

https://dspace.org/

Beneficiaries and officials' perceptions regarding the value of Community Work Programme as a viable employment, capacity building and anti-poverty strategy: the case of Ivory Park Community, Midrand

Kuta, Sibongile Faith

2023
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/36081

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ABSTRACT

With the rise of global unemployment, most governments have sought ways to bridge public employment and social protection in a context where markets are unable to do so. In South Africa, the Community Work Programme (CPW) is an employment safety net aimed at unemployable people of working age. However, even though this programme has been running for several years in South Africa, its viability as an employment, capacity building and poverty reduction strategy has not received much research and scrutiny. This study examined interventions that can strengthen the CWP regarding its value as an anchor strategy of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) that aims to tackle the high rate of unemployment in marginalized communities.

The study was qualitative in nature, located within an exploratory in-depth paradigm. An instrumental case study design was applied in this study. The participants were selected using purposive sampling consisting of 8 participants two of whom were officials, three beneficiaries of employment and three beneficiaries of services. Data was collected through semi-structured interview schedules and analyzed using thematic analysis.

The findings of the study indicate that the Community Work Programme is contributing towards the social development and sustainable livelihoods of both the beneficiaries of the programme and the community of Ivory Park. The CWP has been identified to make an impact in environmental management and safety of the community and also strengthens the local initiatives that provide food security for vulnerable groups. In addition, the participants of the programme are equipped with relevant skills to develop their community. The study also discovered that CWP has created a platform for community participation and upliftment.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that the CWP ensures predictable income in the form of stipends. However, it has been discovered that the lack of resources is a challenge for effective work. It also emerged that participants of the programme are faced with negative psychological and emotional effects with cases of trauma, threats and undermining of roles being reported.

It has been established that regular and continuous employment creates security for those in the programme. In addition to accommodating the marginalized the CWP is found to improve the livelihoods of community members through employment creation. However, the implementation of the programme is subject to the ineffective role of the CWP Implementing Agents; faced with political interference, unmet expectations and insufficient allocation of officials to occupy the roles relevant for effective implementation of the CWP.

In conclusion, the CWP can be strengthened by providing benefits of employment and increasing the working days. It is also suggested that the programme could improve by getting representation from the ground to represent the CWP at a national level. Although the training provided capacitates the participants of the programme to conduct their work; it is suggested that policies need to consider effective ways to ensure trainings that enable future employment prospects.

Key Words: Value of CWP, viable, Unemployment, Expanded Public Works programme, Public Works Programme, Ivory Park, Midrand - SA