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An evaluation of the EPWP vuk'uphile learnership programme within Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

Mukanyima, Andrew

2013-02-05
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/12389

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ABSTRACT

The EPWP Vuk'uphile learnership programme was formulated by the National Department of Public Works in 2006 to facilitate the development of emerging contractors into fully-fledged business entities which are able to execute labour-intensive projects. This research evaluates the programme implemented under Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. The EPWP Vuk'uphile within Ekurhuleni is not a "once off" programme; the imminent implementation of Phase 2 makes evaluation of Phase 1 important. The findings of this research inform programmatic intervention and ensure the continued growth of small contractor development initiatives within Ekurhuleni.

A questionnaire, interviews and a case study are used to collect data for the evaluation of the EPWP Vuk'uphile in Ekurhuleni. The questionnaire used was designed as a monitoring and evaluation tool for the EPWP and hence provides this research with a measuring instrument of the Vuk'uphile programme against its objectives. The case study is used to extract evidence of the sustainability of the current exit strategy as well as the quality of the graduates from the programme. The high response rate solicited from the project participants creates a broad evaluation platform for this research on which to make informed conclusions and recommendations on the EPWP Vuk'uphile in Ekurhuleni.

It is the research findings that the EPWP Vuk'uphile in Ekurhuleni is to a great extent a successful enterprise. The role played by the EPWP, Ekurhuleni and other stakeholders in identifying past failures in Public Works Programmes and mitigating them has ensured that sustainable growth is realised. The research findings also identify areas for improvement, for which this research provides recommendations.

KEYWORDS: Contractor learnership; Labour-intensive Construction; Expanded Public Works Programme