods include funding of Working for Water, Working for Wetlands, Working for the Land, Working on Fire, and Community Based Natural Resource Management Programme. The programme also includes the application of science and technology to create high value commodities that underpin employment opportunities and measures to combat desertification (Public Works, 2007). According to Kaiser (1999), invasions by alien species are considered to be one of the largest threats to the ecosystem of the earth. He further argues that this is evident in some alien tree species that are utilised in commercial forestry and agro forestry as they cause major problems as invaders of natural and semi-natural ecosystems.

Richardson, (1997) concurs that this problem has increased over the past few decades, with a rapid increase in afforestation and changes in land use. Wit (2001), emphasises, that the species that cause the greatest problem are those that have been planted most widely, and for the longest time. Gu & Ryan (2008) purports that alien plants have invaded an estimated 10 million (ha) of South Africa. The Western Cape is the most heavily invaded at about a third of the total area, followed by Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, and Limpopo Province (Le Maitre, 2003).

A detailed survey of the Western Cape mountain catchments showed that around 60,500 out of 1,138 million (ha) 5% of the total surface area) had an invasion density of at least 25% (Marais, 1998). Initial estimates are that approximately 54% of all riparian areas also have an invasion density of at least 25%, or,

effectively, some 460,000 hectares (Versveld et al., 1998; Cullis et al., 2007). Although this means higher storage of carbon, it is important to note that the majority of these invasive alien plants are also fire prone or fire dependent. The invasion of river courses and of important catchment areas is particularly problematic in terms of stream flow reduction (Versveld et al., 1998).

A number of studies have demonstrated that alien plants have a measurable negative effect on stream flow (Le Maitre, 1996; Scott and Smith, 1997; Baskin, 1996; Van Wilgen et al, 2001; Görgens and van Wilgen, 2004). The level of stream flow reduction has been quantitatively linked to the vegetation type and density of invasive plants. Le Maitre et al. (2000) estimated the total incremental water use of invading alien plants that is, the additional water use compared with the natural vegetation at about 3,300 million m³ of water per year. Primary catchments in the Western Cape had the greatest reduction, of up to 31% of mean annual runoff (Le Maitre et al., 1996, 2000). Cullis et al. (2007) estimate that the current loss of usable water due to invasive alien plants is 695 million m³, equivalent to 4% of the total registered water use.

This government programme was initiated in response to the realisation of the gravity of the threat that alien plants posed to water supplies. A group of natural resource managers and scientists presented the idea of the programme to the then Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Professor Kader Asmal, of the newly elected African National Congress (ANC) government, in 1995. They proposed addressing two immediate challenges with one intervention: clearing invasive alien plants could not only address the effect of invasive alien plants on the country's scarce water resources, but also had considerable potential for job creation and economic empowerment.

Finally, in one of the more recent studies, Currie, Seaton, and Wesley (2009) used a stakeholder theory to a feasibility analysis for a potential land and water trail, one involving legal rights and privileges of various special interest groups. By so

doing, the researchers arrived at a modified classification and definition of stakeholders, which they argue, is beneficial in a number of ways. While many payments for ecosystem services (PES) programmes include the objective of poverty alleviation as a side objective, it is the one of the primary objectives of WFWP. Indeed, the continued political support of the programme has hinged on its being primarily a poverty relief programme. The programme has created thousands of jobs, with a strong emphasis on gender equity, and provides considerable benefits such as skills training, health, and HIV/ AIDS awareness programmes.

For example, Milton et al. (2003) estimate that 24,000 previously unemployed people, 52% of whom are women, were employed in 2000. It also generates further income through the development of value adding industries, such as furniture, fuel wood, and charcoal that use alien vegetation as inputs. Turpie et al. (2008) proposes that if successful, this project will lead to more self-sustaining natural resource based community development projects being set-up. Taken together, these developments could be paving a way for the development of an overarching 'Working for Ecosystem Services' organisation that houses nature-oriented (restoration) poverty-relief programmes. The existing model and potentially extended model differ substantially from other PES systems in that restoration is carried out via a contract with individuals other than landowners, and that there is a significant poverty-alleviation component.

2.2.4.4.1.2. Working for the Coast

Working for Coast programme intends benefiting coastal communities as it supports those programmes that use coastal resources for the promotion of these communities, while at the same time protecting and rehabilitating these resources. This programme provides jobs and training for these communities. It covers coastal areas of South Africa and incorporates the following coastal components: wetlands, dunes, public facilities, (parking areas, picnic sites and ablution blocks).

It is the responsibility of implementing agents to manage the work on the ground. There are project teams that are expected to carry out Working for the Coast tasks. These project teams are recruited from the locally unemployed local people and are trained (DEAT, 2005).

2.2.4.4.1.3. People and Parks

The focus of People and Parks programme is on projects that involve communities in conservation of protected areas and seeks to maximise the benefits to poor communities of South Africa's parks and other protected areas. Projects falling under this programme include, though not limited to, fencing of protected areas, removal of alien vegetation in the protected areas, skills training of neighbouring communities and many other projects that could benefit both conservation and livelihoods of local people. Between 2004 and 2007, the total budget for this focus area was at R254 million.

2.2.4.4.1.4. Working on Waste

Working on Waste programme supports waste management and recycling initiatives, while on the other hand it builds SMMEs involved in this programme in order to create local jobs and entrepreneurship. One of these projects is Siyacoca Recyclers Community Project that is based in the O.R. Tambo District Municipality, Eastern Cape Province. The project has thus far managed to put in place a management structure, acquired a truck, machines and equipment, and created 80 jobs for the local community. According to the municipality, it is the intention of this project to create a friendly tourist environment through collection of waste, creating jobs and developing skills for all the previously disadvantaged communities. The main activities of the project reported to date included collection of waste for recycling purpose, bailing of waste and sending it to end-users, glass cutting, manufacturing of toilet papers, and door to door collection of recyclable waste and provision of skills to the people (DEAT, 2005).

2.2.4.4.1.5. Working for Tourism

According to Kepe (2002), ecotourism is internationally recognised as the single most important land use for making the country's natural resources a profitable commodity. The eco-tourism sector is rapidly growing in South Africa (Eco-Africa Environmental Consultants – www.ecoafrica.co.za). This programme uses this prospect to generate revenue for local communities and to involve them in the tourism economy. It funds tourism enterprises that create jobs and benefit local communities (National Treasury, undated). Samson (2007) introduced the concept of Community Benefit Tourism Initiatives (CBTI) and sought to identify the range of stakeholder characteristics that contribute to a successful CBTI.

2.2.4.4.1.6. The infrastructure sector

The programme aims to achieve a large impact in a short time by focusing on construction, rehabilitation and maintenance activities, which offer the best opportunity for labour use. In particular, low-volume roads, trenching, storm-water and sidewalks have been identified as areas where construction, rehabilitation and maintenance using labour-intensive methods, will increase steadily over time. The programme does not exclude other types of infrastructure, and encourages all public bodies to expand the use of labour-intensive methods to other types of infrastructure.

Perkins and Luiz (2006), agree that productive public expenditure in the areas of infrastructure such as road, transportation and housing and human capital plays an important role in accelerating economic growth. These four focal areas will be targeted through attaching specific conditions to the Provincial and Municipal Infrastructure Grants (PIG and MIG). In addition to the infrastructure funded through the MIG and the PIG, additional areas of labour-intensive infrastructure provision and maintenance have been identified. These areas include labour intensive construction of civil works through the Department of Housing (DOH).

Trenching in electrification projects will be implemented through Department of Minerals and Energy (DME). The remaining CMIP (Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Grant) projects earmarked for Labour Intensive Construction Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG).

Road maintenance and higher volume roads will be responsibility of the National Department of Transport (NDOT), whereas building maintenance falls under the Department of Public Works (DPW) (World Bank, 2006). The lead department in the infrastructure plan is the Department of Public Works. Other departments are the Departments of Transport, Housing, Provincial and Local Government; Water Affairs and Forestry; Public Enterprises and Education. The Independent Development Trust and Eskom, which are both parastatals, form part of the plan. Driving values of the plan are efficiency, cost-effectiveness and quality of products. This is applicable to EPWP labour-intensive construction methods in civil works. All work carried out should comply with the industry standards. The programme involves ring fencing a portion of the existing conditional infrastructure grants to provinces and municipalities.

This programme looked at low-volume roads, trenching, storm water and sidewalks as areas where construction, rehabilitation and maintenance could be done using labour intensive methods. The infrastructure sector funded programmes, such as Provincial and Municipal Infrastructure Grants (PIG and MIG). This sector has projected that, through projects, provinces and municipalities would construct 31,000 km of pipelines, 1500 km of roads, and 1500 km of storm water drains and 150 km of urban sidewalks over the next five years, meeting the requirements of the EPWP (EPWP, 2005).

In fourth quarter the break-down of the sector, with regards to the number of work opportunities has shown that most network opportunities were created in the infrastructure sector (at least 109,400), with the gross number in this sector being at least 158,000. The average duration of employment on infrastructure projects is

approximately four months (EPWP, 2005). According to Lieuw Kie-Song (2006), the infrastructure sector seeks to maximise the primary impacts of construction in government-funded infrastructure. Citing an example of using labour-intensive methods of construction and maintenance, Gundo Lashu in Limpopo increased the number of jobs by four hundred percent; on the same type of projects, it created 11,481 instead of 2800 jobs. Lieuw-Kie-Song (2006), describes construction as the fifth largest. Gundo Lashu is isiVhenda phrase for "Our victory". It is government's roads maintenance project employment category in the country, and it is set to grow, with vast government investments in infrastructure in the years ahead (Daily Dispatch, 2006:5). It is envisaged that 900,000 employment opportunities would be created in this sector, which is seen as the largest employment generator. A joint process with DPW, the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) and National Treasury (NT) ensured that a total of R15 billion over the next 5 years is targeted towards the EPWP through the provincial and municipal conditional grants for infrastructure (Kobokana, 2004). This huge budget requires professionalism and capacity. As it is the intention of the EPWP to achieve poverty alleviation, reduce unemployment; develop skills and training through delivery of services. The question remains as to whether or not these departments have the capacity to manage and deliver on such cumbersome budgets. There is a strong correspondence between these poverty indicators and participation in low-paying menial work schemes.

A survey of the characteristics of road workers in Botswana shows that workers are often self-selected in such employment schemes, especially in poorer areas where there are few alternative employment opportunities (Teklu and Asefa, 1999). These self-selecting workers are largely drawn from the households with working adults but with low assets holdings and little supportive income holdings. Within these households, young adults with low educational attainment but in good physical condition participate in road works. Female workers are better represented in areas close to big towns or villages where competition with male adult workers is less intense. These characteristics of the workers significantly

overlap with those who are characterised as poor in these villages. For example, an application of the overlapping method, for example, shows that the percentage of the poor in the total road workers (53%) exceeds the percentage of the poor in the total sampled population (46%). That is, the poor in the roadwork schemes are over represented in the sample, which indicates that the road scheme draws more of the poor than the non-poor individuals do.

For most of the road workers, the schemes not only offer better wages but fixed-term contract arrangements which guarantee stable employment for a given period with some cash flow. Since these workers do not have to search daily for casual work, the search cost of the roadwork is much lower, and hence the effective wage is greater than the comparable unskilled casual wage labour in rural areas. The incentive to stay in the project is strong among these workers as is evident from their self-reported reservation wages. These variations in reservation wages show how the poor in the roadwork differentiate themselves.

The road works in Kenya offer employment to workers who had primarily casual and irregular jobs before joining the road works (Teklu and Asefa, 1999). These workers showed willingness to accept reservation wages, which were below the market wage for casual labour. The large presence of workers with such characteristics indicates that the road works reach poor households, particularly working poor households with a large number of dependents. They are often faced with labour constraints because of the low ratio of adults to dependents. Because of the pressure for meeting subsistence needs, these poor households have to work long hours, especially when activity in the road works overlaps with the seasonal peak farm season.

While participation in labour-intensive public works cannot substantiate how much these public works schemes contribute to poverty reduction, they appear to benefit the poor especially the poorest of the working poor. The schemes institute a bottom up poverty reduction process in which the impact is greater in reducing

intensity of poverty (reducing poverty gap) rather than lowering its incidence (Teklu, 1999).

2.2.4.4.1.7. The Economic sector

Electricity forms the cornerstone of social and economic development. Various municipalities must facilitate community participation of environment impact studies. Bekker, Eberhard, Gaunt, Marquard (2008) argue that the 'first wave' of electrification policy usually involves the electrification of the economy as a whole, with the associated establishment of institutions to regulate and facilitate the orderly expansion of electricity systems. A 'second wave' of electrification policies may be identified that responds to the problem of including areas of national economies, which do not meet the criteria for electrification under existing institutional arrangements (most often expressed as financial criteria), generally leading to various forms of institutional innovation.

One of the primary motivations for second-wave electrification is developmental, as electrification has the potential to promote local economic development, and may resolve problems of 'energy poverty', which are economic penalties paid by low-income households for using low-quality energy carriers. Studies on alternative power sources should be conducted and the possible implementation of the power sources should be initiated. Because of the big area, the necessity for a better infrastructure is obvious. At this time, the programme shifted to a mainly rural focus, which increased average costs and necessitated the funding of bulk infrastructure to strengthen and extend transmission networks and transformers. This will ensure economic development, tourism, farming and communication. It is imperative for funds to be generated through agreements with big users and the Department of Transport.

Education of entrepreneurs to perform certain services will help social development in the area. EPWP intended to utilise public sector budgets to create

additional work opportunities coupled with training after training, productive employment opportunities would be created and ultimately enhance the ability of workers to earn an income after they leave the programme. Income would come either from the labour market or through entrepreneurial or cooperative income-generating activities. The EPWP economic sector focuses on entrepreneurial and cooperative income-generating activities. Furthermore, as part of the contribution to the income of the poor, the target of 1-million work opportunities through the Expanded Public Works Programme was attained in 2008, a year earlier than envisaged in the 2004 electoral mandate. This has massively created the possibility to expand this programme and improve its quality” (SONA 2009). Nobatana in Philips (2004) argues that the code of good practice and the conditions of employment for Special Public Works Programmes are the instruments to serve this purpose.

EPWP projects should not simply be about 'graduating to formal employment through skills acquisition and work experience'. A substantive amount of unskilled and semi-skilled labour is being shed as result of the decline in the primary sector of the economy. This labour has very limited literacy, numeracy and technical skills, and the acquisition of new skills cannot happen in the short term. They have limited private savings and do not qualify for social security. They constitute an army of marginalized reserve labour that is vulnerable to extreme and unfair forms of exploitation. EPWP projects should be designed to target this band of the population and protect them from the vicious cycle of poverty.

Learnerships form the central part of the Expanded Public Works Programme. It is the responsibility of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to coordinate the EPWP economic sector (Economic Sector Plan). This sector aims to develop 3000 sustainable businesses in various sectors over period 2004/05 – 2008/09. These businesses will be developed through a programme known as venture learnerships. A learnership is a route for learning and gaining a qualification within the National Qualification Framework (NQF) from level 1 to 8. It is a qualification

based on Unit Standards. Learnerships include both structured work experience (a practical component) and instructional learning (a theory learning component). This acts as a route for learning and obtaining a qualification in business management (Public Works, 2007).

Claire Bisseker, of the Sunday Times (10/10/2005, 15), wrote that the government's initiatives to transform the second economy have been relatively ineffective. In this report, she refers to a *2005 Development Report: Overcoming underdevelopment in SA's second economy*, released by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the United Nations Development Programme, which comments on the EPWP. She goes on to say that, the rhetoric occasionally touted by politicians that the EPWP will create one million jobs in five years is misleading, given that most of these jobs are temporary and that at any given time there are likely to be no more than 200,000 of them (Sunday Times, 10/10/2005, 15). Several people and organisations have reviewed the Expanded Public Works Programme, among them is McCord (2005), who wrote that the Extended Public Works Programme was launched after the demise of the National Community-Based Public Works Programme, which created only 20, 000 temporary jobs in its short life. She further argued that given that eight million South Africans are jobless and more than 20 million people live in poverty, the EPWP represents a minimal response to a massive social and political problem.

McCord (2005) went on to caution that it is an illusion to think that the EPWP can have the impact anticipated in the policy rhetoric. At worst, she argued, it is politically dangerous, as it reduces the space for the policy discussion urgently required to address poverty and unemployment. Likewise, the Democratic Alliance (DA), in its response to the launch of EPWP by President Thabo Mbeki in Limpopo, alluded to the fact that the programme was good news, but should not be seen as the ultimate solution for unemployment. Public Works Programmes are not the solution to the unemployment problem in South Africa but should rather be

perceived as one of an assortment of short to medium-term interventions aimed at alleviating the poverty associated with unemployment. Blanche said in a statement:” the EPWP will provide work for less than 3% of the unemployed per year and only 20% of the work opportunities will last longer than four months; how many workers can survive on a third of a year’s income. ”

While these schemes are somewhat successful in targeting the poor, they do not; capture all the divergent categories of the poor. Only those who are physically able to work are eligible because of the work requirements. Even among these working poor, there are variations in participation among divergent poverty categories. Other low and middle-income countries have used public works programmes to great effect. McCord (2005) cites the initiative of the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme in India and the New Delhi Programme. Both of these programmes managed to take up to 30% of the unemployed.

Anuradha in McCord (2005) indicates that the most research on the poverty impacts of the experience from Maharashtra shows that it has helped to provide income to the poorest during lean periods and to reduce seasonal migration, while the landed classes have benefited from the infrastructure created. Furthermore, the Maharashtra Scheme guarantees unlimited employment to all rural adults, provided there is a recognised need in the locality and people are willing to report for work regularly. The EPWPs have created 223,400 gross work opportunities in the first year of its programme, according to its fourth quarterly report. These jobs were created from 3400 EPWP projects nationwide, yielding at least R823 million in total wages paid. Of those who benefited from these projects, 38% were women, 41% were youth and 0.5% the disabled. If the EPWPs continue at this rate it will well exceed its target by 2009 (McCord, 2004).

The magnitude of the structural unemployment crisis is such that in September 2003 4.6 million people were unemployed in terms of the strict definition and 8.3 million in terms of the broad definition (Statistics South Africa 1993, quoted by

Phillips (2004). McCord (2004) further argues that unemployment is concentrated in the African population, for whom the narrow definition of unemployment is at 37%. McCord (2005) attribute this rate of unemployment to the fact that the South African economy is undergoing a major structural transformation, which manifests itself in a decline in labour intensive modes of production, caused in part by declining primary sector activity. This has significantly decreased the demand for unskilled labour, and thus a major fall in the total employment levels. While new jobs have been created by the economy since 2003, these employment opportunities have not significantly dented unemployment.

Part of the problem lies in what the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA) characterises as a mismatch between employment opportunities and existing skills levels. It is thus evident that the current economic growth rate is unable to absorb unskilled and the semi-skilled labour in the medium term. Unemployment therefore requires a major state intervention. Linked to the challenge of tackling unemployment is dealing with poverty. It is estimated that there are 13 million people living in households with income levels less than half of the Statistics South Africa 1995 poverty line of R800 per month per household (Samson, 2007: 244).

Government has made strides in working towards the eradication of poverty. Between 2001 and 2004, it is estimated that the number of households living below the poverty datum line dropped from 4.1 million to 3.6 million (Public Works, 2007). This achievement has been made possible by a range of policy instruments utilised in an integrated manner. Teklu and Asefa (1999), argue that provision of low-wage menial employment through public works schemes promises to provide low cost targeting of the poor, especially in rural areas where instruments for income transfer are scarce. Findings from survey-based studies in rural Botswana and Kenya show that the working poor are more willing to participate in public works schemes, especially those with few assets and limited access to private income transfers.

Access to short-term employment through these schemes appears to improve the net income of the very poor and decrease poverty among the rural poor. The significant number of non-poor in the schemes indicates a need for improving poverty targeting through setting wage rates that closely reflect the labour supply characteristics of the poor in rural labour markets. In addition, these schemes have to be complemented with other income-transfer interventions to ensure that the poor who fail to meet work requirements are not excluded from public assistance. The poor are also more vulnerable to employment and income risks, since agriculture, which is the principal source of income, is strongly covariate with low and variable rainfall. Most other income sources are positively and closely linked to agriculture hence the total household income is highly variable (Lucas and Stark, 1985; Valentine, 1993).

Stocking and Lange (2009), states that the exceptions are income transfers and wage income from public works, which often move counter to agricultural and related incomes. This normally makes variability in consumption less pronounced than income among those who have access to transfer income or those who are able to participate in public works. Even in hard times, it can make commercial sense for companies to develop markets that include poor people and business models that address poverty. Stocking and Lange (2009), further comments that businesses that create decent jobs, access to markets or goods and services that benefit low-income groups in emerging economies help to build healthier, wealthier, and more highly skilled communities. Those communities will provide the customers, suppliers, and employees whom companies need for sustainable growth.

Companies are often constrained by shortages of human skills and materials. Low-income groups constitute a huge and potentially valuable labour resource, and a source of materials and produce. Small enterprises, many of which are in the agricultural sector, are the largest employers of poor families. Majority of which

cannot engage with commercial supply chains because of their limited access to finance, seeds, fertilizers, and good-quality land.

2.2.4.4.1.8. The social sector

The Social Cluster comprises the following three South Africa Government Departments: Department of Social Development, Department of Health and Department of Education. While there is a recognition that a number of programmes present a range of opportunities for work creation, the two programmes, Home Community Based Care (HCBC) and Early Childhood Development (ECD) have been selected as the lead pilot programmes for the social sector EPWP for 2004/5.

The Social sector aimed to create work opportunities through the provision of social services. This sector was estimated to have the largest potential for expansion over the next five years, including child minding and early or remedial education, with a one-on-one interaction. The Non-State sector aims to create work opportunities through NGOs, CBOs and NFP organisations, who would offer advice on priorities and administer resources in the running of the programmes, as envisaged as in the framework.

Home Community Based Care is a provision of comprehensive services including health and social services, by formal and informal caregivers in the Home and Community Based Care and Support Programmes. The HCBC programme has been prioritised as a cost effective response substituting for a significant proportion of AIDS related hospital care. The EPWP is a critical component of the effort to deliver a holistic HIV/AIDS and TB related services. It represents a strategic opportunity to address key pressure points in current interventions. The programme aims to put in place the foundations for the roll out of the Community Health and Development Worker (CH & DW) Programme by equipping thousands of unemployed people with the foundation skills and experience to enter in a CH &

DW training programme. It also aims to target 122 240 work opportunities, 17 400 of which will be through learnerships over of over five years through a three-pronged programme in partnership with the Health and Welfare Sector Education Authority (HWSETA) (Boyd, 2004: 78).

Early Childhood Development is the process, by which children from birth to nine years are nurtured to grow and thrive physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally and socially. The focus on EPWP is from birth to six (6) years. In both programmes, a number of practitioners have been targeted in order to develop their skills. The national departments are responsible for policy and other necessary regulatory frameworks for the realisation of the programme, while at the provincial level, the provincial department should identify opportunities and allocate the conditional grants based on the national priorities to partnering organisations at local level. The Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDPSeta) is responsible for the ECD training. Health and Welfare SETA (HWSeta) is conducting the HCBC training. Each SETA would procure service providers to conduct these training at local level. Given the new government initiative, the public sector investment projects create much-needed jobs, while improving the infrastructure in under-serviced areas, particularly rural areas (Perkins and Luiz, 2006: 1037).

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The chapter provides information about the type of study. It also discusses the research design that was utilised in the study; and gives a detailed report of the study area and population of study. The sample selection method and size are also outlined herein together with the data collection methods that were used to collect data. A synopsis of how the data was interpreted, analysed and presented, is outlined as well.

3.2. Research Design

3.2.1. Choice and rationale of design

A research design refers to the option available for qualitative researchers to study certain phenomena according to certain formulae suitable for a specific goal (De Vos *et al* 2005: 268). The study utilised a qualitative research design because the study was aimed at getting perceptions about the socio-economic impact of EPWP Projects in Bushbuckridge. The research was a case study. De Vos *et al* (2005: 272), posits that a case study aims at the exploration or in-depth analysis of phenomena. The intrinsic case study was seen as the most appropriate as it focused solely on gaining better understanding of the individual case which in the study was the impact of EPWP Projects in Bushbuckridge.

Qualitative research helps find out not only what happens but also how it happens and, importantly, why it happens the way it does. The choice of the approach will not only unravel unsaid feelings and unsaid words, but it will also enable a deep interpretation of the situation. Neumann (2006: 152) states that qualitative design can be highly effective for creating a feeling for the whole, for grasping the subtle shades of meaning, for pulling together divergent information and switching

perspectives. For these reasons, the researcher opted for this research design, to find out or investigate in-depth the impact of EPWP Projects in our poor rural communities. Demographic data was manipulated using quantitative methods; however, this does not make this study quantitative.

3.3. Research Methodology

3.3.1. Study area

The study was based on rural villages of Croquet Lawn and Calcutta found in Bushbuckridge Municipality (Mpumalanga Province). Croquet Lawn is in ward number 27 and Calcutta in Ward number 03. Croquet Lawn village, which is 36km east of Bushbuckridge fall under Chief Khoza whereas Calcutta village, which is 40km southeast of Bushbuckridge town falls under Chief Nkuna.

3.3.2. Population

Mouton (1996:134) defines the population as the sum of all cases that meet the definition of the unit of analysis. The total population of Calcutta is 3,272 and that of Croquetlawn is 2,741. The total population of the two trusts equals to 6,013. It is therefore from this population that a sample of households was drawn for the purpose of this research.

3.3.3. Sample size and selection method

A small sample size of 40 people was selected using purposive sampling. The sample consisted of the following:

- 3.3.3.1. 32 households (beneficiaries of EPWPs) at each village, that is, 16 at Calcutta and 16 at Croquetlawn village respectively.
- 3.3.3.2. Two (2) officials from the Bushbuckridge Municipality, particularly those who are hands on with these projects.

- 3.3.3.3. Two (2) representatives from CBOs working the community. As agencies involved in community development, these representatives are likely to have interacted with beneficiaries and have observed how their livelihoods were improved.
- 3.3.3.4. Two (2) traditional leaders (indunas).
- 3.3.3.5. Two (2) Community leaders (Councillors).

3.3.4. Data collection methods

Data was collected from households of beneficiaries of these projects (EPWPs) which targeted heads of household, officials of the municipality (managers), community leaders, CBOs and traditional leaders through semi-structured interviews. In other words, the method of data collection was characterised by the interviewer who poses open-ended questions that allowed both the interviewer and the interviewee (respondent) to discuss the given topic in detail (Nkatini 2005:30). The following data collection methods were used: semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and secondary data sources.

3.3.5. Questionnaires

These are sets of questions that must be simple and short, unambiguous, understandable, not double-barrelled; and, at the same time, should not be leading the respondents (Nkatini 2005:30).

3.3.6. Advantages of using Questionnaires

- 3.3.6.1. Questionnaires are less expensive in terms of money and time unlike interviews, as conducting personal interviews would require training and hiring of interviewers.
- 3.3.6.2. The questionnaire format is standardized for all respondents.

3.3.6.3. The respondents experience a sense of privacy and are more likely to provide honest responses.

3.3.7. Disadvantages of using Questionnaires

3.3.7.1. The use of close-ended questions to some extent limits the respondent as a result miss out some of the important information.

3.3.7.2. The response rate is likely to be affected due to the unavailability of the researcher neither to clarify some of the misunderstood questions nor to explore responses so as to obtain more detailed answers.

3.4. Secondary Data Sources

The study made use of published literature such as books Public Works Programmes, current journals, published articles, research papers and reports of relevance to the study and any other written material from the Department of Public Works with substance to the research problem.

3.5. Data analysis methods

Data was sorted, coded, organised and indexed in a manner that made it easier for the researcher to interpret, analyse and present findings. Text findings were summarised by checking key themes, phrases or passages that were used in a more detailed analysis. The process was, therefore, guided by the original aim of the study.

3.6. Ethical considerations

Ethics in research mean that the researcher should consider the respondents' feelings. The researcher avoided questions that could be embarrassing and that could cause anxiety, in a bid not to induce situations of discomfort to the

respondents. Neumann (2000:284) indicates that researchers depend on respondents' voluntary cooperation; thus the researcher asked well-developed questions in a sensitive way in order to treat respondents with respect and was very sensitive to observe their confidentiality. Additionally, the researcher considered the following ethical issues pertaining to the study: assurance was given to the respondents that the information was going to be treated with a high level of confidentiality and respect, and no questions were posed that caused emotional stress to the respondents. Their anonymity was to be maintained.

3.6.1. Confidentiality

McMillan and Schumacher (2001) and De Vos et al (2005) concur that confidentiality refers to a researcher's management of private information shared by the respondents. The respondents were assured that the collected information would be used for purposes of this research and would be available to them if requested. The information from the completed questionnaire were used to generate frequencies and percentages to be discussed in a research report only.

3.6.2. Voluntary participation and informed consent

The principle of voluntary participation was explained to the respondents and they were also informed that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The principle of informed consent was also attached to the questionnaires and verbally explained to the interviewees. Both principles entailed explaining the research process and its purpose to the participants.

3.6.3. Avoidance of harm to subjects

According to de Vos et al. (2005) subjects can be harmed in a physical or emotional manner during and after the interview. They further intuit that one may accept that harm to respondents in the social sciences will be mainly of an

emotional nature, although physical injury cannot be ruled out completely. Respondents were thoroughly informed beforehand about the potential impact of the investigation.

3.6.4. Violation of privacy/anonymity

Singleton (1988) in De Vos et al. (2005) explains that the right to privacy is the individual's right to decide when, where, to whom, and to what extent his or her attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour will be revealed. The researcher informed respondents of their right to privacy and to remain anonymous, and that this right would be protected by all means.

3.7. Conclusion

The chapter presented the empirical information which justified the significance of the study, i.e., the type of study, sampling methods, data collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, ethical consideration and confidentiality of information collected from respondents. The study was conducted in Mpumalanga Province under the Bohlabela District. It targeted the beneficiaries of the EPWP projects within Bushbuckridge, in the villages of Croquet Lawn, which is 36km east of Bushbuckridge and Calcutta within Mkhuhlu area of Bushbuckridge Municipality which is 40km south east of Bushbuckridge town.

Chapter Four will focus on the research findings, analysis and interpretation. The responses from beneficiaries of the EPWP projects on their impact on poverty alleviation in the Bushbuckridge District Municipality, and responses from officials from the Department of Public Works and Municipality will be presented, analysed and interpreted.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTEPRETATION

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research findings, analysis and interpretation of results. The purpose of the research was to investigate the impact of EPWPs in poverty alleviation in the Bushbuckridge Municipality. The presentation of the results will follow two routes, namely those obtained from the beneficiaries of these projects and those obtained from community leaders, such as CDFs, ward councilors, traditional leaders and municipal officials.

4.2. Presentation analysis and interpretation of results

Forty (40) semi-structured interviews with beneficiaries of EPWP projects and eight (8) officials from the Bushbuckridge municipality, community leaders from both Croquetlawn village and Mkhuhlu in the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality were carried out. The questionnaires for the beneficiaries of Extended Public Works Projects (EPWPs) had two (2) sections, the first section was on biographical information, and section two had eight (8) questions investigating the history and benefits of EPWPs on poverty alleviation in the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality. The one-on-one semi-structured interview schedule for the government officials had nine (9) questions, which were on the impact of the EPWPs in poverty alleviation within the Bushbuckridge Local Municipality. Information collected from the beneficiaries of EPWP projects is presented and analysed as follows:

4.2.1 Biographical information

Under the biographical information the gender, age, race, position in the household, marital status and level of education is presented and analysed. The rationale for checking the age of respondents was to find out what age group is more likely to benefit from these projects. The aim from asking for the gender of respondents was to determine whether males or females were likely to benefit from these projects. The reason for probing the level of education was to determine the educational level of beneficiaries, according to literature the educational level of most beneficiaries of these projects is very low and they have no skills to contribute to the economy of South Africa. The aim for asking for the position in the household was to gauge how many breadwinners or household heads were likely to benefit and also determine what impact would that have on improvement of livelihood of their families.

4.2.1.1. Gender

In terms of gender, out of the 40 respondents, 32.5% (13) are male whereas 67.5% (27) are female. This majority of female respondents in the study gave an impression that the number of people (beneficiaries) of these projects is women. These findings indicate that majority of these EPWP beneficiaries were essentially single parents and female. This gives an impression that most men are or might not be involved in poverty alleviation endeavours. Below is a pie chart to illustrate the distribution of this frequency by gender.

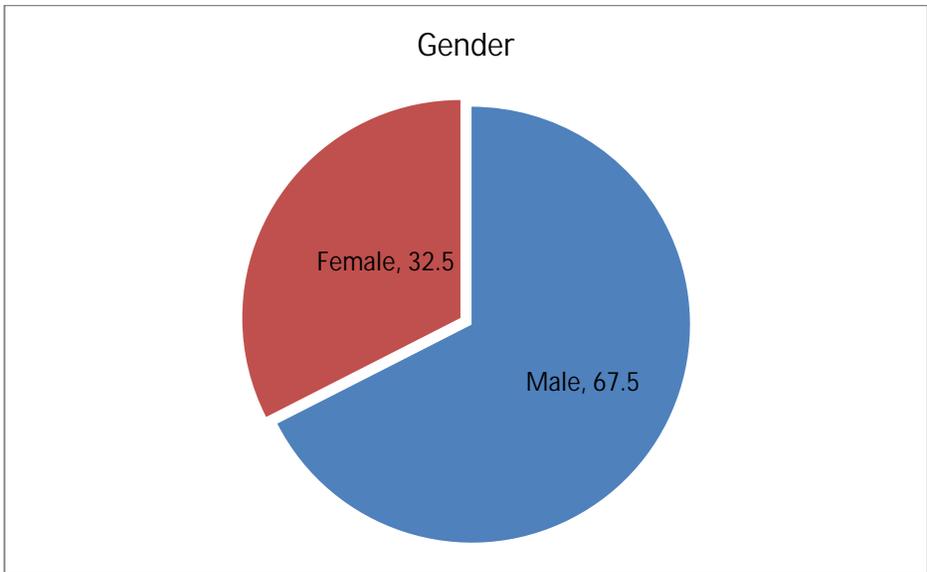


Figure 1: Gender distribution of respondents

4.2.1.2. Age

In terms of age, out of 40 EPWP beneficiaries, 12.5% (5) are below the age of 18 years, 30% (12) between 18 – 25 years, 22.5% (9) between 25 – 30 years and 35% (14) were found to be above 30 years of age. Below is a pie chart showing the distribution of the EPWP respondents by age.

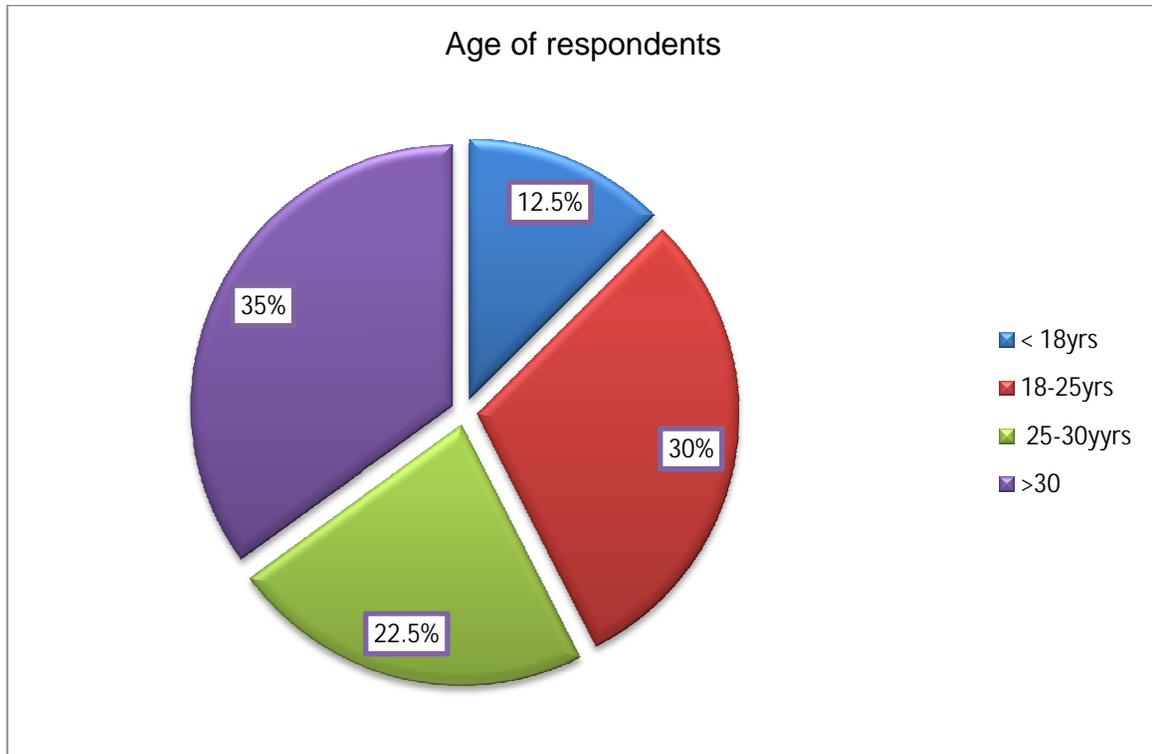


Figure 2: Age distribution of respondents

According to the survey, those who are below the age of 30 benefited most from these projects. This age group, however, accounts for 65% of the total population sampled. Attesting to the same is the EPWP (2005) that indicates that the EPWPs have created 223,400 gross work opportunities in the first year of its programme. These jobs were created from 3400 EPWP projects nationwide, yielding at least R823 million in total wages paid. Of those who benefited from these projects, 38% were women, 41% were youth and 0.5% disabled. If the EPWP continues at this rate, it is going to well exceed its target by 2009.

4.2.1.2. Race

In terms of the race variable, all 40 (100%) respondents were Black. Below is the race distribution table.

In terms of position in the household, of the 40 beneficiaries, heads of families account for 30% (12) of respondents, wives/husbands was 20% (8), sons /or

daughters accounted for 47.5% (19) and only 2.5% (1) was an extended family. This goes further to explain that the majority of respondents are benefiting from EPWPs households within the area, that is, Bushbuckridge Municipality.

Bhorat & van der Westhuizen in McCord (2004) assert that about 93 percent of the population who lived on less than R322 a month (in 2000 prices) were African. Africans clearly continue to account for a much larger share in poverty as their share in the population, with the other race groups accounting for a considerably smaller share of poverty relative to their population weight. By way of contrast, in both years, Whites accounted for less than one percent of the poor population according to both poverty lines, while constituting around ten percent of the population. McCord (2004) further argues that unemployment is concentrated in the African population, for whom the narrow definition of unemployment is at 37%. Below is the household variable result shown in Table 2 and depicted in Figure 3 below.

Table 2: Position in the household

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage
Head	12	30	30
Wife/Husband	8	20	20
Son/Daughter	19	47.5	47.5
Extended family	1	2.5	2.5
Total	40	100	100

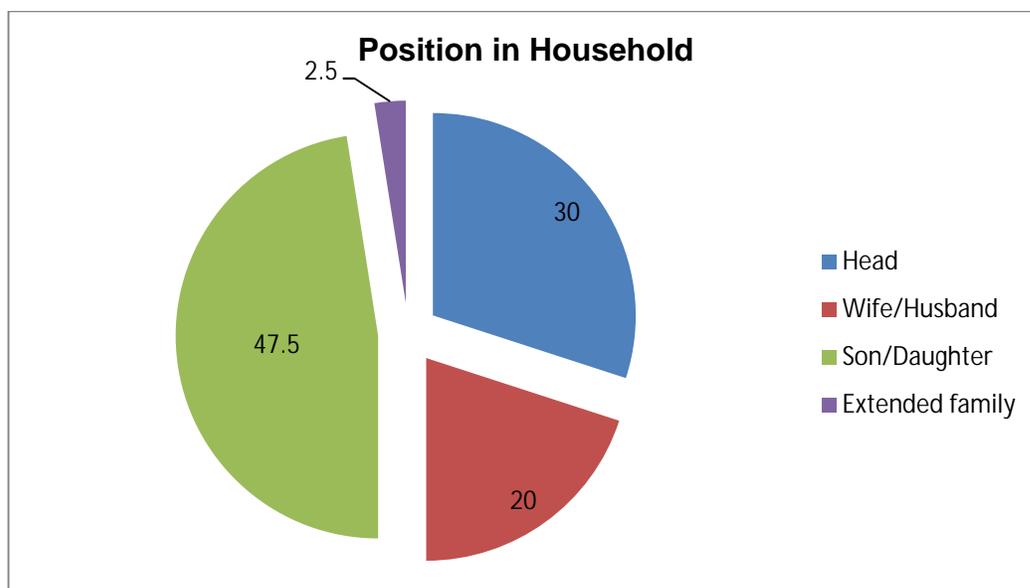


Figure 3: Pie chart for position in the household

4.2.1.3. Marital Status

In terms of the marital status, of the 40 respondents 12.5% (5) was married, 57.5% (23) was single, 20% (8) was living together, 7.5% (3) was divorced and 2.5% (1) was widowed. In accordance with both the age and household position variables, it is indicative of the fact that most beneficiaries of EPWPs were youth and not yet married and/or never married. The table below illustrates the distribution.

Table 3: Marital Status Variable

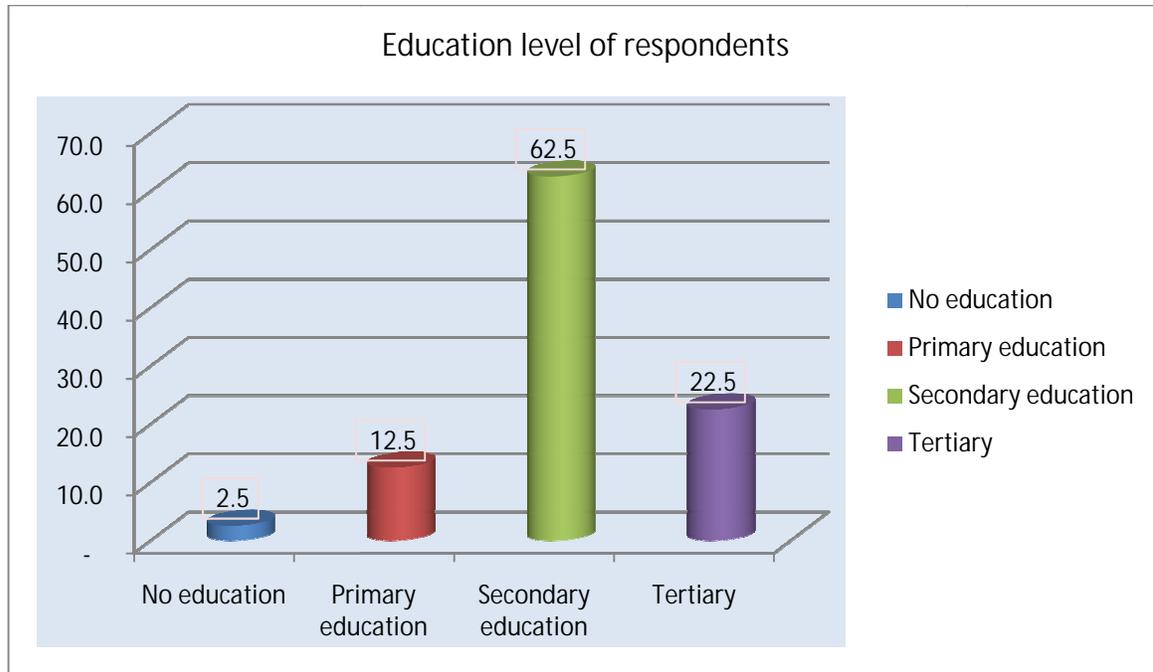
	Frequency	Percentage
Single	23	57.5
Married	5	12.5
Living together	8	20
Divorced	3	7.5
Widowed	1	2.5
Total	40	100

4.2.1.4. Level of Education

In terms of the level of education, out of the 40 respondents in the EPWP beneficiaries, 62.5% (25) had secondary education and the least of them all was 2.5% (1) with no education at all. Most of the respondents have high school education up to matric level, yet they struggle to get decent jobs elsewhere. The implication could be that they are unemployed, or unemployable. The level of education should influence what one earns although in certain instances, this could mean employment with low income that cannot adequately support the household, hence the EPWP projects. Besides, the schools attended, which are located especially in the rural settings, which may have not been good enough leading to unemployment or situations in which recipients earn very low income.

Table 3: Respondents by educational level

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage
No education	1	2.5	2.5
Primary education	5	12.5	12.5
Secondary education	25	62.5	62.5
Diploma/Certificate/Degree	9	22.5	22.5
Total	40	100	100



Graph 1: Bar graph for level of education

4.2.1 Qualitative results from the study

4.2.2.1. Awareness of EPWPs

In terms of publicity and awareness of the availability of Extended Public Works Projects, many of the beneficiaries admit to have known the EPWPs through Ward Councillors and people who were already benefiting. It is for those without education that Adult Basic Education and Training tools and methods should be used.

The responses from the officials of the EPWP and community leaders, CDF's and traditional leaders in terms of awareness agreed with this mode of publicity especially through the "imbizos" (meetings) in the communities that were considered strategic events for information dissemination.

4.2.2.2. Duration of employment in the project

In terms of duration of employment in the project, majority of respondents spent eleven months in the project. However, most of them were already concerned that they were almost a year into the projects and the projects were nearing their end at the end of the second year. Most of these projects (EPWPs) are short to medium term projects; hence the fear of beneficiaries seeing themselves retrenched and falling into poverty immediately after project closure. One can therefore argue that this contrast to some extent, alluded to the fact that the EPWP's strategic aim was that of promoting economic growth, facilitating sustainable development, alleviating poverty and providing income relief through temporary work on socially useful projects (EPWP, 2008).

4.2.2.3. The extent and effectiveness of EPWP projects in alleviating poverty

In terms of the extent and effectiveness of EPWPs in alleviating poverty in villages, many respondents alluded to the fact that these projects were such a relief necessary given their dire poverty situation. They also emphatically mentioned that their situation was temporarily reversed by earning a wage for the period stipulated. The excerpt below captures the feeling:

The term poverty alleviation is rather difficult, but I can say EPWP programme is doing a serious dent in terms of the fight against poverty. It is designed to focus on the deep rural areas of South Africa. Data quality assessment carried out by DPW indicates that most of the projects are correctly located in order to benefit poorest of the poor,- said one Municipal officer.

4.2.2.4. Perceptions and attitudes of people towards these projects

On one hand, a majority of respondents reported that other people within the municipality were of the perception that these projects were a lifesaver, in the sense that those who worked on them were able to get a stipend and receive invaluable skills and information for the duration of the projects, which would be useful elsewhere beyond the project. On the other hand, municipal official, ward councillors and community leaders felt that perceptions differed from one area to another. For instance, in a scenario where EPWP was implemented following the correct procedures, beneficiaries were satisfied and were able to do things they could not previously do. Grassroot communities were able to attest to the real benefits of products delivered through the programme. In scenarios where the policy was partially implemented, it led to situations in which beneficiaries and communities having negative attitudes and feelings that EPWPs had deserted them. This implies that the key issue is to ensure the proper and full implementation of the EPWP policy. In the worst case scenario, improper implementation led people to lodging cases at court and others demanding permanent jobs from public bodies which is against the spirit of the EPWP policy.

4.2.2.5. The socio-economic benefits of EPWPs to the local communities

Many beneficiaries indicated that it was now easier for them to participate actively in the local economy. The respondents said they were able to buy food, purchase clothing, furniture, and other necessities to improve their lives. All of the respondents (40) which represent 100% strongly agreed with the fact that the EPWP projects had actually improved the socio-economic status of the poor. All respondents agreed that the socio-economic status of the poor had improved where poor people had 'secure' jobs and a monthly income, even though the income was not satisfactory. The respondents also indicated that their social capital, among themselves, in the form of solidarity, as poor people had increased

at the time of the study. Most of the EPWP project members were able to live together with trust in the projects and were able to give financial reports each other as a way to build trust. Furthermore, they had also acquired new ideas and skills with regard to economic opportunities from one another. For instance on how to improve the selling of their products and how to access markets for their projects. Putnam (1993) describes social capital as referring “to features of social organisation, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. Social capital enhances the benefits of investment in physical and human capital.”

Putnam (1993) further shows that:

Areas in Italy with low levels of social capital had lower levels of government efficiency, lower levels of satisfaction with government, and slower rates of economic development than did provinces with high levels of social capital.

The project beneficiaries are receiving a stipend, which enabled them to join community investment clubs and burial clubs to help one another pay for funerals in the event of the death of next of kin under social capital.



Picture 1: Beneficiaries working in EPWP Indalo Yethu Environmental Care Project at Mkhuhlu along the main road to Hazyview or Kruger National Park.

In Picture 2, shows road construction in Mkhuhlu where EPWP beneficiaries are involved (See Picture 3 and Picture 4 below).



Picture 2: Road construction at Mkhuhlu Main Street leading to Calcutta village.



Picture 3: Road construction at Croquetlawn village that passes Agincourt and Ireagh villages to Mkhuhlu village.



Picture 4: Road construction at Mkhuhlu Main Street towards Calcutta village.

4.2.2.6. Effectiveness of these projects in developing skills of people within the municipality

A question was posed to a municipal official regarding the impact of EPWP on developing skills of people. One of the municipal officials claimed that the programme has proven to be best in developing skills in municipalities especially with regard carrying out the mandate of job creation and correctly reporting jobs

through a validation system that is in place. He emphasised that the success of the programme depends on the willingness of EPWP officials to capacitate officials of municipalities and the willingness of municipalities to learn and implement EPWP policy, as well as the willingness of municipalities to capacitate poor communities in which EPWP projects are being implemented. He further added that:

Beneficiaries are given a chance to attend accredited and non-accredited training at the full expense of the programme including learnerships and artisan development training. The training also considers SMME development in order to train future African business leaders. It also helps the future leaders to compete in an open business market environment. We teach the beneficiaries on how to catch fish; we not catch the fish for them. The main focus is the readiness of participants to face life after exiting the EPWP programmes. Perhaps we also need to discuss poverty issues regularly.

When asked if there was training to enhance their skills on the project, most respondents said they were receiving training in phases according various units within the project. They also alluded to the fact that as and when the project ends they will be able to use their skills to get employment in other sectors of the economy. Alternatively, they said they were ready to start their own businesses.

Very few respondents were still not yet certain if they would receive their training given the limited period of the project. Respondents who were working in road construction and Indalo Yethu Environmental Care Projects gained the following skills; horticulture skills, grass, tree cutting and tree planting skills and engineering, plumbing and road repair and building skills. This implies that beneficiaries were gaining relevant, practical and useable skills to start their own small businesses.

4.2.2.7. Recommendations of beneficiaries on poverty alleviation in the context of EPWP in their municipality

Mpumalanga Provincial officer in the EPWP policy unit said proper EPWP policy implementation, restructuring of EPWP in municipalities, proper and official institutionalisation of EPWP in all spheres of government especially at municipalities (since most of projects are implemented there), establishment of official forums to deal with EPWP job creation and unemployment, alignment of provincial and municipalities service delivery strategies to include delivery of EPWP must be a standing agenda in management meetings of municipalities and this must be led by senior officials. He emphasised that for the success of the EPWP this implied that EPWP must be a standing agenda in all provincial lekgotla chaired by premiers and attended by all HOD and municipal managers of the province. He also suggested that it is prudent for each project to have its own project manager.

When asked what recommendation they would make with regard to EPWPs, all respondents were of the opinion that these projects should be extended so that they become permanent and by extension, so that the benefit does not cease to exist. They also pointed out that they would wish that the wage could increase to meet most of their day-to-day needs.

4.3. Conclusion

In this chapter, an analysis of the research findings was done, and the collected data was interpreted. Data was collected from twenty (16) beneficiaries at Croquetlawn village and twenty (16) from Calcutta and Tsemamarhumbu villages in Mkhuhlu and from eight (8) officials from community leaders (CDF), traditional leaders (indunas), ward councilors and municipal officials. The aim of the chapter was to investigate the impact of the EPWP projects on poverty alleviation in the Bushbuckridge Municipality.

4.3.1. Concluding statements of the study

In order to arrive at the following conclusion, it is imperative to consider the results that emanated from the data analysis:

- 4.3.1.1. The investigation findings indicate that there is a positive impact of EPWP projects on poverty alleviation in the Calcutta and Croquetlawn villages;
- 4.3.1.2. According to the findings, EPWP projects short-lived expectations of people of the area due to their short duration, which ranges from 4 months to 24 months (2 years).
- 4.3.1.3. The research findings also indicate that few effective job opportunities were created by the EPWP projects for the local poor people;
- 4.3.1.4. The research results also reveal that the socio-economic conditions and the sustainable livelihoods of the poor people within the Bushbuckridge area have improved now; than when EPWP projects were absent though, more projects are required.
- 4.3.1.5. The study found out that social capital of the poor people in the EPWP projects was strongly developed to the point where it strengthened the social capital within the part of the community;
- 4.3.1.6. The objective of empowerment for young people was partially achieved by the projects based on the enthusiasm showed by young people, and their willingness to participate in EPWP projects. To a certain extent some men and women were empowered;
- 4.3.1.7. The findings revealed that most of the projects were marketed by their respective Ward Councillors but more still to be done on the area.
- 4.3.1.8. Programme communication tools and systems used by the EPWP during its campaign and advocacy were not user friendly to its beneficiaries. It is a fact that most rural poor people are illiterate. It is for that reason that indigenous languages known in such wards should be used to communicate the programme to its beneficiaries, hence, there is

a positive relationship between access to information and beneficiation.
Not all community members can go back to school.

- 4.3.1.9. General knowledge and information about the Expanded Public Works Programme's goals and objectives to its primary stakeholders including municipality and civic society organisations is insufficient.
- 4.3.1.10. The question age wanted to determine if the number of youth is benefiting.
- 4.3.1.11. There is an element of fear from Municipal directors in charge of these projects, which indicated that they were puppets of faceless people.
- 4.3.1.12. The quality of work done (EPWP) leaves much to be desired. This is evident by the fact that the rainstorms have eroded the main roads, which were constructed recently, in December 2011.

4.4. Synthesis of the Findings

4.4.1. Governance

All the EPWP projects indicated that they had committees, which were responsible for day-to-day activities of the projects. These projects also had different compositions, which ranged from a membership of four (4) to a membership of above eight (8) members.

4.4.2. Economic aspects

The study revealed that the EPWP projects were making an impact in terms of job creation in the area (Calcutta and Croquetlawn villages). They also indicated that, because of the establishment of EPWP projects, members were earning an income monthly. The EPWP projects have thus succeeded in bringing people together to work as a group (participatory approach), sharing thoughts, earning an income, and being able to fulfill the basic needs such as food, shelter, clothes and school fees for the kids. The researcher's observations reveal that people were

able to buy televisions and radios with the income received from the EPWP projects.

4.4.3. Social aspects

The community had shown a positive perception towards the EPWP projects. The EPWP projects also created jobs for the jobless within the local communities. The level of social capital in the communities where the EPWP projects are located had improved. Social networks, norms and mutual trust among the community members had improved because of the pro EPWP project beneficiaries, who were receiving wages which enabled them to join community investment clubs (STOKVELS) and burial clubs to help one another pay for funerals of the dead.

4.4.4. Support from government

The respondents indicated that they were receiving the required support from both the local municipality and other government departments such as Public Works and Environmental Affairs. Officials paid regular visits to the projects to monitor and advise project beneficiaries.

4.5. Recommendations

The findings of the investigation clearly indicate that EPWP projects funded by the department of Public Works are currently successful in alleviating poverty in the local areas(Calcutta and Croquetlawn villages) than the before the projects kick started in the area, that is the 2009. Nevertheless, as long as factors such as a lack of sustainability of these projects, funding and low wages are not sufficiently addressed by projects in the local areas, the projects face the prospect of collapse in the future and jeopardize the chances of the further development of those projects that have already shown success in poverty alleviation. To further alleviate poverty by 2015 as required by the Millennium Goals through EPWP

projects in the local areas, the following recommendations have to be taken into consideration to influence poverty alleviation strategies:

4.5.1. Job creation by EPWP projects

Although EPWP projects have created jobs a number of jobs for the jobless in the local area of Bushbuckridge, most of the them were created in road construction, clearing and cleaning (Department of Environmental Affairs) and gardening projects (Department of Agriculture and Land Administration). The study thus recommends that all government-funded projects should in future have an independent project manager. The same project manager should also be incorporated into each project to assist with the feasibility of the project, its implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as the progress of the projects, to ensure that projects are successful and are creating more decent jobs that pay beneficiaries the salaries that will assist them to alleviate poverty. If the recommendation can be implemented, the public-private partnership will be a promoted.

4.5.2. Income generation and distribution within EPWP projects

The research findings indicated that project members were receiving a minimum of R1400 and a maximum of R2400, which project members take home. According to the respondents, these salaries were not enough for the project members to support their families. The study therefore, recommends that projects should consider other additional funding to the main objective of the project to maximize the project`s income. For example, if the project is a clearing, cleaning and elimination of alien plant project, it should consider additional funding from the Department of Environment Affairs. These additional funds will maximize the income of the projects and ultimately increase the salaries of the project beneficiaries.

4.5.3. Sustainability of projects

The research reveals that EPWP projects are sustainable in the Bushbuckridge area because they are lasting for an average period between 2 and 4 years. The study thus recommends that these projects should source additional funding, for example, from Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) to extend their life span to up to FIVE (5) years.

4.5.4. Youth participation in the EPWP projects

The research findings indicate that participation by the youth is higher because they have a great interest in working in the EPWP projects. The study recommends that the youth should be empowered and encouraged to participate even more in EPWP the projects through giving them an appearance allowance of R500 each month to encourage them to work in the projects. If this can be done, it can assist in the maintenance of sustainability of these projects in future.

4.5.5. Future research

Although this research on the impact of EPWP on poverty alleviation has been successfully conducted, there are gaps such as those that relate to youth development through EPWP initiatives as well as youth development in the rural areas that have not been fully researched in this study. Hence, the study recommends further research on the impact of EPWP on youth development issues.

4.6. Conclusion

Since the intervention by Department of Public Works in Mpumalanga Province through the establishment of EPWP projects in the Bushbuckridge Municipality area to reduce poverty, there are fewer chances with regard to poverty alleviation

in the local Mkhuhlu and Croquetlawn areas within the municipality to benefit. Although poverty is still prevalent, it has reduced since the introduction of EPWP initiatives. The reason for the high poverty rate by then was that a more micro level intervention of the impact of EPWP was not sufficiently investigated in the Bushbuckridge area. Hence, there was a need to assist households regarding job creation, sustainable livelihoods and empowerment of women and youth to address the local socio-economic problems experienced in the local communities of Bushbuckridge.

The poor people, especially women and youth, have benefited from the projects through jobs created by the projects and income earned at the end of the month. Most of the women particularly covered by this study were empowered by the projects to be able to run their businesses. The EPWP projects funded by the Department of Public Works seem to alleviate poverty at the grassroots level of the communities in the local areas. Despite the improved standard of living and poverty alleviation at the local level in Bushbuckridge, there are still challenges as many young people are still unemployed and lack an income to sustain their lives, while there are EPWP projects in their local areas (Calcutta and Croquetlawn villages). However, those already on these projects are concerned about low income, which does not fully satisfy their needs.

Finally, the investigation added more knowledge with regard to the impact that the EPWP projects funded by department of Public Works have on poverty alleviation such as incomes and jobs, albeit temporary.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter draws conclusions based on the research findings and literature review that focuses on the impact of Extended Public Works Programme Projects (EPWPs) intended for poverty alleviation within the Bushbuckridge Municipal area in the Mpumalanga Province.

5.2. Summary of research

The research is meant to determine the impact of Extended Public Works Programmes (EPWPs) in poverty alleviation in the Bushbuckridge Municipality in the Mpumalanga Province. The study was undertaken at the village of Calcutta in Mkhuhlu and Croquetlawn village under the Bushbuckridge Municipality were the area of study.

Chapter 1: The chapter indicates the nature of the research problem, aims and objectives of the study, the research questions, definition of concepts, the significance of the study and the research design.

Chapter 2: The literature review forms the theoretical framework for the research. It outlined the historical overview of Extended Public Works Programme projects and the EPWP in different sectors such as Water Affairs and Forestry, Environment and Tourism and Arts and Culture departments, and their contribution in creation of jobs that ultimately make a short-term income that contributes to alleviation of poverty in the Bushbuckridge Municipality.

Chapter 3: The chapter deals with the research methodology, giving explicit analysis of the design used, the area under study, that is, Calcutta and Croquetlawn villages, the population of the study, sample selection method and

size, data collection methods and analysis. The study is qualitative in nature. It was conducted in South Africa's Mpumalanga Province at the Calcutta village in Mkhuhlu and Croquetlawn village under the Bushbuckridge Municipality. The study targets the population benefiting out of EPWPs. It utilises different types of sampling methods, i.e. dimensional (used for the beneficiaries of EPWP projects) and purposive (for officials of the municipality (managers), community leaders, CBOs and traditional leaders). A semi-structured interview schedule and questionnaire was used to collect data from heads of household, officials of the municipality (managers), community leaders, CBOs and traditional leaders.

Chapter 4: The chapter deals with the presentation made by respondents thereof, analysis and interpretation of data. The responses gathered through the semi-structured interview questionnaire were sorted, coded, organised and indexed, and then analysed and interpreted. The sample size was thirty two (32) heads of households (beneficiaries) and eight (8) officials of the municipality (managers), community leaders, CBOs and traditional leaders. The focus was to get the perceptions on the impact of EPWPs on poverty alleviation in the Bushbuckridge Municipality.

Chapter 5: The chapter presents the conclusion drawn from the research based on the literature review and the findings of the study. Out of these recommendations were made.

5.3. Recommendations

The recommendations in this study are based on the findings of the study, personal experience and the body of literature reviewed and presented in chapter two. The recommendations are made to the South African Government to ensure that relevant contributions in terms of managing Extended Public Works Programme Projects are necessitated.

5.3.1. The South African Government

In order to make relevant contributions in terms of recommendations to the South African government in managing Extended Public Works Programme Projects.

5.3.1.1. Recommendations

At the delivery or grassroots point, the institutional arrangement of the Programme is virtually weak and non-existent in most instances resulting in poor governance. It is therefore, recommended that during the programme design stage, institutional arrangements and mechanism should be improved by the involvement of potential beneficiaries to enhance service delivery. Bird (2007) argues that pro-poor growth — growth that benefits the poor relies on the state providing an enabling policy environment. Evidence from East Asia, where pro-poor growth has occurred, suggests that the government's role in enabling such growth has resulted from the provision of public goods and social protection mechanisms, and the creation of institutional conditions for more inclusive and equitable development. Achieving this requires that policies be adopted and implemented effectively, which in turn means that there must be institutional and governance structures that are capable and willing to devise, operationalise and implement such policies. However, reaching this point of effective policy-making might require changes to the political settlement amongst the state, the private sector and civil society.

5.3.1.1.1. The beneficiaries should form part of monitoring and evaluation of the programme to solicit comments and inputs from the poor beneficiaries.

5.3.1.1.2. Programme and project community participation should be encouraged government through municipality to enable the community to take ownership of the final product.

- 5.3.1.1.3. Poverty summits should be organised on annual bases to enhance programme and project planning processes.
- 5.3.1.1.4. Programme implementation process should be consultative with the people that seek to benefit from it.
- 5.3.1.1.5. The programme design should in the main address human basic needs related infrastructural projects. Labour intensive programmes can create a greater demand for local products and services than do high technology programmes which are reliant on imported technology and equipment.
- 5.3.1.1.6. The Municipal indigent policies should be based on profound and accurate data as informed by StatsSA and other relevant authorities (it is my observation that most municipalities review their indigent policies after three to four years, this imposes some limitation in the planning process).
- 5.3.1.1.7. Poverty-stricken beneficiaries should be given special preference over the other beneficiaries.
- 5.3.1.1.8. It is recommended that gender mainstreaming forms part of the project management and programme design. This implies that vulnerable people such as woman and orphan children are considered a special status in the programme.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEWS FOR BENEFICIARIES OF EXTENDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME PROJECTS (EPWP)

TOPIC: THE IMPACT OF EXTENDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMMES (EPWP PROJECTS)

Administrative section:

Questionnaire number:

Name and surname of respondent:

Location/site: _____

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

1. Gender

Male		Female	
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2. Age of respondent

Below 18 years	1	
Between 18-25 years	2	
Between 25-30 years	3	
Above 30 years	4	

3. Race

Black	1	
White	2	
Coloured	3	
Indian	4	
Other (Specify)		

4. What is your position in the household?

Head of the household (HHH)	1	
Wife/Husband	2	
Son/Daughter	3	
Grand Parent	4	
Extended family (Specify)	5	

5. Marital Status

Single	1	
Married	2	
Living together	3	
Separated	4	
Divorced	5	
Widowed	6	

6. What is your level of education?

No education	1	
Primary education	2	
Secondary education	3	
Diploma/Degree	4	
Postgraduate diploma/degree	5	

SECTION B: RESPONDENTS HISTORY WITH THE EXTENDED PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS

7. How did you know about Extended Public Works Projects?

8. How long have you been employed in these projects?

Years		Months	
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9. How many people from your household have benefited from these projects?

Number of beneficiaries	
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10. To what extent are the EPWP projects effective in alleviating poverty in your village?

11. What are the perceptions and attitudes of people towards these projects in the municipality?

12. What are the socio-economic benefits of these EPWPs to the local communities?

13. How effective are these projects in developing skills of the people within the municipality?

14. What recommendations can be made to alleviate poverty within the context of EPWP in the municipality?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWS FOR THE REPRESENTATIVES OF CBOs, TRADITIONAL LEADERS, COMMUNITY LEADERS AND MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS.

TOPIC: THE IMPACT OF EXTENDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMMES (EPWP PROJECTS)

Administrative section: _____

Questionnaire number: _____

Name and surname of respondent: _____

Contact details: _____

Location/site: _____

1. What is your role in the community?

2. What do you know about Extended Public Works Projects?

3. What are your experiences with Extended Public Works Projects?

4. To what extent are the EPWP projects effective in alleviating poverty in your village?

5. What is your perception about these projects? Elaborate.

6. What are the perceptions and attitudes of people towards these projects in the municipality?

7. What are the socio-economic benefits of these EPWPs to the local communities?

8. How effective are these projects in developing skills of the people within the municipality?

9. What recommendations can be made to alleviate poverty within the context of EPWP in the municipality?
