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# Assessing the role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment

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**WITS Graduate School of Governance**

**Thesis presented in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Development Management) to the Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management, University of the Witwatersrand**

**March 2018**

# DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis/dissertation titled '**Assessing the role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment'** is my own, unaided work. I have acknowledged and referenced all sources that I have used and quoted. I hereby submit it in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (Public and Development Management) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I have not submitted this report before for any other degree or examination to any other institution.

Lindiwe Nkuna

Johannesburg, March 2018

# ABSTRACT

**Author:** Lindiwe Nkuna
**Thesis title: Assessing the role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment**

Youth unemployment and skill shortages poses major challenges to the socio-economic status of South Africa. Making it worse is the fact that the South African youth unemployment landscape is complex and multi-faceted. As such, the country is grappling with a challenge of how to implement employment creation and skills development initiatives that will respond to this multifaceted challenge. This is not withstanding the fact that government is implementing interventions like the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) National Youth Services (NYS) programme aimed strengthening youth participation in service delivery and the built environment, whilst helping the youth to gain the work-related skills necessary to access opportunities for a sustainable livelihood (Department of Public Works, 2017). Despite government interventions to address the challenge of unemployment, the majority of young people are concerned that government is not doing enough to create jobs for them. Moreover, anecdotal evidence also suggest these programmes are less attractive to the younger age cohort because they are not well tailored for young people and fail to address their aspirations. While the EPWP has been implemented for years now and there is monitoring of the number of work opportunities created, there is no evidence to confirm the extent to which this programme contribute to youth employment. This paper then proposes to assess the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment. This paper proceeds by reviewing the literature on the public works programmes in order to get an understanding of the nature of the problem. Secondly, this research establishes frameworks that can interpret the empirical findings on the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment. Thirdly, based on the literature reviewed a conceptual framework for this study is developed. Fourthly, from data collected, the research analysed the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment. Lastly, this research has applied the established theoretical frameworks such as the theory of change and capabilities approach framework to interpret the empirical results with conclusions and recommendations for future research made.

Johannesburg, March 2018

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Master Degree has been a challenging experience, but with the wisdom from God, I have managed to succeed in it. I would like to dedicate this report to both my parents Mr Sam Nkuna and Ms. Angelina Mathebula-Nkuna for the role they have played in shaping my life and for instilling the value and importance of education in me. I am also eternally grateful to my siblings for the support they have provided to me throughout this journey; I count myself blessed to have you in my life.

It is an honour to have been supervised by Dr Kambidima Wotela who shared his extensive experience on the research topic, his continuous guidance and feedback, which was reflective rather than corrective, thus unleashing my thinking capacity beyond my imagination.

Without mentioning each person individually, my heartfelt thanks to all my extended family members and friends who supported me throughout this journey. Your continuous words of encouragement helped me to stay focused in my studies until the end.

Indeed "no man is an island", completing this report will not have been possible without the guidance and advice received from friends whom I met at Wits University during my studies always willing to help whenever contacted.

My sincere gratitude also goes to my managers and colleagues in the DPW EPWP Branch who have been supportive throughout this journey and ensured they carry on with my work when I was away from work for my studies.

# 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

## 1.1 Background

Before presenting the research problem statement (Section 1.2.1) and subsequently the research purpose statement (Section 1.2.2) as well as the research questions (Section 1.2.3), this chapter will briefly introduce the terms used in conceptualising this research. In presenting the research topic, this section consists of five parts, namely section 1.1, which introduce the research context generally and more specifically to the topic researched. Section 1.2 covers the research problem, purpose and questions that guided the research undertaken; whilst Section 1.3 covers the delimitations of the study; with Section 1.4 providing the justification for the research; and in Section 1.5 a preface of the research report.

### 1.1.1 History of South Africa

South African history is made up of five distinct periods, including the pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid eras. Nigel (2012) highlights that, from the late 1870s, the country was composed of large numbers of communities, chiefdoms, colonies and settlements that varied in size, power and racial composition, with no unity and political tension. In the 19th century, the discovery of minerals such as diamonds and gold brought about profound change, pushing the economy onto the world stage (Thompson, 2001). Africans provided a massive scale of labour in this regard and many workers became migrant labourers in cities away from their homes.

Following the enactment of the Status of the Union Act in 1934, South Africa became a self-governing nation state within the British Empire. From 1948 to 1994, Afrikaner nationalism dominated the politics of the country. In 1960, white minority rule and separation by race, referred to as apartheid (an Afrikaans word implying disconnectedness), came into existence with an official law of segregation coming into existence after South Africa became a republic. During this time, the governing system and laws of the country prevented black people from participating in certain economic activities.

Following an era of armed struggle and international opposition to apartheid, with the provision of military and political support, the country's first democratic election took place in April 1994. From the era of apartheid to the first democratic dispensation in

1994, unemployment has been a recurring problem for South Africa, with the youth mostly affected. A rapidly increasing labour force to increasing job losses in the mining and agricultural sectors in the 1980s, as well as slow job creation from the 1970s until now are some of the reasons contributing to this situation (Altman, 2007). Altman further indicates that with the problem of unemployment there is a strong bias on race in terms of skills possessed, unemployment and poverty, with many of the unemployed categorised as Africans, based on the proportion of the population and the numbers reported. It is generally agreed that the crisis of structural unemployment, particularly for those who have been underprivileged, is a result of the past apartheid regime in the country as many African people were unable to participate in the labour market to gain skills and experience.

### 1.1.2 The history of the Expanded Public Works Programme

At the dawn of democracy in 1994, in driving the country's development agenda, government identified the National Public Works Programme (NPWP) as a potential instrument to help address the triple challenge faced by the country of poverty, unemployment and inequality. McCutcheon (2001) indicates the Community-Based Public Works Programme (CBPWP) and the reorientation of mainstream public expenditure towards infrastructure projects using labour-intensive techniques were two strategies used for the NPWP. The Department of Public Works (1994) mentions that amongst the objectives of the NPWP launched in 1994 were the following: a) Assisting in the reduction of unemployment through the creation of productive labour absorption mechanisms; b) Training and educating those involved in the programme for purposes of economic development and sustainability.

Following the 1999-second democratic election, the focus of government interventions were on addressing key socio-economic challenges, which included unemployment, poverty, a low skills base and inadequate social services. At the policy conference of the African National Congress (ANC) in late 2002, the conference resolved that there should be a large-scale expansion of the use of labour construction methods to alleviate poverty and address infrastructure backlogs (ANC, 2003). In the state of the Nation Address of February 2003, former President Thabo Mbeki mentioned that government had decided that to deal with the challenge of unemployment and poverty in the country, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) will be launched formally as

a matter of urgency (Mbeki, 2003). Responding to this resolution, the Growth and Development Summit (GDS) convened in 2003 culminated in a social contract between government, labour, community and the private sector (Mubangizi, 2003). The GDS Agreement states that the EPWP "can provide poverty and income relief through temporary work for the unemployed to carry out socially useful activities. These EPWP projects will be designed to equip participants with a modicum of training and work experience, which should enhance their ability to earn a living in future. Such EPWPs must be large enough to have a substantial impact on employment and social cohesion, especially for young people, women and the rural poor. Some programmes in the EPWPs would take the form of the National Youth Service Programme" (Mfusi and Govender, 2015, p.160).

The GDS agreement state that the implementation of the EPWP must not displace existing permanent jobs and opportunities, but rather respond to real demand for services. Another compelling reason for the establishment of the EPWP was a premise that at a macro level there is polarisation of the country into what was described as two separate economies at the time (ANC, 2003). The "first economy" was viewed as advanced, sophisticated and based on skilled labour, while the "second economy" was mainly informal, marginalised, unskilled, and populated by the unemployed and those unemployable in the formal sector. A conclusion was made that the vast majority of South Africans were locked in the second economy, which constituted the main development challenge faced by the country. McCord (2003) indicates the emphasis of the GDS agreement considered relevant and targeted training to be part of a central component of the EPWP to ensure that workers attain relevant and marketable training skills for future employability. Hence, the design of the EPWP Phase 1, along with a range of interventions, was to address this objective (Hemson, 2007).

To date, the EPWP is implemented throughout the country across all spheres of government. The programme builds on lessons learned since inception of the EPWP by drawing on experience from international Public Works Programmes (PWPs) and forging innovation within the space of Public Employment Programmes (PEPs) (Department of Public Works, 2016). It is implemented through four sectors, namely infrastructure (led by the national Department of Public Works); social (led by the Department of Social Development); environment and culture (led by the Department

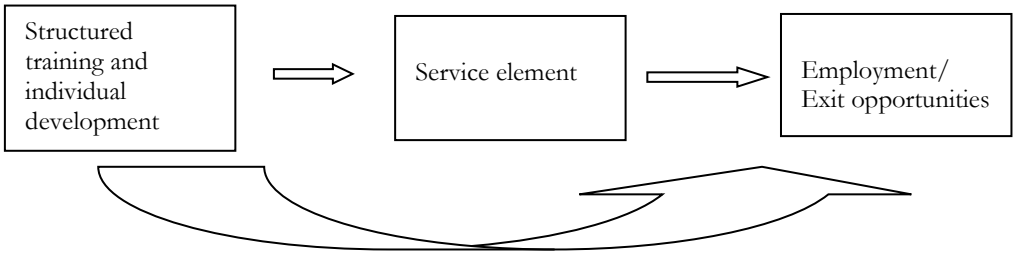
of Environmental Affairs); and the non-state, including the Community Work Programme and the Non-Profit Organisations Programme (managed by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Department of Public Works respectively).

### 1.1.3 The South African Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service

The National Youth Service (NYS) is a government programme implemented by the national Department of Public Works as part of the EPWP. The concept of the NYS is premised on the involvement of youth in activities that provide benefits to the community, while developing their abilities through service and learning (Department of Public Works, 2017). Since 1994, the democratic government of the Republic of South Africa has embarked on various interventions targeting youth development, including developing youth policies, establishing the National Youth Commission (NYC) and Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF), offering bursaries, learnerships and implementing targeted programmes like the NYS. The intention of all these interventions was to address youth unemployment in a structured way.

The NYS was initiated in October 2003 as a special presidential programme to address high levels of youth unemployment by creating opportunities for voluntary service and skills development for young people (Department of Public Works, 2017). The programme was formally launched in April 2007 with the objective of strengthening youth participation in service delivery and the built environment, and helping the youth to gain the work-related skills necessary to access opportunities for a sustainable livelihood (Department of Public Works, 2017). The programme is a joint initiative between the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), formerly known as Umsobomvu Youth Fund, and the Department of Higher Education and Training, as the funder of training.

**Figure 1: overview of the NYS Structure**




Harnessing the potential of young people to become valuable and actively contributing members to society.

As demonstrated in figure 1 above, the NYS programme is structured as follows:

1. Providing structured training and individual development to participants;
2. Ensuring the participation of youth in community service delivery activities thereby instilling the spirit of patriotism in young South Africans; and
3. Assisting youth with employment or exit opportunities post their participation in the programme.

In delivering the NYS, the Department of Public Works utilises its infrastructure budget through its capital and maintenance projects expenditure to contribute to job creation by developing skilled artisans.

## 1.2 Assessing the role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment

### 1.2.1 The research problem statement

Since 2008, youth unemployment has been on the rise in South Africa. The National Treasury Budget Review (2011, p. 5) indicates that "high youth unemployment in South Africa means youth cannot acquire the skills or experience needed to drive the economy of the country forward and this poses a challenge to the economic development of the country, which further imposes a financial burden on the state to provide social assistance". In spite of various interventions made by government and the private sector to address unemployment in the country, youth remains hardest hit. In the Statistics South Africa Quarterly Labour Force report of 2017, 38,6 percent of youth aged 15 to 34 were unemployed. This figure increases to 55,90 percent when counting those who have become discouraged from seeking work. In addition, an estimated 50 percent of those between the ages 20 and 24 years were in neither employment nor education and training. These figures confirm that the problem of acute youth unemployment is dire and requires government to develop multiple strategies to create jobs. As Du Toit (2003) puts it, the issue of youth unemployment poses a serious challenge, with an estimated 500 000 young people annually waiting to enter the labour market – more

than ever before in the history of humankind, and yet there are fewer jobs available to absorb them.

The South African government has adopted the EPWP as an intervention to address the challenge of unemployment in the country, with the NYS programme designed to target youth participation. However, a study undertaken by Mokgohloa (2015) in Limpopo highlights that despite the implementation of programmes like the EPWP NYS, the majority of young people are concerned that government is not doing enough to create jobs for them. Furthermore, Mayer et al. (2014) indicates anecdotal evidence suggests that programmes like the EPWP NYS are found to be less attractive to the younger age cohort because they are not well tailored for young people and fail to address their aspirations because they do not offer progression into better-paid jobs in the labour market. While the EPWP has implemented the NYS programme for years, and there is monitoring for the number of work opportunities created by the programme, evidence regarding the extent to which it is contributing to the employment outcomes of young people is not available.

### 1.2.2 The research purpose statement

The purpose of this study is to assess the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment in South Africa. Firstly, literature on public works programmes is reviewed to gain a full understanding of such programmes and how they are implemented both internationally and locally, in particular with the focus on the EPWP in South Africa. Secondly, guided by the literature review and other documented frameworks, a detailed theory-of-change framework is developed to evaluate whether the EPWP NYS programme achieves the desired outcomes. Thirdly, a conceptual framework is developed to guide how the research will proceed beyond the literature review; and appropriate research strategies, designs, procedures and methods are selected to assess the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment and achieving the intended outcomes. Fourthly, data collected from participants of the NYS is analysed to assess whether the outcomes of the programme are in harmony with theories on public works programmes and frameworks on NYS. Lastly, based on the results from the analysis, conclusions are drawn on aspects crucial to the South African

government achieving its intended outcomes in using the EPWP to address youth unemployment.

### 1.2.3 The research questions

The primary research question in this study is:

1. What is the role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment?

The secondary questions posed in this study are:

2. What are the critical factors of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme that promote youth employment?
3. What are the limitations of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment?
4. Where has the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme participants exited to after participating in the programme?

These secondary questions are crucial in that they help to assess the role of the EPWP NYS programme in providing a foundation for future employment-related activity of participants.

## 1.3 Delimitations of the research

Flick (2014) describes the delimitations of research as those elements that the researcher chooses to include and to exclude, providing the boundaries of the research. The broad field of study for this research is development, which has five components, namely economic, social, political, cultural and environmental development. This study will focus only on economic and social development as high youth unemployment implies that young people are unable to acquire the skills or experience needed to drive the economy of the country forward. As such, this poses a challenge to the socio-economic development of the country and further imposes a financial burden on the state to provide social assistance (National Treasury Budget Review, 2011). Furthermore, for the purposes of this study, the definition of unemployment will be premised on "narrow unemployment", which considers those people who are available for and actively seeking paid work, but cannot find it. Unemployed people not actively seeking work, will not be considered in this study. This is owing to the fact that Statistics South Africa

has, since 1998 used "narrow unemployment" as the official measure for unemployment in South Africa.

## 1.4 Justification of the research

The study is important because it assesses the role and relevance of a key development intervention in South Africa. More so, because it interrogates youth unemployment in South Africa which is at the highest in the history of the country since democracy. The focus on youth unemployment is motivated by the fact that young people make up the biggest cohort of new job seekers and are the most vulnerable group with regard to the challenge of unemployment (Cloete, 2015). In South Africa, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) is considered as a central policy by government to address the issue of unemployment in the country. Therefore, there is a need to understand the role of the programme in particular the National Youth Service aimed at providing experiential skills and training to participants so that they can secure formal jobs in the labour market. Furthermore, there is a need to justify the expansion of such programmes, since the country is struggling to provide adequate resources for competing government priority programmes to alternative various policy options in dealing with the challenges faced by the country. Building a body of knowledge that explores the ways in which public works programmes can be improved or revised to address the countries pressing challenges of joblessness and poverty is crucial.

## 1.5 Preface to the research report

To this end, this report will comprise six chapters. Following on from this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 reviews literature based on the problem and past studies as well as the explanatory and conceptual frameworks. Chapter 3 discusses the research strategy, design, procedures, reliability and validity measures, and limitations. It also looks at reliability and validity measures as well as limitations of the research design. Chapter 4 describes and analyses the research data by means of a discussion of the issues raised under the two research questions and a conclusion to the Chapter. Chapter 5 discusses the findings in Chapter 4 using the theoretical framework proposed in Chapter 2. Finally, Chapter 6 presents the knowledge gained from undertaking this research. The chapter summarises, concludes the research, and highlights study limitations and recommendations.

# 2 REVIEWING LITERATURE TO DERIVE THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section introduces the literature on which the research is based. Section 2.1 provides a contextual background of South Africa, highlighting developmental challenges. The unemployment trends in the country are reviewed in Section 2.2 and causes for the persistent high unemployment rates identified. Section 2.3 reviews the methods, data and conclusions drawn by researchers who have conducted similar studies, while Section 2.4 covers the broad field of the study, encompassing the research. Section 2.5 discusses the key attributes and variables for public works programmes. Section 2.6 outlines an explanatory or theoretical framework used to interpret the research findings, while Section 2.7 provides a conceptual framework of how this research intends to assess the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment.

## 2.1 South Africa: History and Developmental Challenges

This section will provide the history of South Africa, giving a background on the genesis of the developmental challenges faced by the country. Lam, Leibrandt and Mlatsheni (2008) indicate that South Africa is an important case study for youth unemployment as research on this problem is new.

The history of South Africa dates back as far as 100 000 years ago, when the first humans inhabited the country (SA Yearbook, 2015/16), and comprises five distinct periods, which include the pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid eras. Nigel (2012) highlights that, from the late 1870s, divisions in the country consisted of a large number of communities, chiefdoms, colonies and settlements varying in size, power and racial composition with no unity and political tensions.

In the 19th century, the discovery of minerals such as diamonds and gold brought about profound changes, pushing the South African economy onto the world stage. The country became industrialised; there was development of urban infrastructure and a shift away from an exclusively agrarian-based economy (Thompson, 2001). These discoveries, however, also created conflicts, which led to an open war between the Boer settlers and the British Empire over control of the budding mining industry. These

mineral discoveries not only resulted in the country experiencing conflict, but also had a radical impact on every sphere of society (SA Yearbook, 2015/16). The changes in the economy required a massive scale of labour, which had to be provided by Africans, and many of these workers became migrant labourers away from their homes.

The SA Yearbook (2015/16, p. 2) indicates that "following the defeat of the Boers in the Anglo-Boer War between 1899 and 1902, the Union of South Africa emerged as a dominion of the British Empire in terms of the South Africa Act 1909 which combined the four separate British colonies, namely the Cape Colony, Natal Colony, Transvaal Colony and Orange River Colony". Subsequently, South Africa became a self-governing nation state in 1934 within the British Empire, following the enactment of the Status of the Union Act. The 1960 referendum ended the domain of the British Empire on 31 May 1961, and the country was legitimised to become a sovereign state with the adoption of a new constitution after the country was named the Republic of South Africa. Since 1948 to 1994, Afrikaner nationalism dominated the politics of the country. In 1960, separation by race and rule by the white minority, referred to as apartheid (an Afrikaans word implying disconnectedness) came into existence and an official law of segregation was adopted in the Republic of South Africa.

During apartheid, huge inequalities in terms of wealth distribution existed, whilst the laws, and regulations and practices denied black people access to economic opportunities that whites had access to (Venter, 2002). This resulted in a dual economy, divided based on race. In 1994, following the democratic elections South Africa discarded the apartheid laws and ushered a new dispensation, which heralded a new hope and path towards a developmental state. Post 1994, the country has recorded decent economic growth rates. Government has, however, had to develop policies to address the high rate of youth unemployment, including youth development programmes and structures such as the National Youth Commission (NYC) and Umsobomvu Youth Fund (which has subsequently merged into the National Youth Development Agency), with bursaries and learnership programmes including the implementation of NYS programme (Thwala, 2015).

## 2.2 Levels and trends of youth unemployment in South Africa and the government interventions

For years, the high levels of youth unemployment in South Africa has been one of the country's major socio-economic challenges. According to the Statistics South Africa Labour Force Survey of 2017, the rate of youth unemployment in the country increased to 55,90 percent in the second quarter of 2017, from 54,30 percent in the first quarter of 2017. From 2013 to 2017, the average rate of youth unemployment in South Africa was 51,93 percent, reaching an all-time high of 55,90 percent in the second quarter of 2017. The report further indicates that 38,6 percent of those aged 15 to 34 were unemployed. This figure excludes those who have become discouraged from seeking work. Furthermore, an estimated 50 percent of those between the ages of 20 and 24 were neither in employment nor education and training.

This deep-rooted problem of youth unemployment is a result of various challenges facing the labour market. Perold, Cloete & Papier (2012) indicate that these include: i) insufficient jobs available in the labour market; ii) employers reluctance to hire people with no previous work experience and iii) a mismatch in skills demanded by employers and those supplied by the job seekers. Additionally, the cost associated with searching for jobs is a barrier to enter the labour market, in particular to a number of youth living in remote poor rural areas with limited infrastructure (Ardington et al, 2013a; Burns et al, 2013; Woolard, 2013; Altman et al, 2012; Rankin et al, 2007).

The National Treasury (2011, p. 5) states that "youth between the ages of 15 and 24 would ideally be finding their first jobs or continuing their studies, but just under a third are not in employment, education or training (NEET)". Without doubt, this cohort is the most vulnerable group to the challenge of chronic unemployment, poverty and social exclusion, since they are not improving their skills through further education nor are they gaining work experience required to enter the labour market. The S4Ye (2015) report indicates that in emerging economies like South Africa, which are highly service based, the majority of the workforce population lack basic skills required by employers. Research by Du Toit (2003) shows that lack of skills and experience tend to be the root cause of unemployment for young people in South Africa. This is worsened by another challenge identified by Verick (2012) where employers are demanding more people with skills yet many work seekers have lower levels of education, in particular African

women. The Statistics South Africa Report of 2015 notes that an estimated 86 percent of unemployed youth have not gone past Grade 12 in terms of schooling. National Treasury (2011) further notes that the weaknesses identified in the schooling system reduce the chances of youth finding productive jobs, as in most cases they do not have the basic competencies required for the job market.

Even though there is consensus that lack of skills and work experience are the leading causes for youth unemployment, Kingdon and Knight (2005) highlight the inflexibility of the South African labour market in terms of wage responsiveness also add to the problem. In addition to these challenges, Banerjee et al. (2008) highlight there are three key reasons behind the persistent high unemployment rate in the country, this includes the inability of the informal sector to absorb excess labour due to the high wage levels set in the labour laws; spatial separation between areas of work and where people reside, particularly in rural areas; and the unavailability of affordable transport for job seekers to move around.

Verick (2012, p. 374) notes "the segregation policies of the apartheid era in South Africa has resulted in low levels of education, suppressed entrepreneurism and spatial inequalities among the African population". Even though the apartheid regime ended in 1994, Verick further highlights that the legacies of apartheid still influence the outcomes of the economic and social status in South Africa. He argues the labour market, characterised by high rates of unemployment particularly in rural areas is testimony to this legacy. To support the argument made by Verick, research by the South African Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) (2013) highlights that the increasing youth unemployment rate reflects the spatial inequalities that stem from the apartheid-era policies of separate development. Furthermore, on the causes of youth unemployment, young people with a bit of work experience arguably fare much better than youth with no experience when it comes to employment prospects. Kürten (2007) highlights that in South Africa many young people do not possess the work experience critical to gaining exposure to training and learning on the job or to accessing the labour market with a potential to creating networks that will increase their prospects of future employment.

Noting the persistent challenge of youth unemployment in the country, since 1994, many scholars, politicians and organised labour have debated that employment creation is the responsibility of the state. Hence, in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994, public works programmes are identified as a critical intervention to address unemployment in South Africa. As such, the resolution of the Growth and Development Summit (GDS) of 2003, accepted the implementation of the EPWP Phase 1 from 2004 to 2009. At this time, it was assumed that the persisting high levels of unemployment were the result of a laggard "second economy", and the EPWP was seen as a short-term intervention to move people to the "first economy". Even though the EPWP managed to achieve its set target of creating one million work opportunities, the graduation of participants into formal employment was minimal.

The limitations of the EPWP in Phase 1 were realised and the adoption of the New Growth Path (NGP) and National Development Plan (NDP) recognised that the structural features of the economy contributed to systemic unemployment, and not the idea of a "first" and "second" economy, which could be bridged through the EPWP. The concept of public works programmes to address unemployment in the country gained momentum post-1994. Dube (2011) highlights that these initiatives were first employed to address the so-called "white poor problem" in the 1930s and a renewed interest in them emerged in the 1980s when the gross domestic product (GDP) and overall income per capita growth rate declined. Chirwa et al. (2002) notes that in many developing economies in Southern Africa, such as Zimbabwe, Botswana, South Africa and Malawi, the implementation of public works schemes started in the late 1980s to early 1990s. McCutcheon (2001c); Adato and Haddad (2002); and McCord (2003a) mention that during these years public works programmes were used as a policy intervention to alleviate poverty.

However, the focus of using public works programmes (PWPs) to mitigate poverty has changed, as Derjadin (1996) highlights that in recent years many countries have been using them as major government policy interventions to mitigate the negative impact of structural adjustment on the poor, particularly in the short term. Derjadin further mentions that the high dependency on PWPs is due to the fact that many of these countries are failing to grow their economies to levels where the lives of the poor are improved and the levels of unemployment can be tackled in a sustained manner. In

McCord's (2009) typology of PWPs, these type of programmes are referred to as government employment programmes, where the state acts as an "employer of last resort" by creating job opportunities on a regular, sustained basis.

Notwithstanding the reintroduction of the EPWP to address the challenge of unemployment in South Africa, youth unemployment has been on the rise since the 1990s. This situation means youth are unable to get the necessary skills or experience required to move the economy of the country forward, further posing a challenge to the development of the economy in the country in that it imposes a financial burden on the state since it has to provide social assistance to the unemployed (National Treasury Budget Review, 2011). McCord (2003a) indicates that since 1994, youth unemployment has been increasing with many young people interested in working, yet most are unskilled and unable to find jobs because the economy is unable to deliver employment. This status quo is present despite the fact that structured skills development programmes like the NYS are being implemented under the EPWP, where youth can gain work experience and skills development and at the same time provide services beneficial to their immediate communities. The youth unemployment rate of 55, 90 percent highlights there is a need for government to develop multiple strategies to increase employment opportunities whilst supporting inclusion and social cohesion. In this regard, this study will assess the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment.

## 2.3 Methods, data, findings, and conclusions of studies undertaken on youth unemployment and interventions in South Africa

Given the importance of public works programmes to deal with poverty alleviation through employment creation, there is substantial literature that examines the efficacy of public works programmes, in particular the EPWP, to address the challenge of unemployment. Lam, Leibrandt and Mlatsheni (2008), however, indicate that youth unemployment research in South Africa is new, implying that most of the research done in the past focused largely on the challenge of unemployment at a broad level. This section will therefore first consider the studies that focused on the performance of public works programmes in responding to the overall challenge of unemployment,

followed by studies that focused on interventions to deal with youth unemployment in particular.

In South Africa, McCord (2009) has developed the most comprehensive critiques of the EPWP in a series of publications, which are informed by theoretical and documentary analysis. The key finding highlighted by this scholar in various publications relates to the fact that by design the EPWP is not an intervention to create a bridge between the second and first economies whilst assisting the unemployed in moving into secure, formal sector employment. McCord (2009) notes that while public works programmes have been effective in providing transitional employment, the EPWP has been ineffective in transferring marketable skills to enable participants to obtain jobs once they exit these programmes in a South African context in which intermediate and high skills are in demand.

In addition to an established body of literature that suggests that public works are neither a platform for large-scale job-creation nor a sensible alternative to other forms of social protection, a growing body of research suggests that public works employment promotes the practice of labour casualisation in the South African labour market. Samson (2007) argues that since the poor participate in public works projects in which employment agreements limit employment security, labour rights, and wages and benefits, this participation creates conditions of vulnerability similar to those related to the currently greater and hotly debated labour-broking and casualisation practices. As such, Samson (2007) contends that public works employment contributes more to insecure forms of employment and poverty than to the solution, thereby contradicting the rhetoric surrounding the contribution of PWPs of improving employment prospects of the poor and reducing and/or eradicating poverty. He argues that government continues to promote PWPs over other forms of social protection because it wants to be seen to be doing something.

McCord (2009, p. 20), however, indicates that "PWPs are not monolithic entities, but a conceptually varied form of intervention, which can vary in terms of duration, relationship to the labour market, scale, targeting and implementation modalities". Hence there are misinterpretations as to what the programmes can offer as their

diversity is not explicitly recognised in the literature, and their implications are not adequately considered.

A study by Nzimakwe (2008) provides an overview of the EPWP, with an emphasis on the infrastructure sector, unemployment reduction and employment creation opportunities. It concludes that the EPWP has the potential to make a significant contribution to employment creation, poverty alleviation and skills development. However, the EPWP must not be seen as a solution to the unemployment problem. As Altman (2004) points out, diverse and complex causes of unemployment exist in South Africa, because the root cause is structural rather than cyclical. Altman further remarks that the skill composition of the labour force, the development trajectory of the country with heavy reliance on capital-intensive industries, and the rapid reduction of lower skill jobs in the mining and agriculture sectors, have protected the absorption of unskilled and semi-skilled labour in the economy, which accounts for the vast majority of the unemployed. Therefore, it is essential that the evaluation for the contribution of the EPWP in the economy is done against this backdrop. While the programme provides an important avenue for labour absorption and income payment to poor households in the short to medium-term, it is critical to note that it is not designed to be a policy instrument to address the structural nature of the unemployment crisis (Altman, 2004). What is required to address the scourge of unemployment is a forceful and sustainable intervention, which can place the economy on a labour-absorbing development path.

Noting that a substantial body of literature exists to explore the labour market performance of PWP participants after their participation in such programmes, few longitudinal studies exist tracing participants after their participation in temporary positions within the EPWP. For example, McCord (2004a, 2004b, 2005) highlights that while numerous researchers provide insight into labour market performance in the short to medium term, the long-term implications of public works participation for subsequent labour market attachment cannot be inferred from the same studies. Considering the limitations of longitudinal studies on EPWP participants post their participation in the programme, there seems to be fewer researches undertaken to assess the outcomes of the programme post participation by participants.

A qualitative study undertaken by McCord (2003, p. 14) to assess the potential of the EPWP and its adequacy as an instrument to address the problems of poverty and unemployment highlights that the "public works programme monitoring and information systems tend to focus on the creation of 'jobs' per se, rather than the social and economic impact of those jobs. Where performance indicators are monitored, these tend be quantitative input measures (e.g. units of training delivered, kilometres of road constructed, or number of workers recruited), rather than outcome indicators relating to the labour market, social or economic consequences of the intervention. There is little systematic monitoring of socio-economic and social development indicators, and this problem is compounded by the lack of baseline information on programme participants". The study concluded that the available data makes it difficult to show the anticipated broader benefits of PWPs, in terms of improved livelihoods, reduced poverty and the creation of sustainable employment, community empowerment, local multipliers or growth as outlined in the policy rhetoric achieved, or likely to be achieved, through the EPWP.

For instance, desktop research undertaken by Thwala (2011) to investigate African experiences in implementing PWPs and projects explored how initiatives such as skills development and the EPWP could be used to address the low skills levels and rising unemployment in South Africa. The study concluded that education plays a major role in the probability of finding a job. The study further indicates that most of the youth, in particular blacks, suffer from deficiencies in education because they either made an early exit out of the schooling system or lack particular skills that are in high demand in employment sectors. Implementing policies aimed at reducing youth unemployment might thus have a significant impact on society as a whole. There is however, a need for the education system to be aligned to the labour market so that employers can recognise qualifications held by young people. This can be achieved through offering young people internships at government departments, private firms and consultancies. As far as undertaking these initiatives in programmes like the EPWP, government needs to establish and deploy a long-term programme on employment-intensive construction. It should however be noted that this cannot be established overnight, and will take some years to grow into a national programme (Thwala, 2011).

A qualitative research strategy by Mubangizi and Mkhize (2013) focused on eThekwini Municipality as a case study to examine how its EPWP had been conceptualised concerning job creation and to establish the extent to which its beneficiaries were able to obtain and sustain decent jobs beyond their involvement in the programme. The following findings were reported: "Among the beneficiaries interviewed, some were happy just to have found employment of any kind, but many felt that the targets had been either partially achieved or not at all. Some respondents mentioned that they had received training in community development work, HIV/AIDS counselling and gardening while working on the EPWP. Subsequently, they had found other positions within the Municipality where they were continuing to work on pertinent social development issues in the community. Notwithstanding these benefits, some beneficiaries nonetheless complained of administrative difficulties that prevented them from benefiting from the EPWP's training objectives" (Mubangizi and Mkhize, 2013, p. 4).

The findings of this study cannot be generalised for the broader EPWP because it focused solely on the eThekwini Municipality. Considerable evidence however suggests that, at a broader level, there is no substantive evidence of the anticipated medium-term programme outcomes regarding the programme objectives of graduating participants out of poverty and transforming to enter the formal labour market (Hagen-Zanker et al., 2011; Holmes et al., 2013; McCord et al., 2015). Philip (2013) indicates that many EPWP participants return to their unemployed status after participation in the programme due to the oversupply of low- and semi-skilled labour as the market is not able to absorb the labour exiting from EPWP employment.

Furthermore, it is arguable that the findings presented above were not focusing on EPWP programmes targeting youth only. McCord (2003a) highlights that since democracy in 1994 the crisis related to youth unemployment seems to be increasing, with a lot people interested in working, yet most are unskilled and unable to find jobs because the economy is not creating jobs. This is notwithstanding the fact that government uses various interventions to help young people access the labour market, as outlined by Mayer et al. (2014, p. 24), which include: "1) formal education; 2) vocational training; 3) public employment and deployment programmes; 4) entrepreneurship interventions; and 5) job placement programmes".

To assess the performance of the EPWP NYS programme, Thwala (2016) reviewed the Department of Public Works' management and implementation of the programme in Mpumalanga using a qualitative research study. The study highlighted that the programme has great potential for employment creation and skills development for the intended beneficiaries. Training of staff and timeous payment of beneficiaries were cited as key success factors for the implementation of the programme. However, this research noted that various challenges confront the implementation of the programme, including a lack of NYS implementing structure as well as poor planning and allocation of requisite resources.

From the analysis provided in this section, it is evident that divergent views and expectations exist as to what the programme can achieve at an outcome level. In evaluating the EPWP, it is important to understand that while the programme provides an important avenue for labour absorption and income payment to poor households in the short to medium-term, the programme should not be regarded as a policy instrument to address the structural nature of unemployment in the country.

## 2.4 Field of study for the research

### 2.4.1 An introduction to development and its key components

This research is an outcomes evaluation research for the EPWP NYS Programme, which is a government intervention to address unemployment in South Africa, hence it, is located within the development broad field of study. Therefore, providing a conceptual understanding of development, established facts and debates surrounding this field, will assist to guide and identify appropriate components, processes and methods for the research. It also provides a perspective on the choice of locating the research within the components of economic and social development. Thomas (2007) indicates that development studies is a contested field with different meanings and dimensions used; it is normative and subject to value judgments. The concept of development entails change in the short-, medium- and long-term to relatively desirable human aspirations (Sumner & Tribe, 2008; Slim, 1995).

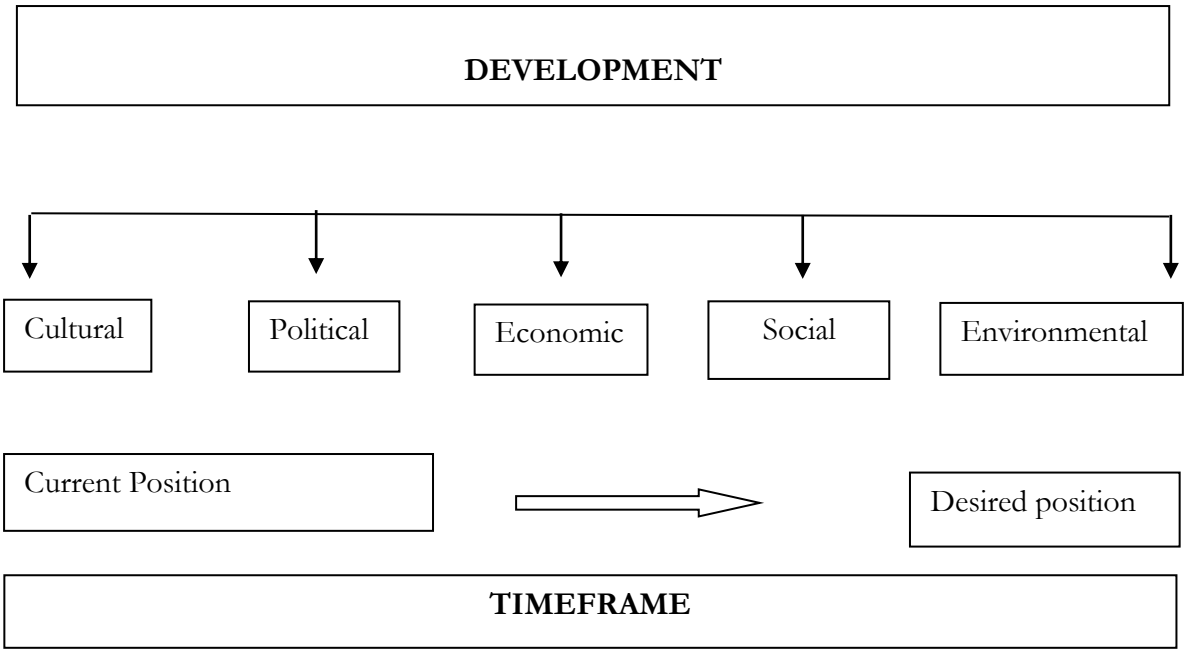



**Figure 2.1: The concept of development,**
**Source: Wotela (2017)**

Figure 2.1 illustrates the concept of development in terms of its components as well changes that occur in a particular condition when development occurs. Though there is no single definition to describe development, Streeten in Todaro (1992, p. 62) indicates that "development is concerned with an attack on the chief evils of the world today, ranging from malnutrition and disease to illiteracy, slums, unemployment and inequality". This definition highlights that unemployment, which is the topic of study for this research, is one of the areas to be addressed through development.

In traditional economic terms, development is however described as indicators that focus mainly on national income, Growth Domestic Product (GDP) or its derivatives of GDP per capita or GDP growth rates (Griffiths, 2011). Todaro (2009) describes it in terms of the capacity of a national economy, which has been more or less static for a long time, with an ability to generate and sustain an annual increase in its gross national product rates of five to seven per cent or more. Supporters of this definition believe that development that reduces poverty is a result of positive economic growth. Arguably, Griffith (2011) points out that this view is general and inadequate because its focus is on a single aggregate measure of income as a measure for development without considering the human development aspect, which comes about as result of enlarging people's choices and not focusing on the economy as a means to achieve development. With varying definitions of development, it can be said that development is concerned with a

process of change from the past (historical) to present and these changes normally occur within the socio-economic structures in society (Sumner & Tribe, 2008).

### 2.4.2 The purpose of development studies

As quoted in Sumner and Tribe (2008), Mehta et al. (2006) states that development studies research seeks to make a difference, making it more loaded and contested than other kinds of research as it is committed to improvement, where knowledge generation is not an end in itself (Molteberg and Bergstrøm (2000). It is argued that development studies focus on addressing current, actual problems to seek solutions with the intent of resolving them, implying that the studies tend to be applied and action- or policy-orientated. Considering this description, it is evident that development studies can be linked to solutions provided to influence policy and improve current problems or challenges faced by societies.

Even though development studies are about providing solutions to challenges faced by societies, cited in Sumner and Tribe (2008), Corbridge (2005, p.1) highlights that "there are criticisms levelled against development studies for being irrelevant, being hopelessly evolutionary, of being colonial in intent, of being masculinist, and of being a vehicle for politicising and the extension of bureaucratic state power". Furthermore, there are scholars who argue that development studies contributes as primary sources to the many problems faced by the so-called Third World countries, as interventions brought about by development studies' researchers are limited to providing solutions for these countries.

Contrary to this view, Nallari in Griffiths (2011) mentions that advocates of development argue that development studies play a crucial role in addressing market failures in information, coordination, credit and other aspects. In developed countries, the 2008 recession gave further impetus to development and poverty-reduction strategies, with a strong role of government required in the economy brought about a shift away from the Washington Consensus, which was dominant in the 1980s and 1990s, promoting macroeconomic stability, deregulated markets, globalisation and market-based growth (Griffiths, 2011).

### 2.4.3 Major components of development

According to Todaro (1992), economic growth is an important component for development, but it is not the only component. Wotela (2016, p. 89) indicates that there are "five components of development, including economic, social, political, cultural and environmental". Even though other components exist, Todaro (1992) reflects that in the past, the concept of development mainly focused on economic phenomenon, where rapid gains in the overall economic growth would filter through to the multitudes of people through jobs and other opportunities in the economy. As such, economic growth was the major component to deal with issues related to poverty, unemployment and income distribution as secondary in deriving development.

Experience from the 1960s has showed, however, that focusing on economic growth as a component for development enabled many Third World nations to achieve the overall United Nations (UN) growth targets, yet the levels of people living in poverty remained high. This experience confirmed that something was missing when defining development in economic terms only. As such, an increasing number of economists and policymakers started considering a replacement of the Growth National Product (GNP) as an indicator to measure development with other indicators that focus on the measurement of levels of absolute poverty. As a result, a new measure of economic development was introduced in the 1970s, where development is now defined by the reduction or eradication of poverty, inequality and increasing unemployment within the context of a growing economy (Sumner & Tribe, 2008).

With this change, the concept of development is now a multi-dimensional process involving the restructuring and reorientation of the entire economic and social system, and not one-dimensional (Todaro, 1992). The UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD, 2011, p. 2) defines social development as a "process of change that leads to improvements in human well-being, social relations and social institutions, and that are equitable, sustainable, and compatible with principles of democratic governance and social justice". The definition emphasises social relations, institutional arrangements and political processes and regards these as central achieving desirable development outcomes. It also includes material achievements such as good education and health, and access to goods and services necessary for decent living. Furthermore, it focuses on cultural, social and political achievements such as a sense of dignity, security,

the ability to be part of a community through social and cultural recognition, and political representation (UNRISD, 2011).

Kuhl (2012) stresses that economic development can influence social development, but complementarity with provisions of political and civil rights, eradicate poverty, tyranny, intolerance, poor economic opportunities, and systematic social deprivation is needed. According to Kuhl (2012, p.4) "as a central policy response, public works programmes are meant to address both the problem of unemployment and a range of social and economic development challenges". For the purpose of this study, economic and social development will therefore be the key components discussed at length, as they are interlinked and critical in addressing the issues of development within the context of employment interventions like the EPWP.

### 2.4.4 Major processes of development

Sumner and Tribe (2008) mention that development processes occur in two forms, namely immanent and imminent processes. The immanent process refers to unintentional development such as the rise of capitalism and the private sector role in the economy. The process undertaken by World War II to develop Third World countries is referred to as imminent. Interestingly, there is considerable confusion over the definition of development processes. Cowen and Shenton (1998) argue that the difference between immanent (unintentional or underlying processes of) development can be linked to the development of capitalism, while imminent (intentional or "willed") development is linked to the deliberate process to "develop" the "Third World", which began after World War II as much of it emerged from colonisation.

There are two differences in the process of development: Firstly, development processes help to introduce the concept of development intervention required in a particular situation, which in this instance would be an intentional development (Wotela, 2017); and, secondly, it is critical in monitoring and evaluation studies, with its primary focus on measuring changes after a development intervention. As highlighted in Sumner and Tribe (2008), the imminent or intentionally planned development fundamentally defines development interventions as planned and have a desired response to a perceived cultural, political, economic, social and environmental problem or simply a desire to upgrade or upscale. Wotela (2016) description of imminent development

clearly reflects interventions that can occur at three levels, namely policy, programme and project.

In development, different interventions exist and include policy interventions that are theoretical, long-term, general and broad, and project interventions that are action-oriented, more specific, and narrow and tend to happen in the short term (Wotela, 2017). In-between the policy and project interventions are programme interventions that tend to be strategic and occur in the intermediate time-scale. Whatever the interventions done, at these three levels all are interlinked and interrelated. A policy intervention includes a number of interrelated development programmes, while a programme includes a number of interrelated projects that in turn consist of interrelated development activities. The EPWP is a programme intervention as it aims to deal with unemployment issues in the country.

### 2.4.5 Established facts in development

In relation to the established facts of development, the focus is mainly around the theories of development. From the early 1950s, development studies began in a very specific historical context. As cited in Noyoo (2014, p. 5) Bonn (2005) indicate that by then, Myrdal appropriately defined development "as a combination of three elements; decolonisation, the emergence of new power elites in many developing countries with a development-oriented agenda, and the Cold War". Furthermore, through decolonisation and the Cold War, a call emerged for a new approach to deal with colonies or former colony countries in which there was widespread poverty, illiteracy, and poor health standards.

However, in the 1950s and early 1960s, the driving force behind the development premise was the Modernisation theory, which is bipolar in outlook in that it suggests two contexts, namely the traditional and modern society (Noyoo, 2014). The theory assumes that to develop societies, which are backwards or traditional, Western nations trajectories should be shadowed. Proponents of this theory believe that the traditional traits of doing things is a hindrance to development, particularly for the backward nations (Martinusen, 1997). Furthermore, the theory advances that development in

modern societies should have an extensive division of labour, a well-functioning and active state apparatus, a democratic form of government and equality before the law.

From the late 1960s, a challenge to the Modernisation theory came in the form of the Dependency theory, regarded as one of the best-known neo-Marxist development theories of the Sixties. Certain scholars believed developing countries were stuck in their stage of underdevelopment because of their structural exploitation by industrialised countries, which were provided with both raw materials and export markets on very favourable trade terms. The 1970s, however, ushered in a new era of the Marxism theory, with a view that capitalism is unjust and exploitative. The Marxism theory focuses on the social and economic status of development, incorporating social transformation and analysing class relations, including conflict-related issues within the society (Desai, 2009). Around the same time, another dominant theory was introduced, the Neoliberalism theory, which was based on the capitalist perspective. This theory advances that for development to happen, no action is needed except for having free markets, to ensure that the resulting uninterrupted economic growth "trickles down" for the benefit of everyone (Desai, 2009). Subsequent to World War II, the development economies came with an emphasis on state development because capitalists were reluctant to inject their resources for production, implying that the state had to intervene. In this theory, development is viewed as the duty of the state and its aim is to bring about a modern industrial society. In the context of PWPs, such as the EPWP, implemented by the state to address the issue of unemployment, an alignment to the principles of the development economies are clear.

### 2.4.6 Key issues in the study of development

An evolution to the body of development theory has been emerging from the 1950s to the 1980s. As cited in Noyoo (2014, p. 5) Bonn (2005) by then, development was categorised into "a combination of three elements namely; decolonisation, the emergence of new power elites in many developing countries with a development-oriented agenda, and the Cold War". During this phase, development was mainly on long-run structural societal change with a significant interventionist role given to the state (Sumner and Tribe, 2008). However, during the 1980s, an impasse in development theory emerged, described as a deadlock between modernisation and underdevelopment

theories (Schuurman, 1993). To date, the impasse is viewed an important landmark in the teaching of Development Studies, though its existence is disputed, yet this impasse has simply disguised the revival of modernisation theories (Munck, 1999).

The seminal critique of development theory by Booth makes a proposition that the development theory was out of touch with reality, lacking in usefulness and theoretically flawed. In the 1970s and 1980s, through significant global changes, the development theory was undermined and the rise of the newly industrialised countries generated adjustments to the balance of global economic power. However, the end of the Cold War in 1989, together with the addition of "transition economies" in Central and Eastern Europe as well as Central, Eastern and South East Asia, challenged the coherence of the "Third World" category and thus the subject matter of significant areas of development theory.

Modernisation theories were criticised for their overreliance on a linear, common path to development, which focused on economic growth and industrialisation and disregarded the environmental impacts of industrialisation. Furthermore, their perceived over-emphasis on the macro policies, which neglected the micro intra-household social and economic relations, and meso (intermediate levels of analysis) and the lack of empiricism and rigour (particularly testability and refutability) were criticised. As such, the early 1980s ushered the advent of a neo-liberal development agenda, with the foundation of structural adjustments introduced known as the Washington Consensus. In the midst of huge debts by countries and improved lending by international financial institutions, structural adjustments occurred, which made the crisis a structural issue for the developing world. In the early stages of adjustment programmes, the state of poverty was considered a temporary phenomenon, requiring intervention through economic growth. However, this period of adjustments in the economy, proved that the rising income inequality are the leading cause for the rising poverty levels.

As such, at the dawn of the 21st century, the development agenda was at the forefront, with the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the introduction of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (Griffiths, 2011). Through the MDGs, the attention was on the renewed strong debates on the relationship between the processes of globalisation, increasing poverty levels and emerging violent conflicts. Furthermore,

MDG targets revealed that countries were able to show progress made towards development, yet in reality many were unable to achieve their targets. The poor performance was attributed to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA, 2010) macroeconomic liberalisation policies, which narrowly focused on issues such as inflation, government budgets and current account deficits in the 1990s (Griffiths, 2011). Though some scholars believe that there is convergence in development, there is an acceptance that in many developing countries the inequality gap amongst the poor and rich has widened over the past few decades. While opportunities have increased through globalisation, few countries and sections of the population have benefitted. With positive signs of the rapid growth in countries such as China and India, housing the most of the world's poor people, many African countries, including South Africa, are lagging behind.

## 2.4.7 An introduction to Economic Development

### 2.4.7.1 Public works programmes as part of the Economic Development

This section will provide a further discussion on the component of economic development in relation to PWPs. In market economies, employment-related issues are functions of the markets, and the focus of employment policies is to maximise outcomes of employment within the private sector. Across the globe, the emphasis of employment policy relying on markets is widely accepted with no contestation. However, fewer states have attained full employment levels, with many countries struggling to reach full levels of employment, resulting in high social and economic costs on societies. Therefore, the argument advanced by Philip (2013) is that a focus on outcomes from the markets alone are not sufficient and it is at this point that debates on the importance of public employment are imperative.

Philip (2013) argues that public employment programmes, the umbrella term that includes PWPs, provide a complementary instrument that can limit the damage to society from unemployment, though they are rarely positioned as a part of employment policies or as a counter-cyclical instrument, able to assist in responding to changes in employment trends. Instead, in many countries, PWPs are temporary, short-term and last-resort programmes, used to respond to employment crises. In Adams theory of general equilibrium, the balance between the demand and supply of labour is a

determination of the natural state of an economy that is not regulated markets by the state. As such, this ideology has influenced several debates regarding the role of the markets and the state in relation to employment and economic policies. Implicitly, the debates positions the role of the markets against the state, as well as the functions of economic development against the social development. Collectively, these debates assumes that the markets can achieve full employment with the right policies in place.

To date, the debates by Keynes remains uncontested on this topic. Wray (2007b) indicates the arguments advanced by Keynes demonstrates that the failure by the capitalist system was on providing full employment and its predisposition towards providing excessive unequal distribution of incomes. Philip (2013, p. 2) indicates, "For Keynes, the normal path of any economy is cyclical in nature, which is far from unfettered markets. Moreover, the role of government is included in the two main levers of achieving full employment with public investment whilst providing a form of economic stimulus, combined with welfare spending. The purpose of such welfare spending is partly to contribute to aggregate demand. In the post-1980 neo-liberal era, Keynes fell out of favour, as the global crisis ushered the return of policies focused on public investment in the form of stimulus packages in some quarters. Through this era, Keynes's second lever of stimulating an increase in aggregate demand has been a far less prominent part of the current picture".

#### 2.4.7.2 Purpose of economic development in the context of Public Works Programmes

Before a discussion on the purpose of economic development, it is crucial to first define the field of study of economics to be able to trace the roots of this component. Todaro (2009) describes economics as a study in social sciences concerned with how people interact with the social systems, which organise what they do to meet their material needs such as food and shelter. Within the discipline of economics, different areas of specialisation exist, with development economics as one of them. Traditional economics, normally referred to neoclassical economics, focuses on the efficient allocation of scarce resources, and how they can grow over time in perfect markets whose decisions are based on marginal private sector profits and utility calculations (Todaro, 2009). It further assumes economic rationality relies on individualistic, materialistic, self-interested orientation toward decision-making.

Todaro (2009), however, highlights that development economics is not only concerned with efficient allocation of scarce resources and their growth over time, but it focuses on other mechanisms likely to bring change in people's lives. Development economics is largely concerned with how economic, cultural and political requirements bring changes in rapid structural and institutional transformations of societies as a whole in a manner that will ensure that everyone has an opportunity to access economic progress (Todaro, 2009). Development economics focuses on mechanisms that keep families, regions and even entire nations from breaking out of poverty.

According to Philip (2013, p. 43) "in South Africa, a clear tension exists in terms of providing sustainable solutions to unemployment, requiring structural economic change, as within the current economic context there will be winners and losers with the type of employment interventions provided". Philip argues that sustainable solutions to the challenge of employment will take time to reach the desired results, notwithstanding the current levels of unemployment that are socially and economically unsustainable at present. As such, part of the rationale for government to implement PWPs is that it provides an opportunity for the country to address the burning issue of unemployment in the short term while working on longer-term policy solutions (Philip, 2013). Within the South African context, the implementation of PWPs borders within a broader integration of development in the broader scope of economic development.

#### 2.4.7.3 Components of economic development

All countries endeavour to have development where there is economic growth amongst other components (Todaro, 2009). As such, three basic components or core values help to understand the concept of economic development. These include sustenance, self-esteem and freedom (Todaro, 2009). Such components relate to the essential human needs, which are common across societies and different cultures. Within the context of development meeting human needs, Cypher (2014) mentions that key to development is the issue of moral dimension. Cypher further remarks that development focuses on realising human values, which are fundamental to extend the benefits of change to every human being. These human values include, but are not limited to:

a) the opportunity for meaningful employment, under honourable conditions, and the possibility to provide for one's self and family;
b) employment under conditions that comply with the following four core labour standards of the International Labour Organisation: (1) freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; (2) elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; (3) effective abolition of child labour; and (4) elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation;
c) the opportunity to pursue education and the increased quality of life it promises;
d) equal treatment under the law and in the economy, regardless of race, gender, class, ethnicity, religion, nationality, or other differences; and
e) respect for individual dignity.

The values outlined above confirm that all human beings have certain basic needs without which life would be impossible. As quoted in Dube (2013), Streeten (1981, p. xi-xii) advanced the following argument in explaining the basic needs approach: "The objective of a basic human needs approach to development is to ensure that all human beings should have the opportunity to live full lives. To this end, the approach focuses on receiving access to minimum levels of consumption of certain basic goods and services. The basic needs approach attaches fundamental importance to poverty eradication within a short period as one of the main objectives of development. It defines poverty not in terms of income, poverty lines and deciles of the income distribution, but as the inability to meet certain basic human needs on the part of identifiable groups of human beings. Poverty is characterised by malnutrition, by ill health, by lack of education, of safe water, of sanitation, of decent shelter. An important aspect of the elimination of poverty thus consists in securing access to these goods and services by the poor."

Arguably, if society lacks these fundamental needs, underdevelopment is likely to occur. It is therefore critical that all economic activities provide as many people as possible with an opportunity to overcome helplessness and misery, which might arise from the lack of basic needs (Todaro, 2009). Hence, economic development should be looked at as a necessary condition to improve the quality of life for people.

The second component, self-esteem, refers to the concept of being a person. Todaro (2009) explains that another key universal component of a better life is self-esteem, interpreted as a sense of self-worth and respect. Arguably, from culture to culture or society to society, human beings seek self-esteem in different ways. However, with the proliferation of modern societies in developing nations, many people with a profound sense of self-worth suffer from serious cultural confusion due their exposure to economically advanced societies. The reason for this is partly because many people measure their worth in terms of that national prosperity.

Lastly, another component is freedom from servitude, referring to the ability of choice based on existing human freedom. This freedom is interpreted as an emancipation from alienating material conditions of life and from social servitude to nature, other people, misery and oppressive institutions leading to poverty. Human freedom encompasses a number of components such as political freedom, which include but are not limited to personal security, the rule of law, freedom of expression, political participation and equality of opportunity (Todaro, 2009). In Development as Freedom, Sen (1999) refers to development as a process of increasing real freedoms that can cause people to enjoy and value life. Sen advocates that his framework of "Development as Freedom" should be a foundation and universal principle for all humans to be able to realise the aspirations of multi-faceted forms of protest and contestation against inequality from race and gender struggle for equal freedoms. Without any doubt, for economic development to occur, the human development aspect must be at the centre of development strategies.

#### 2.4.7.4 Processes of Economic Development

To a large extent, the process of economic development focuses on signposts required for development, in a manner that will make it possible to determine what needs to be done and what should be avoided when planning to make progress (Cypher, 2014). Many abstract theories with a focus on how to undertake development are advanced by development economists, and these theories form an integral part of development economics, which provide an important historical window on how economists have understood development until now. In the real world, however, the process for a country to become more developed or to get on to a path to development is neither about changing the past that resulted in low growth rates and limited progress, nor it is

about the simple efficient allocation of existing resources within a given institutional regime (Cypher, 2014).

It should be noted that economic development is not just about the maximisation of utility or profits within the limited resources of what is currently available to societies as inherited from the past. It is about regime change and the search for an optimal growth path that is superior to the existing allocation of resources and current efficiency levels. In addition, stimulating development requires significantly new institutional patterns and organisational structures necessary to support such a dynamic process of change. Cypher (2014, p. 38) remarks that for change to happen, "the future cannot be just an extension of the past, of doing more of what is now being done. Change must be dramatic. The past binding structures and their weight on the present are precisely what have made these nations underdeveloped and it is these political economy structures of power that need to be transcended."

Due to labour migrating from rural areas to urban areas in search of better employment opportunities, the shift of workers from low-productivity agricultural employment to higher-productivity industrial employment has contributed to a sharp increase in total national output. A critical aspect for development is an increase in the productivity of labour in all sectors of the economy, if incomes and standards of living are to rise. This is achieved partly, but, quite importantly, through improvements in the training and education of the existing and future labour force by means of increases in what economists call human capital accumulation. This takes place not only through the formal schooling process, but also via "learning by doing" at the workplace (Cypher, 2014). This in itself implies that with many people migrating to urban areas and industries requiring skilled labour, the provision of skills development in the delivery of PWPs is crucial in assisting participants to gain access to opportunities in the labour market and improve their standard of living.

It is argued that skills development not only contributes to employment, but also to economic development. In South Africa, skills development is one pillar of the EPWP NYS programme to ensure participants are better skilled to access improved opportunities post their participation in the programme. Johnson and Adam (2004), cited by Reddy (2006), suggest that investing in skills development leads to positive

contributions to increase economic development. In addition to the processes already outlined, development requires fundamental institutional change. For change to happen, the central government or state must change and sometimes fill in gaps where the private sector lacks initiative, which, it can be argued, is partly done through initiatives like the NYS programme. The overview summary provided above on the processes of development clearly demonstrates that for development to occur a break with the past needs to happen.

#### 2.4.7.5 Established facts and debates on economic development in relation to Public Works Programmes

According to Todaro (2009), four major and sometimes competing strands of thought exist and these include the linear stages of growth, theories and patterns of structural change, the international-dependence revolution, and the neoclassical free-market counterrevolution that dominates post-World War II literature. In recent years, however, an eclectic approach has emerged that draws on all of these theories. In the 1950s and 1960s, many theorists viewed the process of development as a series of successive stages of economic growth through which all countries had to pass (Todaro, 2009). In this period, the economic theory of development postulated that development requires the right quantity and mixture of saving, investment and foreign aid for economic growth. This meant that development was synonymous with rapid economic growth.

However, in the 1970s, two competing schools of thought replaced the linear-stage approach to development. One of these theories focused on patterns of structural change and used modern economic theory to portray the internal process that a typical developing country must undergo if it is to succeed with generating and sustaining economic growth. The second theory, the international-dependence revolution, was more radical and political, and viewed underdevelopment in terms of national and domestic power relationships, institutional and structural economic rigidities, and the resulting proliferation of dual economies. The emphasis of the dependence theory was on external and internal institutional and political constraints. Both these theories emphasised the need for major new policies to eradicate poverty, to provide more diversified employment opportunities, and to reduce income inequalities (Todaro, 2009).

The Minsky theory, which emerged post-dependence theories, was often regarded as one of the major post-Keynesians theories. The most important recognition for Minsky relates to the fact that the structure of the economy affects its economic performance as well as the nature of employment (Wray, 2007). Arguably, Minsky accepted Keynes's argument that the two outstanding faults of capitalism are its arbitrary and inequitable distribution of income and persistent unemployment (Dodd, 2007). According to Minsky, better economic performance since World War II has not resolved these problems. In his view, the only way to address poverty was through a combination of policies that would euthanise the rentier; put in place a modest bias of taxes and transfers in favour of the poor; and maintain tight full employment (Minsky 1965, 1968, 1973). Minsky was convinced that the focus of any anti-poverty programme would have to be tilted toward jobs rather than transfers or welfare.

According to Wray (2007), Minsky argued that to address development challenges there is a need to introduce a "bubble-up" policy instead of a trickle-down economics. He advanced the argument that government spending should be targeted directly at the unemployed; instead of investing in sectoral activities with the hope that outcomes of these programmes will benefit the poor and unemployed people. For this reason, the Employer of Last Resort (ELR) programmes were advocated for implementation in that they would be able to assist people secure jobs and skills (Minsky, 1965). Further, Minsky advanced an argument that in the absence of full employment, there cannot be a minimum wage set; however, with the implementation of ELR programmes, the wages paid through these programme becomes an effective minimum wage.

#### 2.4.7.6 Key issues and debates on Public Works Programmes as part of Economic Development

Kuhl (2012) indicates that since the systematic inception of welfare in the 19th century, discussions on social security provision for marginalised groups in society has largely focused on how to deal with the extent of the state supporting the poor and unemployed people. At the same time, the concept of putting the unemployed to work by leveraging on state expenditure were considered, which started in discussions on economic theory in Europe and the United States of America. Kuhl (2012, p. 6) notes that "while early socialists such as Louis Blanc attempted short-lived experiments with public works initiatives in 1848, scholars concerned with the functioning of the

economy looked at public employment schemes in the context of the demands and characteristics of economic production and consumption".

In the 1980s, PWP strategies were used to advance actions taken in stimulating an economy during recession. The main attributes of these programmes were government spending, interest rate and tax reductions, with the assumption that the economy was to be primed to function properly once again. According to Anderson (1944), there was a view that government spending would stimulate private spending, which in turn would lead to economic expansion. To address the depressed economic conditions, which followed a war, an English scholar TR Malthus suggested that the employment of the poor in roads and public works programmes would help balance the disturbances of produce and consumption (Anderson, 1944).

Kuhl (2012) explains that in 1912 American writer William Hard published an article in The American Labour Legislation Review highlighting the increasing challenge of unemployment and advancing reasons why it would not be addressed through the private sector. In his article, as quoted in Kuhl (2012, p. 6), Hard (2012) wrote; "It does not seem likely that Capital, of its own motion, will step forward and offer a solution." Hard's writing initiated discussions on how to utilise public expenditure for PWPs, with considerations given on how to plan adequately for such initiatives.

Hard stated that a huge budget was required for the effective implementation of PWPs, and outlined projects that were to be selected for budget allocations upon the order of the president so that public works could be increased as soon as a depression hits (Hard, 1916). As such, PWPs became a government-led policy intervention with two-fold objectives: "They were meant to offer employment to the marginalised, but by doing so they simultaneously stimulated private industry through government expenditure in times of stagnation and recession" Kuhl (2012, p. 6). For the remainder of the decade, little was accomplished in the way of theoretical analysis on the pump-priming theory by Hard (Anderson, 1945).

However, due to the severe depression, which began in the latter part of 1929, there was a shift in the debate on welfare issues, with revived interest in depression remedies, including PWPs. Hudson (1985) remarks that from 1920 onwards, sluggish growth rates

and rising long-term unemployment revealed the structural nature of the economic crisis. Though classical and neoclassical economists were considering unemployment as a cyclical phase, and were in denial about the existence of involuntary unemployment basing their argument on the fact that there is no role for government in the economic affairs of the country as it relates to employment issues. However, with the continued collapse of the economy, which led to recession, these views were challenged as there was pressure to act against the enduring objections to governmental intervention in the economic field.

It is argued that the failure of the private sector to deal with unemployment worked in the favour of theorists like Hard, forcing government to intervene in addressing the problem of unemployment. Contrary to the demands of liberal-market mechanisms, there was a revival of the debate for state intervention. In 1936, Keynes claimed that the market economy had collapsed on its own and it was trapped in a vicious circle, from which it could not free itself, and, as such, government was required to help (White, 2008). Other theorists like Joseph Schumpeter did not agree with Keynes's methodological approach because he criticised neoclassical theorists who made heavy use of mathematics.

In 1924, in a tribute paid to Alfred Marshall, Keynes declared that the day of the theoretical economic discourse had passed and that there was a need for the modern economist to aim for immediate policy relevance (White, 2008). As such, from 1930 onwards, various states, including the United States, started focusing on full employment, economic growth and the welfare of their citizens, while "fiscal and monetary policies usually dubbed 'Keynesian' were widely deployed to dampen business cycles and to ensure reasonably full employment" (Harvey, 2005, p. 10). During this period, these programmes were used to create productive employment opportunities to promote both macroeconomic development for stimulating the economy and social protection outcomes. In the 1950s and 1960s, when many developing nations were able to achieve their economic growth targets without changes in the levels of living for the masses, there was a realisation that development cannot be defined only in narrow economic terms (Todaro, 2009). Hence, from the 1970s onwards, a number of policymakers and economists started defining economic development in terms of

reductions or the elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment within the context of a growing economy.

### 2.4.8 An introduction to Social Development

#### 2.4.8.1 Public Works Programmes as part of Social Development

Philip (2013, p. 22) states that "considerable debate exists on whether public works programmes (PWPs) should be regarded as part of social protection or not, with many believing that participation in these programmes is not a form of entitlement for the needy and therefore they cannot be considered as part of social protection". However, Dube (2013) affirms that PWPs such as the EPWP contribute to the social development of poor workers or beneficiaries in the form of benefits that accrue to them.

To be able define what social development is, it should therefore be noted that the concept of social development is context-specific and no single definition can be adopted to define it. MacPherson and Wong (1998) describe social development as a field that is broadly focused on problems such as poverty, health concerns, unemployment, lack of suitable housing and other social ills. The UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) (2011, p. 2) defines social development as "a process of change that leads to improvements in human well-being, social relations and social institutions, and that are equitable, sustainable and compatible with principles of democratic governance and social justice". The emphasis of the UNRISD definition is on social relations, institutional arrangements and political processes with the components regarded as central to the efforts of achieving desirable development outcomes. This definition also includes material achievements, for instance, good education and health as well as access to goods and services necessary for decent living. It also focuses on cultural, social and political achievements such as a sense of dignity, security, the ability to be part of a community through social and cultural recognition, and political representation.

The advocates of social development argue that strategies towards economic development should maximise people's participation in productive economy and the adoption of employment policies should create mass employment, invest extensively in human and social capital, enhance self-employment opportunities and ensure that incomes are raised for all citizens equitably (Midgely, 1995). Slim argues that

development is not a commodity to be measured by indicators such as the GNP because it entails a change process that enables people to take full charge of their own destinies to realise their full potential. Therefore, for any intervention that strives to be part of a social development, the fundamental principle should be the need to build in people the confidence, skills, assets and freedoms necessary to achieve this goal, which is the case for the EPWP, as embedded in its objectives. Even though there is no single definition for social development, the definition adopted for this study places people at the centre of development, while looking at ways in which to empower them to change their circumstances.

#### 2.4.8.2 Components of Social Development

According to MacPherson and Wong (1998), social development comprises welfare and social services, social security and social well-being. Literature reflects that social development is a process of upgrading the quality of life of people who have been denied qualifications and opportunities of welfare, social services and social security. Welfare is concerned with underprivileged people. Patel (2005, p. 20) broadly defines social welfare as "an integrated system of social policies, social services, benefits, programmes and social security to promote social development, social justice and social functioning in a caring and enabling environment". Welfare programmes and policies should entail the meeting of human needs, maximising opportunities, and the promotion of human empowerment and social inclusion. In the South African context, issues receiving attention through social welfare include poverty, joblessness, and the protection of children, youth and those who are vulnerable.

MacPherson and Wong (1998) indicate that social services include education, health, housing and communications. This is in line with the UNRISD (2011) definition on social development, which includes material achievements such as good education and health as well as access to goods and services necessary for decent living. It also focuses on cultural, social, and political achievements like a sense of dignity, security, the ability to be part of a community through social and cultural recognition, and political representation.

While social security is about providing security and a safety net, Dube (2014) highlights that PWPs contribute to the social development of poor workers or beneficiaries in the form of benefits that accrue to them. It is argued that PWPs have demonstrated the ability to achieve several of these social development goals through the benefits that accrue to the poor and the communities in which they are implemented. According to Lipton (1998), these include direct benefits, such as transfer and stabilisation benefits, as well as indirect benefits, like infrastructure development and food security.

Social well-being is a philosophical concept, beyond the physical context of quality of life. Midgley (1995) highlights that social development calls for the adoption of policies that create mass employment, invest extensively in human and social capital, enhance self-employment opportunities and ensure that incomes are equitable for all citizens. Patel (2005) explains that social development should follow a people-centred approach to ensure citizen participation in the decision-making processes towards building democratic and accountable institutions.

#### 2.4.8.3 Purpose of Social Development

According to Midgely (1995), the purpose of social development lies in offering a comprehensive macro-perspective that focuses on communities and societies, with an emphasis on planned interventions that promote a dynamic, change-oriented approach that is inclusive and universalistic, and above all seeks to harmonise social interventions and economic development efforts.

Gray (2006) further highlights that the purpose of social development theory and approach to social welfare is about positioning a macro policy framework for poverty alleviation, through a combination of social and economic goals. Gray mentions that developmental social welfare is the name given to South Africa's new welfare system moulded by the theory of social development as embodied in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997).

When examining social development theory, it is evident that the concept combines social and economic goals, thus requiring those involved in economic planning and policy-making to work in tandem with those focusing on social improvement. In this way, social development is considered the most effective way to deal with poverty. To

support this view, the proponents of social development argue that investment in social programmes enhance people's welfare, thereby achieving economic development. Midgley (1996, p. 2) states that social development is meant to link "social interventions to a dynamic process of economic development" and integrate economic and social policies. An assessment of development is primarily in terms of advances in social development, and the achievement of development is thoroughly dependent on social development.

MacPherson and Wong (1998) indicate that emerging from the World Summit on Social Development was a conclusion that the critical development issues for the 1990s must be based on social transformation, including justice, which requires that all people have the means to make a minimum decent living for themselves and their families. In relation to this view, Dube (2013) explains that in South Africa the PWP has demonstrated the ability to achieve several goals on social development through the benefits that accrue to the poor and to the communities in which the programme is implemented. Based on the above, the purpose of social development is regarded as an intervention that brings about planned social change aimed at promoting the well-being of societies.

In a nutshell, Gray (1996, p. 9) indicates that "any definition of social development should discourage dependency, promote the active involvement of people in their own development, employ a multi-faceted and multi-sector approach, and encourage partnership between the state and all other stakeholders in welfare".

#### 2.4.8.4 Processes of Social Development

Due to its broad nature, Midgley (2014) defines social development as a process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole within the context of a dynamic, multifaceted development process. Midgley (2014, p. 13-15) "identifies key aspects of social development as a dynamic process, progressive in nature, forming part of a multifaceted process consisting of the intergration of social, political, economic, cultural, environmental, gender and other dimensions". Furthermore, social development is an interventionist process, requiring input in different forms to achieve social developmental goals. According to Midgley (2014),

other key aspects of social development are that it is productivist, contributes positively to economic development and promotes people's well-being. Lastly, Midgley (2014) states that social development is a universal concept not only concerned about the vulnerable and poor people, but it is concerned with the population as a whole.

Gray (2006) argues that an examination of social development theories should be combined with economic goals, requiring those who are involved in economic planning and policy-making to work together with those working towards social improvement. In this way, social development would become an effective means to deal with poverty. Patel (2005) indicates that South Africa has officially adopted a developmental approach to social welfare with the EPWP adopted to deal with the challenge of unemployment. However, there seems to be no alignment between these two fields. Hence, in the National Planning Commission (2012), unemployment and poverty are identified as key challenges facing the country and both the social development and the EPWP are considered to have the potential to address these challenges.

#### 2.4.8.5 Established facts on Public Works Programmes as part of social development

Philip (2013) highlights that in developed world, social protection for the unemployed is based on a Keynesian logic. Its premise is on the fact that "unemployment is not the fault of the individuals affected, but it is a function of economic cycles and dynamics outside their control, and that the costs of unemployment should therefore be treated as social costs, and be borne at a societal level rather than shouldered by the individuals, households and communities directly affected. This underpinned the rise of the welfare state in Europe, with its strong systems of social protection for the unemployed" (Philip, 2013, p. 22 – 23).

In the developing world, however, social protection for the unemployed is sporadic, significantly raising the vulnerability of those affected. This implies that in the absence of social protection measures, the costs of unemployment are borne by those affected, their households and wider communities. In many instances, the burden of unemployment is carried by the poorest segment of the population; impoverished households that are further subjected to poverty. Social protection for the unemployed, however, is absent in much of the developing world. Considering the argument made by

Philip, UNRISD (2011) concedes that a focus on the social dimensions of development is now as urgent as ever.

UNRISD (2011) advances an argument that in comparing the immeasurable suffering be it from natural or human-induced crises, in conjunction with the incredible wealth accumulation by few individuals; as well the vast sum amount spent by governments to assist financial institutions, the resources dedicated to deal with the crisis of poverty, challenges the acceptable norms of justice. All the daily events of people's sufferings highlight the violation of human rights enshrined in many UN conventions relating to survival, childhood, health and happiness, freedom from fear, dignity and respect, and control over one's own life. Therefore, for as long as hundreds of millions of people worldwide are denied their basic rights, a need exists for continued policy-relevant research on issues of social development.

In the South African context, Philip (2013) highlights that even though PWPs are at times considered part of social protection, of safety net programmes, by definition, there are times when these programmes are used as a means to justify the abandonment of minimum standards of work and low payment of stipends. She argues that participation in these programmes creates a set of tacit and often under-recognised skills of work crucial to productivity in any economy. As quoted in Philip (2013), Irvine (1984) points to the established fact that those who lose employment start to lose the skills, habits and disciplines of work and that those who have never been employed, may never learn them.

Dube (2013) reflects that the contribution of the EPWP to the social development of both beneficiaries and host communities supports this view. He mentions that the income earned by beneficiaries working in the programme enables them to meet basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing. They also acquire skills and work experience from the programme, improving their chances of accessing jobs that are permanent or enabling them to become self-employed once the programme ends.

#### 2.4.8.6 Key issues and debates on social development

Philip (2013, p. 10) indicates that "part of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights includes the right to work; while the goal of full and productive employment is part of the founding statues of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), reasserted as part of the Global Jobs Pact signed in 2010 in the wake of the financial crisis". However, the declaration made by the United Nations, in the sub-text not provided, implies that the attainment of full employment is dependent on the performance of the labour market, which normally creates a limitation towards achieving the goal of full employment.

Philip (2013) argues that many economies, with the exception of few countries, have been able to achieve full employment, while the majority struggle with high unemployment rates that create a burden on societies owing to related increasing social and economic costs. Considering the effects these have on societies, it is argued that the focus on market-based employment policies only is not adequate to address the issue of unemployment; as such, the gap left by the markets often leaves scope for public employment. The ILO (2014) in highlighting the issue of high rates of unemployment in many countries and particularly the effects on the economy, has brought to the forefront the role that governments can play in employment creation.

In South Africa, the role of government in employment creation is reflected in various government policies such as the NDP, which highlights the inability of private-sector players to create sufficient employment opportunities for the unemployed, worsening the existing structural unemployment challenge facing the country. It recognises that the state should play a bigger, active role in the creation of employment opportunities. The argument advanced in the NDP is supported by Philip (2013) and indicates that PWPs can limit the impact of unemployment on societies by complementing the employment-creation efforts of non-state entities and addressing employment-related challenges.

As McCord (2007) puts it, PWPs are meant to achieve the objectives of social protection normally expressed in a broader context of protection policies, with their functions articulated within the social protection policy measures. McCord (2007), however, mentions that the context provided above is not the case for the EPWP, as the programme is implemented within a policy context in which the institution, design

and concept of the programme is separated from the social security system components, notwithstanding the role the programme has as a key policy intervention to alleviate poverty for the unemployed and poor people, who are not currently covered by the policy instruments rolled out by the Department of Social Development. She argues that the prevailing institutional arrangement of the EPWP, where coordination of the programme is managed through the Department of Public Works, reflects an isolation of the programme at an institutional level with regards to its social protection role, a situation that does not have a parallel with existing international PWPs.

While McCord is of the view that the EPWP is a social protection programme, Lieuw-Kie-Song & Philip (2010) argue that PWPs serve as an instrumental tool in protecting the most vulnerable while at the same time developing local infrastructure through the promotion of social and economic development. This view differs from McCord's assertions in that it suggests that the EPWP should not be confined to a social protection programme. Altman et al. (2007, p. 7) also argue that the "EPWP is meant to intensify labour absorption in the delivery of services and infrastructure, which is particularly important in the South African context with its high rate of long-term structural unemployment and marginalisation". In support of this debate, Du Toit (2005) remarks that the implementation of public employment programmes should be seen as a means for government to create jobs in its role as an influencer of the policy measures of players outside of government, in terms of how they design employment-creation programmes and the pace at which it should be done.

## 2.5 Key attributes of development to assess the role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment

In examining social development theories, it becomes evident that the concept of social development is a combination of social and economic goals. Midgley (2014) refers to social development as the process of planned change designed to improve the well-being of citizens that occurs in conjunction with the dynamic processes of economic development. In essence, the concept of social development is based on the need to improve social characteristics ranging from equity, participation, living standards and material wellbeing, enjoyment of citizenship entitlements, cultural and personal expressions, and other attributes that make up the quality of life.

Literature indicates that the value-add of the NYS programme includes the following; creating and encouraging a culture of service among young people in South Africa (Green Paper on NYS, 1998); developing the abilities of young people through service and learning (Green Paper on NYS, 1998); helping young people to enhance their employment outcomes; and increasing access to economic opportunities (Bodley-Bond and Cronin, 2013). Hence, for the purposes of this study, the attributes for the EPWP NYS programme have been approached from a youth-development perspective. A youth-development approach is rooted within the capabilities perspective (Sen 1999, Nussbaum 2001), which recognises the assets and capabilities that young people have, and seeks to understand the ways in which the programme can build on those capabilities to enhance their future employment prospects. The key attributes considered for this study, therefore, will include participation, skills development, living standards and material wellbeing.

### 2.5.1 Participation

The overall objectives of the EPWP NYS are stated as follows: to engage young South Africans in service delivery in order to strengthen youth participation in service delivery, to promote youth participation in the built environment and to assist youth to gain work-related skills necessary to access sustainable livelihood opportunities (Department of Public Works, 2017).

The advocates of social development argue that strategies towards economic development should maximize people's participation in productive economy and the adoption of employment policies should create mass employment, invest extensively in human and social capital, enhance self-employment opportunities, and ensure that incomes are raised for all citizens equitably (Midgely, 1995). The UN's Millennium Declaration (2000) further mentions that indicators of youth development include economic participation and skills development. Although society presents its needs and expectations to its youth through various rules of engagement, it tends to ignore that young people have needs as well. Youth are in a process of self-actualisation and self-realisation, but require some form of assurance, which Pittman (1993, p.8) says includes "feeling safe, cared for, valued, useful and spiritually grounded". Hence, a key objective of the NYS is to create and encourage a culture of service among young people in South

Africa (Green Paper on NYS, 1998). These provisions assure young people that their existence is meaningful and valued.

### 2.5.2 Skills development

One of the pillars of the EPWP NYS is skills development, to ensure that participants are better skilled to access job opportunities post programme participation. Johnson and Adam (2004), cited by Reddy (2006), suggest that investing in skills development makes a positive contribution to the increase of economic development. Todaro (2009) highlights that a critical aspect for development is an increase in labour productivity in all sectors of the economy to raise incomes and the standard of living. To achieve this partly, and most importantly, there should be improvements in the training and education of the existing and future labour force through an increase of human capital accumulation as referred to by economists. Cypher (2014) indicates for this to take place, learning should not only be provided through the formal schooling process, but it can also be provided via "learning by doing" at the workplace.

### 2.5.3 Living standards and material wellbeing

Many industries require skilled labour and so the provision of skills development in the delivery of PWPs is crucial in assisting participants to access better opportunities in the labour market and improve their standard of living. Cornel, Gambone and Smith (2000, p. 285) state that the common goals for youth development are "to become economically self-sufficient", "to be healthy and have good family and social relationships", and "to contribute to their community". Principally, it can be argued that developing young people will ensure that they become economically active and self-sufficient, that they are able to support their families and contribute to their wellbeing and, through good social relationships, contribute to their communities. This is in line with the argument provided by Todaro (2009), which indicates that three basic components or core values that serve as a conceptual basis towards the understanding of economic development exist, and they include sustenance, self-esteem and freedom. All these components relate to the fundamental human needs that find their expression in virtually all societies and cultures at all times. Within the context of development through meeting human needs, the living standards of individuals and material well-being improves.

## 2.6 Established frameworks to interpret empirical findings assessing youth employment programmes

This section will present the theoretical frameworks used in the research to interpret the research results. The capability approach to youth development framework will be discussed before developing a theory of change for the EPWP NYS programme.

### 2.6.1 The capability approach

As discussed above, the field of study for this research is development located within the economic and social development components. It is argued that youth development interventions are rooted in the capabilities framework, which aligns well with the social development approach to policy and practice. In the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (nd, p. 1), the capability approach is referred to as a "theoretical framework made up of two core normative claims: first, the claim that the freedom to achieve well-being is of primary moral importance, and second, that freedom to achieve well-being is to be understood in terms of people's capabilities, that is, their real opportunities to do and be what they have reason to value". It is implied in the capability approach that the freedom to achieve a complete well-being is a based on what people are able to do and to be, and thus the kind of a life they are effectively able to lead.

As discussed above, Patel et al. (2012, p.215) indicates that "economic development alone is not enough to help people escape poverty, and significant investment in human development such as poverty reduction, local economic development, employment creation, urban and rural development, providing healthcare, housing, education, social protection and developmental welfare services must be employed together to ensure the poor are advantaged to the full". In support of this view is Hawkins and Roa (2008), mention that three concrete components of social development are required for economic development, namely human, social and economic capital. The achievement of economic capital is related to vocational programmes, job placement, micro-enterprises, small-scale, individual or family owned business ventures and neighbourhood-based cooperative enterprises (Hawkins and Roa, 2008, Gray, 2010).

Patel (2015) explains that the social development approach is rooted in a human rights framework, which advocates for interventions that improve people's wellbeing. This approach departs from conventional approaches that focus only on economic or social outcomes in that it argues that interventions that seek to address both the social and economic needs of people are critical to enhancing their wellbeing. Fundamental to the social development approach is the key principle that promotes greater participation of people in their communities and societies, for their own benefit (as a freedom that is important in and of itself in Sen's terms) and for greater participation, which may contribute to better development outcomes in communities.

Applied to the world of work, a key tenet enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is to free the potential of each person and improve the quality of life of all. Work is a central aspect of inclusion, growth and the freeing of each individual's potential (Aliber, Kirsten, Maharaj, Nhlapo-Hlope and Nkoane, 2006). The social development model is a pluralistic one, noting that the state, private sector and civil society all have unique strengths, positionalities in society and access to different resources, and that when combined can bring about better outcomes. Philip (2013) highlights that in the developed world, social protection for the unemployed is based on Keynesian logic. Its premise is that "unemployment is not the fault of the individuals affected, but is a function of economic cycles and dynamics outside their control, and that the costs of unemployment should therefore be treated as social costs, and be borne at a societal level rather than shouldered by the individuals, households and communities directly affected. This underpinned the rise of the welfare state in Europe, with its strong systems of social protection for the unemployed" (Philip, 2013, p. 22 – 23).

To this end, the social development approach promotes interventions that bridge the divide between micro- and macro-level policies and interventions, in ensuring that all policy and programmatic work enhance at a broad level the wellbeing of people and society. In the context of youth issues, applying the social development approach to employment issues provides the theoretical background for the theory of change, which will be presented below. As mentioned above, as a starting point it is important to view young people as active agents of change in societies that have assets and capabilities they

can work with, and that any intervention given to them should seek to enhance opportunities for participation by activating those assets and capabilities, both within the intervention and as an outcome for greater participation in the labour market (Patel et al., 2015).

It will be demonstrated in the theory of change below that a key feature of the social development approach when applied to employment issues is the consideration of the connection between social and economic interventions. In this study, the focus is on the economic and social development aspects and we are testing the combination of human capital development and economic interventions. Further, we are interested in both the social and economic outcomes in order to assess whether interventions such as the EPWP NYS programme strengthen the social, personal and skills assets of individuals. Furthermore, the approach used leads us to reflect on the type of outcomes that interventions like the EPWP NYS programme contribute to issues of youth development.

The approach to social development is normative and shapes current social welfare policies in South Africa. However, significant gaps exist in the implementation of welfare programmes in the country, for instance young people above the age of 18 years who are not receiving grants or in employment programmes are not covered in the social welfare system (Aliber, Kirsten, Maharaj, Nhlapo-Hlope and Nkoane, 2006). As demonstrated above, there are challenges that impact young people in ways that reinforce social inequality. While fewer young people from privileged households are able to move along conventional pathways from school into further or higher education, the pathways to the world of work for those from poor households are likely to be inaccessible. Another factor to be considered is that with many people migrating to urban areas, traditional pathways to livelihoods, such as access to communal land and the accumulation of livestock as assets, no longer exist in the greater scheme of things.

Against this backdrop, the key question to be asked is, what should the pathways to employment for young people look like, particularly for those who are not able to follow the conventional pathways of moving from school to tertiary education and then getting a job? The answer lies partly in improving access to further and higher

education. In the absence of such seamless and structured pathways to employment, Heinz (2009) argues that there is a need to introduce new and different employment opportunities as well as to expand interventions that support young people to transition into the labour market. There is room for alternative interventions in the form of youth employment programmes such as the EPWP NYS that might act as stepping-stones for young people to effectively transition to employment.

### 2.6.2 The theory of change

Within the field of evaluation, the theory of change is the most popular framework used in particular for results-based management (Bester, 2012). Coryn, Noakes, Westine and Schröter (2011) highlight that the theory of change is an element of programme theory and the core of theory-driven forms of evaluation. Its origins can be traced to Ralph Tyler's concept of constructing and testing programme theory for evaluating interventions in the 1930s. The framework maps out the change process (Rogers, 2013) and its purpose is to improve programme design, implementation and evaluation processes (Johnson, 2012). Rogers (2014, p.3) argues that a good theory of change outlines "how change is expected to come about and how activities are understood to contribute to a series of results that produce the final intended impacts". Vogel (2012) indicates the most common elements of theory of change are context, actors, outcomes, pre-conditions, indicators, interventions, processes and activities leading to long-term change, assumptions, rationales and narrative. In this study, the theory of change that will be considered is illustrated in Figure 2.2 below.

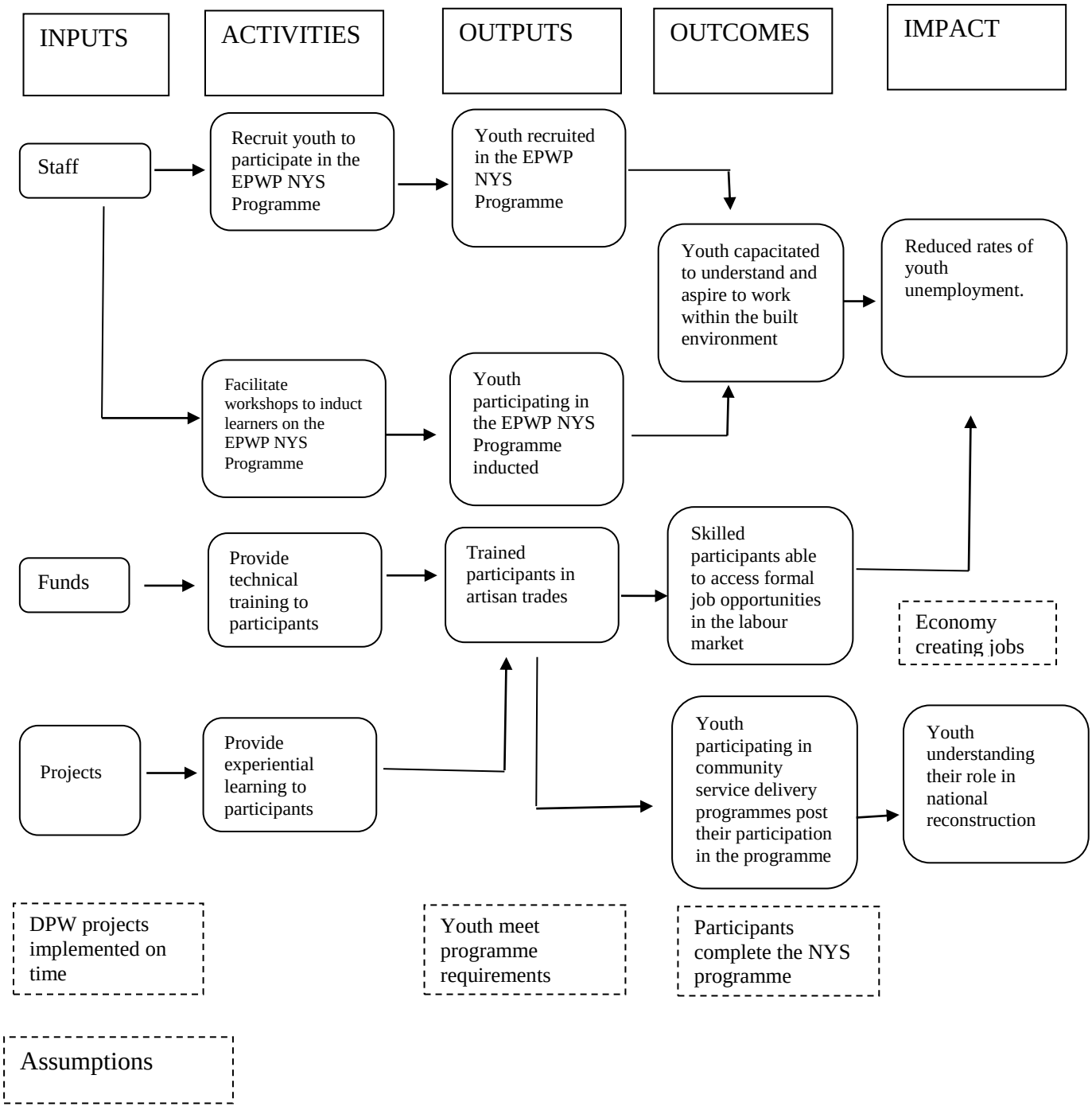



**Figure 3: EPWP NYS Programme Theory of Change**

## 2.7 Assessing the role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment: a conceptual framework

The purpose of this research is to assess the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment. This section will provide a conceptual framework for this study. Maxwell (2013) describes a conceptual framework as a collection of systematically discussed concepts, assumptions and theories supporting and informing one's research strategy, design, procedure and methods. A conceptual framework outlines what should be studied as well as the key attributes (qualitative) or variables (quantitative) and their relationship.

Preliminary analysis indicates with the introduction of democracy in 1994, in driving the country's development agenda, government made a recognition that the National Public Works Programme (NPWP) is a potential instrument to use labour-intensive methods and public works programmes to help address the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality that are facing the country. To respond to the persisting complex and inter-related challenges of poverty and unemployment, the GDS convened in 2003 culminated with a social contract between government, labour, community and private sector and agreement on the continuation and growth of PWPs. According to the Department of Public Works (2016, p. 1) the GDS agreement stated that "EPWPs can provide poverty and income relief through temporary work for the unemployed to carry out socially-useful activities". In the GDS agreement, the design of the EPWP projects had to equip participants with a combination of training and work experience, so as to enhance their ability to earn a living in the future. From inception, it was envisaged that the programme should be large enough to have a substantial impact on employment especially for youth, women and poor people in rural areas. As such, other programmes in the EPWPs focusing on the youth took form of the National Youth Service (NYS) Programme.

From October 2003, the NYS was introduced in the EPWP to address high levels of youth unemployment by creating opportunities for voluntary service and skills development for young people (Department of Public Works, 2017). Since inception of

the NYS, there has been monitoring of the number of work opportunities created, however, there is a lack of evidence regarding the extent to which the programme contributes to the employment outcomes of young people.

Recent studies undertaken on the EPWP have focused on the broader outcomes rather than those specific to youth programmes like the NYS. Lam, Leibrandt and Mlatsheni (2008), for example, highlight that South Africa is an important case study for youth unemployment studies because research on the issue in the country is new. Qualitative, literature review and document analysis seem to be the most preferred research methods of past studies on the research problem, with few favouring quantitative methods. The qualitative studies employed case study design, with either single or multiple case studies, and there was limited use of comparative analysis studies of municipalities on a concurrent function of national, provincial and local government level.

In past studies undertaken to evaluate the EPWP, theories prevalently used to interpret the research findings included the theory of change, which is most popular within the evaluation field, particularly in results-based management (Bester, 2012). Past studies included primary data sources such as senior officials from public service who were involved in the implementation of the EPWP. Notable limitation with regards to most of the past studies is the exclusion of programme participants who are affected by how these programmes are delivered.

Past studies undertaken indicate that the EPWP must not be seen as a solution to the problem of unemployment. Altman (2004), for example, mentions that there are various causes of unemployment in South Africa, which are manifold and complex because the root cause is structural rather than cyclical. Altman further remarks that the skill composition of the labour force, the development trajectory of the country with heavy reliance on capital-intensive industries, and the rapid reduction of lower skill jobs in the mining and agriculture sectors, have protected the absorption of unskilled and semi-skilled labour in the economy, which accounts for the vast majority of the unemployed. Therefore, it is essential that the contribution of the EPWP in the economy is evaluated against this backdrop. While the programme provides an important avenue for labour

absorption and income payment to poor households in the short to medium term, it is critical to note that the design of the EPWP is not meant to serve as a policy instrument which will address the crisis of structural unemployment. However, the crisis of unemployment faced by the country would require a more forceful and sustainable intervention to place the economy on a labour-absorbing development path.

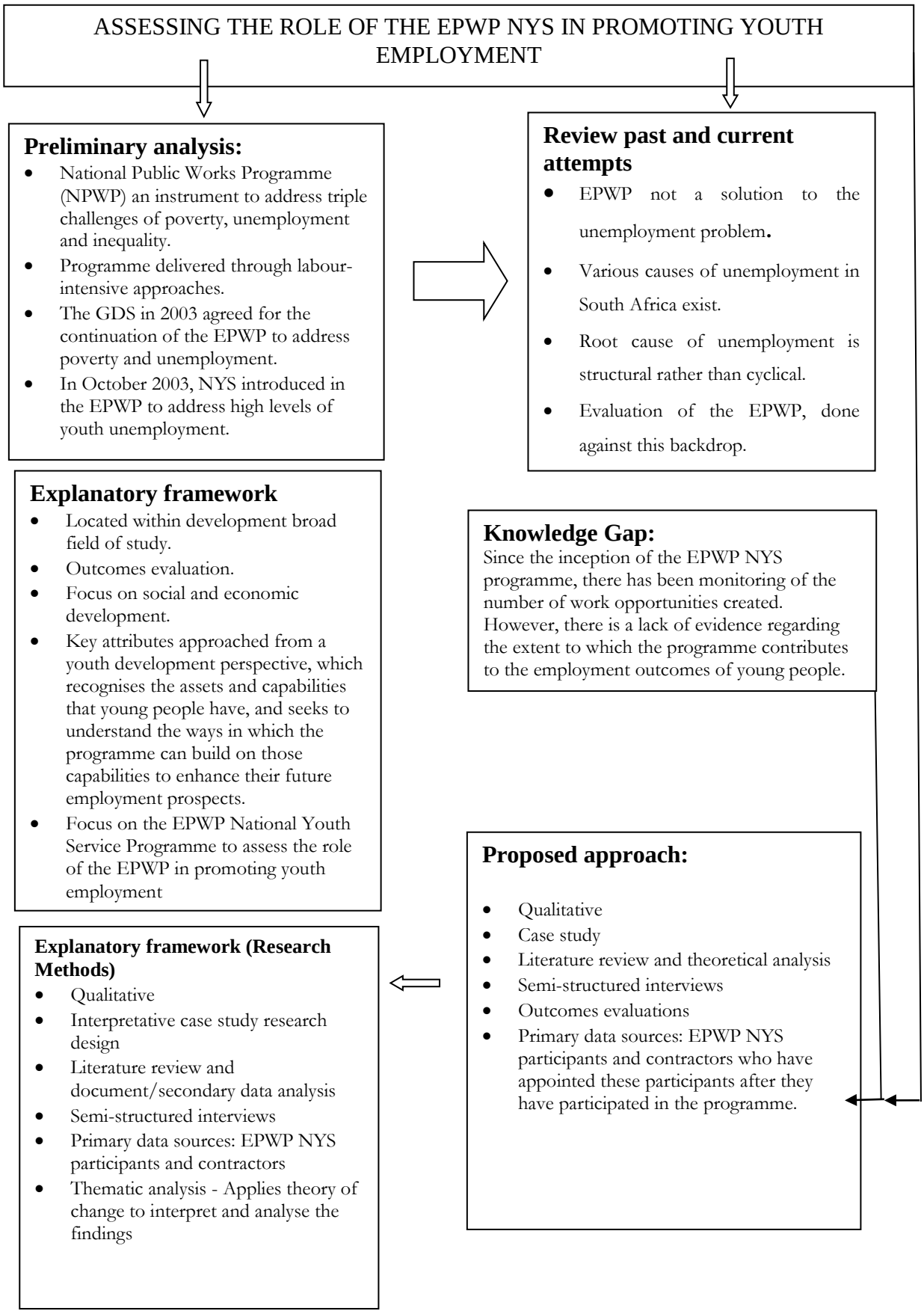
Despite the fact that there are programmes like the NYS, the Statistics South Africa Labour Force survey of 2017 shows that the rate of youth unemployment in South Africa increased to 55,90 percent in the second quarter of 2017, from 54,30 percent in the first quarter of 2017. From 2013 to 2017, the average rate of youth unemployment in South Africa was 51,93 percent, reaching an all-time high of 55,90 percent in the second quarter of 2017. The report further indicates that 38,6 percent of those in the 15 to 34 age category are unemployed. This figure excludes those who have become discouraged from seeking work. Furthermore, an estimated 50 percent of those between the ages of 20 and 24 years are neither in employment nor in education and training. The youth unemployment rate of 55,90 percent highlights the need for government to develop multiple strategies to increase employment, and support inclusion and social cohesion.

The knowledge gap identified in past studies relates to the extent to which the EPWP contributes to increasing youth employment. This study will assess the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment. To close this knowledge gap, a theory of change on the EPWP NYS programme is developed to interpret and analyse the findings, as outlined in Section 2.6. The research builds on a literature review as well as the identified research gap, and will be an outcomes evaluation study that assesses the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment. The broad field of study is development. It focuses on the two components of economic and social development to gain an in-depth understanding of PWPs as interventions to address the challenge of unemployment. It is argued that youth development interventions are rooted in the capabilities framework, which aligns well with the social development approach to policy and practice. Patel et al. (2012, p.215) indicates that "economic development alone is not enough to help people escape poverty, and significant investment in human development such as poverty reduction, local economic development, employment

creation, urban and rural development, providing healthcare, housing, education, social protection and developmental welfare services must be employed together to ensure the poor are advantaged to the full". Hawkins and Roa (2008) mention that three concrete components of social development are required for economic development, namely human, social and economic capital. The achievement of economic capital is related to vocational programmes, job placement, micro-enterprises, small-scale, individual or family owned business ventures, and neighbourhood-based cooperative enterprises (Hawkins and Roa, 2008, Gray, 2010).

This research is a qualitative, interpretative case study research design that uses purposive and convenient sampling, literature review, semi-structured interviews and content analysis to uncover in-depth data on the intervention Nzimakwe (2008), Mubangizi and Mkhize (2013), Phillips (2004). To address some of the limitations of most qualitative studies, which relied on top government officials as primary data sources in the sample, this research will include youth who participated in the EPWP NYS programme from the 2014/15 to 2016/17 financial years. In addition, contractors who are the current employers of programme participants will also be interviewed to gather their views on the role of EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment. Figure 3 below presents a visual picture of the research conceptual framework for this study.

**Figure 4: Research conceptual framework**



# 3 RESEARCH STRATEGY, DESIGN, PROCEDURE AND METHODS

This chapter discusses the research strategy, design, procedure and methods used for this study. It further provides justification for the choices made and the process that unfolded in undertaking the research, which is argued by Bryman (2012) as crucial in answering the research question. In section 3.1, a brief description of the three research strategies is provided, with a justification as to why a qualitative strategy was employed. Section 3.2 follows a similar approach in that it provides a brief description of the different research designs and a justification as to why the chosen case study design was used for this research. Section 3.3 discusses the research procedure and methods employed, and provides a rationale for those utilised in the study. Section 3.4 describes the reliability and validity measures applied in this research to make it credible within the context of qualitative research, as well as the measures employed to address these concepts. In closing, Section 3.5 provides the limitations of the research.

## 3.1 Strategy

Creswell (2009) and Wagner, Kawulich and Garners (2012) refer to a research strategy as the plans, procedures and conceptualisations of the research with detailed data collection and analysis methods. In research strategy, three different approaches can be used to find answers to research questions, and these are qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches (Bryman, 2012; Kumar, 2014). In this study, a qualitative research strategy has been used to assess the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment.

Merriam (2009) explains that the qualitative research strategy is located within the interpretivist paradigm, with an emphasis on gathering rich data to obtain different meanings and interpretations of the same phenomena in different settings. Bryman (2012) further explains that the focus of the qualitative research strategy is on using words rather than numbers to collect and analyse data. Other authors indicate that a qualitative research strategy is suitable when a researcher is trying to present the experiences and perspectives of people towards a certain issue or phenomenon that exists in their social or cultural context (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2015). In this regard, Yin

(2015) maintains that the researcher's values, principles and views on the existing phenomenon should not matter at all and that what should matter is the perspectives or experiences of what is studied. Houser (2015) further argues that the qualitative research strategy is suitable when the aim of the research is to understand a situation that cannot be explained through a large quantitative scale. A key strength of the qualitative research strategy is its ability to obtain in-depth, rich, descriptive data, with the researcher becoming the instrument for data collection, analyses and interpretation (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012; Creswell, 2013). A noticeable weakness of this strategy, however, relates to the fact that the results of the study cannot be generalised to the findings of the entire population (Houser, 2015).

This research has reviewed past studies that have successfully applied a qualitative research strategy to assess the outcomes of the EPWP in its contribution to the formal employment of participants post their participation in the programme. Nzimakwe (2008) used a qualitative research strategy in a study to assess how the EPWP addresses unemployment and poverty in South Africa. The use of the qualitative research strategy in this study enabled the researcher to explain how the EPWP, in the infrastructure sector in particular, can contribute to employment creation in South Africa, provided it is not seen as the only solution to the unemployment problem faced by the country. The study concluded that the EPWP has the potential to make a significant contribution to employment creation, poverty alleviation and skills development.

Likewise, a study by Mubangizi and Mkhize (2013) applied the qualitative research strategy to establish people's views and perceptions of the EPWP programme, and consisted of one-on-one interviews with selected officials to gain a deeper understanding of the situation. The use of a qualitative research strategy enabled the study to assess how the EPWP in EThekwini Municipality assisted participants to secure formal employment post their participation in the programme. The study found that most participants of the EPWP were able to secure opportunities, with some going on to find other positions in the organisations in which they were placed while in the programme. As a result, they were able to continue their work on pertinent social development issues in the communities in which they served.

Besides the two studies presented above, numerous other studies applied a qualitative strategy to evaluate the outcomes of the EPWP in relation to its contribution to the promotion of employment. Most studies reviewed in Section 2.3 preferred the qualitative research strategy to assess the outcomes of the EPWP. Taking cue from all the studies reviewed, this research applied the qualitative research strategy, drawing insights from academic literature and past studies on the role of the EPWP in promoting youth employment. To obtain in-depth, rich, descriptive data, the researcher collected data from a small-scale sample of nine EPWP NYS participants and three contractors who appointed participants who were placed with them while in the programme. In addition, data collected from this study has been presented from the point of view of the participants, based on their experiences of the EPWP NYS programme.

## 3.2 Research Design

A research design is described as "an architectural blueprint that [should be] followed in the construction of a building" (Wagner, Kawulich, and Garner, 2012, p. 21). Kumar (2010) describes a research design as a roadmap followed during the research process to guide in finding answers to the research questions in as valid, objective and accurate manner as possible. Bryman (2012) and Wagner et al. (2012) identifies five generic research designs, namely cross-sectional, longitudinal, case study, comparative and experimental. Fundamental to all is that a research design is a manner in which a researcher collects data. This study adopted the case study design as the research focuses on the EPWP NYS programme, which targets the youth.

"Case study designs are based upon the assumption that the case being studied is typical of cases of a certain type, and therefore a single case can provide insights into the events and situations prevalent in a group from where the case has been drawn" (Kumar, 2010, p. 365). Case study research designs are more favourable in qualitative research methods because they assist to provide an in-depth examination of a case being studied (Bryman, 2012). Additionally, case studies are useful when exploring an area about which little is known or where there is an attempt to gain a holistic understanding of a situation (Kumar, 2010). In the context of this research, the aim of the study was to assess the role of the EPWP in promoting youth employment. Since little is known about the role

of the EPWP in promoting youth employment, the NYS programme has been chosen as a case to be studied to enable the researcher to do an in-depth assessment of the EPWP.

Furthermore, an advantage of case study research design is triangulation because the design makes it possible for the researcher to triangulate data with various data sources, including in-depth interviews, observations, secondary records and focus groups (Creswell, 2013; Kumar, 2014; Houser, 2015). The intent of adopting a case study research design in this research was motivated by fact that the researcher wanted to explore the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment, based on the experiences of programme participants as well as contractors who had appointed some of these participants. Additionally, the case study research design allowed the researcher to obtain rich descriptive information from the interviews conducted. The design also facilitated triangulation in this research, which enhanced its validity. To triangulate the data for this study, different data sources were used, including primary (from the interviews) and secondary data (the NYS Green Paper, EPWP performance reports, NYS frameworks and strategies, and past research studies on the EPWP).

Creswell (2013) argues that before deciding on a research topic to be studied, a determination should be done of whether the research design is suitable for achieving the research objectives. To this end, the research reviewed past studies on the EPWP, with the use of the case study research design. A study by Phillips et al. (2009) to evaluate the performance of the EPWP in the North West used the case study research design. The aim of the study was to assess the performance of the EPWP in the North West in the first five years of the programme, and to produce recommendations for scale-up of the programme going forward. The study included case studies of three EPWP sectors, interviews and workshops, and a desktop research of the programme documents. The study found that strong political and administrative support is required if the EPWP programme is to meet its outcomes.

Similarly, a study by Mubangizi and Mkhize (2013) used a case study research design to establish the extent to which the beneficiaries of the EPWP in eThekwini Municipality have been able to obtain and sustain decent jobs beyond their involvement with the municipality. The application of a case study research design enabled the research to

uncover different perceptions and understanding from participants and officials on what the EPWP aims to achieve. The study found that some of the participants interviewed were happy just to have found employment of any kind, while those who had received training in courses such as HIV/AIDS and gardening had subsequently found other positions within the municipality, where they were continuing to work on pertinent social development issues in the community. The study triangulated the data through the application of different data collection methods, including one-on-one interviews, observations and secondary data document analysis. The triangulation enhanced the validity of the study.

This study takes its cue from studies by Phillips et al. (2009), and Mubangizi & Mkhize (2013), which explore the research problem within a bounded context. It considers the EPWP NYS programme as a bounded context within which to study the EPWP. The study applies a case study research design to obtain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the research problem. This research also provides in detail the views and perceptions of the programme participants and the contractors in terms of the role the EPWP NYS plays in promoting youth employment.

## 3.3 Research procedure and methods

This section will present the data collection procedures and methods used in the research. Section 3.3.1 will discuss data collection instruments used, while section 3.3.2 will outline the target population studied and the sampling techniques used, and section 3.3.3 the ethical approach applied when conducting the research. Section 3.3.4 will cover data collection and storage, and section 3.3.5 the data processing and analysis applied in the research. Finally, section 3.3.6 will conclude with a description of respondents for the research.

### 3.3.1 Data collection instrument

Data collection instrumentation is a "document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit [research data and] information…" (Babbie, 2015, p.248). Annum (2017) indicates that data collection instruments refer to the tools used for the collection of data and include questionnaires, interviews, observations and reading. The

two fundamental types of instruments used for data collection include interviews and observation schedules. For this research study, an interview schedule was used as a data collection instrument to guide the interviews conducted with former participants of the EPWP NYS programme.

In research, the sources of data usually inform the type of instrument appropriate for data collection; instruments are designed and implemented to collect what needs to be known (Wagner et al., 2012). The researcher must ensure that the data collection instrument chosen is both valid and reliable because the validity and reliability of any research relies on the appropriateness of the instruments chosen. As stated by Silverman (2011), the reliability and validity of research is largely dependent on the data collection instruments, and it is important that they produce reliable and valid data.

Gill et al. (2008) indicates that a variety of methods of data collection in qualitative research exists, including observations, textual or visual analysis (for example, books or videos) and interviews (individual or group). Interviewing is a method commonly used to collect information from people (Kumar, 2014, p. 176). Three fundamental types of research interviews exist, namely structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Gill et al., 2008). This research employed a semi-structured interview schedule to collect data. The use of an unstructured data collection instrument is preferred when little is known about the topic under study, while a structured instrument is considered more appropriate for a study where information is already available. The advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they are able to accommodate new information that may arise during data collection; information that may have been overlooked or not covered in the interview schedule (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012; Bryman, 2012). Semi-structured interviews allow for flexibility, giving the researcher the opportunity to probe for further information with follow-up questions where clarity or explanation may be required.

Generally, most studies of the EPWP have used semi-structured interviews. A study by Moyo (2013) to investigate the efficacy of the EPWP in increasing participants' subsequent employability utilised semi-structured interviews. The instrument allowed the researcher to build rapport with respondents who were willing to talk openly and discuss personal material. Furthermore, the approach allowed for more time for

questions to follow up on interesting points, including issues raised by respondents that the researcher had not anticipated. The study found that employment in public works did not enhance participants' access to other employment opportunities.

In a study by Phillips et al. (2009) to evaluate the performance of the EPWP in the North West, semi-structured interviews were undertaken with local, provincial and national officials as well as contractors. The interviews assisted with identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the programme in achieving its objectives. The study was unable to determine whether the projects in the EPWP are implemented in accordance with programme objectives, and identified a need to reinforce the understanding of the programme among its implementers in order to be able to achieve its intended outcomes.

A semi-structured interview schedule was developed for this study (Appendix 1.1) and contains an introductory paragraph that presents the purpose of the study. The questions are divided into three sections: the first section includes a set of background information questions; the second includes questions to assess aspects that facilitate the employment outcomes of participants from the EPWP NYS programme; while the last covers questions for the contractors interviewed. The interview schedule was used in the conducting of interviews to guide the questions and ensure that the same wording is used with all participants and in the same order that they appear (Bryman, 2012). However, during the course of the interviews ideas for further questions emerged, which were not covered in the interview schedule initially developed. The probing done when asking questions was to obtain rich information and this process allowed for the triangulation of the data (Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2012).

### 3.3.2 Target population and sampling

#### 3.3.2.1 Target Population

Conceptually, Malhotra (2010) describes a target population as a specific collection or universe of many cases or several units or elements or objects – such as people, firms, institutions, organisations, places, cities, regions and countries, as well as employees or members of a particular firm, institution, organisation, city or region. The target

population for this study is youth across all provinces who participated in the EPWP NYS programme from the 2014/15 to 2016/17 financial years, as well as all Gauteng-based contractors who employed some of these youth post-programme participation.

This study determined its target population by drawing insight from past studies of the EPWP. A study by Phillips et al. (2009), titled *Evaluation of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the North West*, assesses the performance of the EPWP in the province in the first five years of implementation. The target population included participants of the programme and contractors such as engineers.

#### 3.3.2.2 Sampling or selecting respondents from the target population

Bryman (2012) describes a sample as a segment or a subset of the target population that is selected to actually respond to the research data collection instrument(s). Technically, this sample is meant to represent the target population from which it is drawn and, eventually, the research results should be generalised to the population (Neuman, 2014). Sampling is therefore the process of selecting or drawing respondents or participants from the target population (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, and Painter 2010; Wild and Diggines, 2013). In qualitative studies, the goal of sampling is to explore a deeper understanding of how people view an issue, event and problem in their social or cultural settings, however, generalisability is compromised (Neuman, 2011). Among the advantages of sampling is the ability to save time, money and human resources (Kumar, 2014). A disadvantage of sampling, however, relates to the fact that it can compromise the accuracy in findings because of the estimate made from respondents (Kumar, 2014).

Wagner (2012) indicates that there are probability and non-probability sampling techniques. This research applied the non-probability sampling technique, which is usually used in cases where people are selected because they have an interest and are available to participate in the research (Laher and Botha, 2012). An advantage of this technique is that it is convenient and inexpensive. Additionally, Kumar (2014) argues, qualitative, non-probability studies are found to be highly relevant. Non-probability sampling techniques include convenience, judgmental or purposive, expert, snowball and quota sampling (Kumar, 2014; Neuman, 2011; Bryman, 2012). This study uses a combination of convenience and purposive sampling.

Purposive sampling implies that the cases, units or members should be (i) typical of the target population (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, and Painter 2010), and (ii) strategically relevant to the research (Bryman, Bell, Hirschsohn et al. 2011), that is, the selection should be "based on the requirements of the research questions or theoretical considerations" (Neuman 2011, p. 530). In addition, Laher and Botha (2012) mention that in purposive sampling the researcher is guided by previous researchers, skill and experience in the field, and innovation to find means of ensuring that relevant people participate in the study. In many instances, the researcher approaches people whom they think will be able and willing to share the required information (Kumar, 2014). The study took its cue from a study by Slindile and Barnes (2017), which used non-probability purposive sampling to identify and select participants in skills training programmes and implementers of the programmes funded by the NSF. In this study, the researcher used her own judgment to select participants with various characteristics to be able to obtain different viewpoints.

Convenience sampling differs from purposive sampling in that expert judgment is not used to select a representative sample of elements (Battaglia, 2011, p.525). In convenience sampling, the selection of respondents is based on the criteria of ease of availability to obtain a sample. For this study, the most convenient and affordable methods of sampling participants were considered and participants were chosen according to availability as well as relevance to the programme. This decision was based on the limited time and budget available to complete the study. The researcher had decided on a sample of 10 participants, but only managed to secure nine for the interviews. In addition, the researcher interviewed three contractors out of a sample of four who had appointed participants from the EPWP NYS programme post-participation.

In drawing a sample for this study, cue was taken from a study by Slindile and Barnes (2017), which assessed the impact on beneficiaries of training initiatives funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) through the National Skills Fund (NSF). The initiatives are implemented by various entities and, for the purpose of the study, the EPWP under the Department of Public Works (DPW) was selected as a targeted sample owing to the size and breadth of the project. The EPWP is implemented on a national scale with thousands of participants trained, yet the sample

size for the study was only 25 participants. This sample included three participants involved at implementation level and 16 beneficiaries of skills programme interventions. The sample size was sufficient to create stability among the views expressed in the study (De Vos et al., 2011, p. 358).

### 3.3.3 Ethical considerations when collecting research data

While there are several guiding principles on ethical considerations, Neuman (2014) mentions that ethical considerations provide for the adoption of legitimate and moral research procedures and methods. In the pursuit of scientific knowledge and its ultimate benefits, researchers should consider the rights of research participants and respondents (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012), that is, their "dignity, self-esteem, privacy and democratic freedoms" (Neuman, 2014, p.145). According to De Vos et al. (2011, p.113), "research should be based on mutual trust, acceptance, cooperation, promises and well-accepted conventions and expectations between all parties involved."

To ensure adherence to research ethics for this study, which is provided by literature such as De Vos et al. (2011), approval was obtained from the University Ethics Office prior to commencement. Participants were approached via telephone and the researcher introduced herself to each as a government official employed by the national Department of Public Works within the EPWP branch, which is responsible for the coordination of the EPWP across all spheres of government. The researcher informed the participants that she was, however, contacting them in her personal capacity for the purposes of her research studies as a student of Wits University. The researcher asked if they would be willing to participate in her study and requested that they avail themselves for an interview that would take approximately one hour. They were further informed that their participation should be voluntary and that any information obtained for the research would be treated as confidential and not used for any work-related purposes. Bless, Higson and Sithole (2013) mention that unethical research behaviour involves misrepresentation of facts from research participants or any form of dishonesty from the researcher or violation of the privacy of participants, sharing confidential information about the participants or revealing any personal information.

To abide by research ethics and ensure no harm is done to the research participants, they should be provided with complete information and their privacy not be invaded. To fulfil this requirement, participants were reminded that their participation is voluntary and they had a right to withdraw from the process. Before proceeding with the interviews, the researcher requested permission from each participant to record the conversation and informed them that the recordings would remain anonymous and be safeguarded for privacy. Participants were also informed that should they wish to withdraw from the study, the recordings would be discarded.

Taking cue from Morris (2011), the research interview schedule (Annexure A), which included the consent form, was given to all participants prior to commencement of the interviews. The interviewees were then asked to sign the consent form and given an opportunity to ask questions for clarity. Interviews, and the recording thereof, were done after the consent forms had been signed. Moreover, data collected were not shared with anyone, including the national Department of Public Works EPWP branch to ensure the privacy of the interviewees was protected and that they were not harmed in any way. All information and data collected during the interviews was handled with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity. The signed consent forms were kept private and confidential, and a number instead of a name was assigned to each participant's transcription to ensure anonymity.

### 3.3.4 Data collection and storage

#### 3.3.4.1 Data collection process

Kumar (2014) indicates there are major two processes of gathering information in a research, namely primary and secondary data collection. Information collected by means of the first approach uses primary sources for data collection, while secondary sources are used in the latter approach. For primary sources, the collection of data is from first-hand information obtained from the participants of a research study. Extracting data from official records, articles, journals, magazines and books all fall within the category of secondary data sources (Kumar, 2014).

This research utilises a combination of primary and secondary data sources. As noted above, semi-structured interviews were employed as a data collection method through face-to-face interviews the respondents (De Vos *et al*, 2011). Face-to-face interviews are commonly used in semi-structured interviews (Try, 2007) and can take place in different environments, including office spaces and parks or restaurants, and suitable to be used for different members of the society (Thwala, 2009). Furthermore, interviews can take place with individuals or in groups. A key strength of this method is that it allows the interviewer to judge the quality of the responses provided, notice if a question has been properly understood, and encourage the respondent to elaborate where the responses are not adequate or clear.

Taking cue from a research by Thwala (2009), face-to-face interviews were conducted and recorded after obtaining permission from the participants. The first phase of the interviews started with those who participated in the EPWP NYS programme between 2014 and 2016. These interviews were conducted at venues convenient for the participants and close to where they reside. The second phase of the interviews were conducted with the contractors who had appointed some of the EPWP NYS participants post their participation in the programme. These interviews took place at the offices where the contractors operate. Guided by the past research studies reviewed, the researcher provided all interviewees with the consent form and explained the interview process prior to conducting the interviews. The interview guide constituted a set of similar questions for all participants, and another set of similar questions for the contractors.

At the start of the interviews, the researcher informed the interviewees of the title and purpose of the research, the intended use of the data, the duration of the interview and the processes that will be undertaken to protect their privacy. In addition, the content of the consent form was explained to the participants and they were requested to sign if they agreed with its contents. All participants signed the consent form. All interviews were recorded, as recommended by Magrath & Walsh (2012). In closing the interviews, interviewees were given an opportunity to ask any questions or share additional information in relation to the research, and were asked for permission to be contacted should the researcher require additional information and for purposes of member checks (Magrath and Walsh, 2012). Interviews were scheduled for one hour with each

participant and for 30 minutes with each contractor. Most of the interviews with participants, however, were completed within 45 minutes, with two lasting 90 minutes due to the sharing of additional information. Interviews with contractors took place as scheduled.

Creswell (2013) highlights that data storage is critical for any research study, and this process should receive adequate attention in the study. The data collected in this research and the scripts transcribed from interviews were safeguarded and stored in different formats, including a voice recorder for raw data, electronic data files for the scanned copies of the interview notes, as well as Dropbox for the transcripts. To ensure the information is accessible only to the researcher, passwords were created to access the folders where this information was stored.

### 3.3.5 Data processing and analysis

#### 3.3.5.1 Data processing

Data processing involves the preparation of data for analysis. Kumar (2014) mentions that the data available to the researcher in the processing stage is still raw. To process this data, the researcher should edit or remove discrepancies (Kumar, 2014). The most common method to process data in qualitative studies is transcribing recorded audios interviews and determining themes (Bryman, 2012; Magnusson & Marecek, 2015; Creswell, 2013; Kumar, 2014). The process of transcribing is time-consuming, and can take more than five hours to transcribe a one-hour interview (Bryman, 2012; Magnusson & Marecek, 2015). Magnusson and Marecek (2015) argue that transcription should happen simultaneously with the data collection process and immediately after each interview to ensure that no information recorded is lost. Furthermore, when transcribing data, the researcher must at all times adhere to ethical protocols and refrain from using the real names of the participants in the transcripts (Creswell, 2013; Ogletree & Kawulich, 2012; Magnusson & Marecek, 2015).

Wagner, Ogletree & Kawulich, and Garner (2012) indicate that there is a distinction between the processing of qualitative-study theory-driven themes and experimental data-driven themes. In qualitative studies, coding is required when conceptualising

themes from empirical data and information. This process entails the following steps: 1) transcribing data from audio into text; 2) conceptualising themes from theory contained in the literature review; 3) fragmenting data into themes from literature review; 4) conceptualising themes from data or information; and 5) fragmenting data into themes derived from data or information.

This research has reviewed past studies and taken its cue for data processing from literature by Magnusson and Marecek (2015). The transcribing process was done at the same time as the data-collecting process. Magnusson and Marecek (2015) suggested that data should be transcribed after each interview, the transcribing process in this study happened in the same manner. Audio recordings from the interviews were transcribed at the end of the each data-collection process.

#### 3.3.5.2 Data analysis

Data analysis entails the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data (De Vos et al., 2011, p. 397). De Vos et al. (2011), Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (2012) indicate that data analysis involves the task of reducing the size of raw data, sifting significant from trivial information, identifying significant patterns, and communicating the findings or observations from the analysed data. In qualitative research, various methods exist for data analysis, including content analysis, thematic analysis, narrative analysis, phenomenological analysis, discourse analysis and grounded theory analysis (Kumar, 2014; Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Kawulich & Holland, 2012).

This study employs thematic direct content analysis, which is a combination of thematic and content analysis. Wagner (2012) describes thematic content analysis as a general process of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. Wotela (2016) explains that a subjective interpretation of information is involved after it is systematically arranged according to themes or patterns of interest. This analysis focuses on explicit and implicit content or the contextual meaning of information provided by respondents (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Thematic analysis involves different phases, including the familiarisation of data for data reduction, the generation of initial codes according to themes, the review of codes across data for constant comparison, the

search for themes, review of themes, definition and naming of themes, and production of the report (Hewlett, 2016). Kawulich and Holland (2012) emphasises that the criticality of the researcher's report depends on the data analysis process, which can contribute to the quality and usefulness of the research findings.

Literature suggests various steps in undertaking thematic analysis: transcribing data from audio tapes into transcripts; reading through the transcripts to edit and clean inconsistencies; identifying the unit of analysis (words, phrase, or sentence); labelling the unit of analysis with a code; keeping a list of all codes; comparing new data with previous codes; and identifying data patterns after creating a coding scheme (Kawulich and Holland (2012, p. 231).

To conduct data analysis in this study, the recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, examined and edited for errors to ensure accuracy (Try, 2007). The next step entailed an examination of the transcripts to identify main issues and recurring ideas, as well as implicit and explicit ideas on the research topic. Data was summarised and paraphrased into original texts, and overviews were produced to gain an overall understanding of the data (Vaismoradi, 2013). As suggested by Vaismoradi et al. (2015), this phase of data analysis focuses on establishing the meaning of different data sets and the relationships between them. It included repetitively referring to the tape recordings and examining field notes to gain a better understanding and confirm the overviews of the transcriptions (Pilane, 2014).

The first step of the thematic content analysis was the coding of data, which involved a manual search of the transcriptions for specific phrases, content and related terms (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The search emanated from different aspects of the research questions and literature. These included key attributes of youth development initiatives rooted within the capabilities perspective (Sen 1999, Nussbaum 2001), which recognises the assets and capabilities of young people and seeks to understand the ways in which the programme can build on those to enhance the prospect of future employment.

Data interpretation followed to make sense of the coded data and reach conclusions (Flick, 2014). Guided by Try (2007), data from each institution and sphere of government were analysed, focusing on specific characteristics and contextual issues to

search for within- and across-case patterns. This process entailed examining similarities and differences in the responses given by participants, establishing possible explanations, and making conclusions on each research question (Flick, 2014; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Vasmoradi et al., 2013). Data was condensed, summarised and produced as overviews, and then grouped into data collected from respondents, past studies, literature and secondary sources to be able to reach conclusions through comparison (Try, 2007; Flick, 2014).

Subsequent to this process, findings were analysed using the theory of change on youth development. Since there was no theory of change and results chain framework for the outcomes under study, the research derived the theory from the literature and document sources of the Department of Public Work NYS programme. In this regard, the research findings were compared against these theories, the results of past studies, secondary data sources and literature review to assess and examine aspects crucial for the EPWP NYS programme to promote youth employment. The following key themes emerged from the coding and interpretation process: the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment; critical factors of the NYS for the promotion of youth employment; and areas in which participants were employed after exiting the programme. These themes were further divided into sub-themes covering skills development, monitoring of the NYS programme, exit opportunities for the NYS programmer, and limitations to delivery of the programme.

In the process of thematic content analysis for this study, the researcher reviewed a research by Thwala (2016), which focused on the management and implementation of youth development programmes in Mpumalanga. The study evaluated the NYS by analysing data using thematic content analysis. The thematic areas helped the researcher to create meaningful data for analysis, and assisted in locating the study and its evaluation within a particular context. This was emphasised by Knight (2002), cited in De Vos, et al. (2011), who argues that writing and thinking would be difficult if the researcher lacked focus.

### 3.3.6 Description of the respondents

The term "respondents" refers to the participants of the NYS programme interviewed for primary data source, while "contractors" refers to the owners of the companies that absorbed participants post their involvement in the programme. Two categories of respondents participated in the study. The first category included youth enrolled in the EPWP NYS programme from the 2014/15 to 2016/17 financial years for projects implemented in Gauteng. Below is a summary table that reflects the demographic status of participants, presenting the location of respondents, their age, gender, highest education level completed, nationality, and start date in the EPWP NYS programme.

**Table 3.1: Demographic details of research participants**

| RESPONDENT NUMBER | GENDER | AGE RANGE | HIGHEST QUALIFICATION OBTAINED | NATIONALITY | START DATE/ YEAR IN EPWP NYS | DURATION OF CONTRACT IN EPWP NYS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Female | 25 – 30 Years | N6 Building & Civil Engineering | South African | June 2015 | 12 Months |
| 2 | Female | Above 35 Years | Grade 12 | South African | January 2015 | 9 Months |
| 3 | Male | 21 – 25 Years | Grade 12 | South African | 2016 | 9 Months |
| 4 | Male | 26 – 30 Years | N6 Civil Engineering | South African | November 2015 | 9 Months |
| 5 | Male | 26 – 30 Years | N6 Civil Engineering | South African | 2015 - 2016 | 9 Months |
| 6 | Male | 26 – 30 Years | N6 Engineering Studies | South African | 2014 - 2016 | 24 Months |
| 7 | Male | 26 – 30 Years | Diploma in Engineering & Building Science | South African | 2012 – 2013 2014 - 2015 | 8 Months |
| 8 | Female | 31 – 35 Years | National Certificate (Civil Engineering) | South African | February 2016 | 11 Months |
| 9 | Female | 26 – 30 Years | N6 Civil Engineering | South African | 2015 | 8 Months |

Overall, nine respondents took part in the research and all reside in Gauteng. Both genders were represented, with five males and four females being interviewed. Regarding age profile, only one respondent was above the age of 35, which is the cut-off

age for participation in the EPWP NYS programme. The majority of the respondents were within the age range of 26 to 30 years. In terms of education levels, most respondents had completed a National Certificate in Civil Engineering, while two had completed Grade 12.

The second category comprised three contractors who had employed participants from the EPWP NYS programme. The contractors are all based in Gauteng. They provided useful information in that they were willing to share their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the NYS in terms of programme design. They gave recommendations on how to improve implementation so that the NYS programme is able to meet its objectives. The table below shows the profile of the contractors interviewed, including their position and type of work.

**Table 3.2: Description of contractors and type of work done in their organisations**

| CONTRACTOR NUMBER | POSITION IN THE ORGANISATION | TYPE OF WORK DONE BY THE ORGANISATION |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Project Manager | Electrical and mechanical work |
| 2 | Project Manager | Construction (building and renovations, roads, landscaping, civil, electrical) |
| 3 | Project Manager | Construction (building and renovations, civil, electrical) |

## 3.4 Research reliability and validity measures

Bryman (2012) describes reliability and validity as methodological and disciplinary standards aimed at ensuring that results in a research report are of high quality and find wide application.

According to Bryman (2012), reliability is the consistency of a measure of a concept, and a measure is reliable if it can be constant over time. He argues that research has internal reliability when the scores of respondents on any one indicator are related to their scores on all the other indicators.

Validity is concerned with whether an indicator and the measurement techniques used to measure a concept actually represent that particular concept or something else; and if they measure what they are supposed to be measuring (Bryman, 2012; Bless et al, 2013).

Various debates exist on the use of the concepts of reliability and validity, and their appropriateness in qualitative research. Creswell (2009) points out that the concepts of reliability and validity do not have the same connotation in qualitative research as they do in other research strategies. Supporting this notion, Lincoln and Guba (1994) argue for the use of "trustworthiness" of a research study. They propose the "qualitative-oriented" concepts of credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability as four measures of the trustworthiness of a qualitative research, with the first three considered most critical for qualitative studies (Lincoln and Guba, in Shenton, 2004).

To increase the credibility of the research results, Shenton (2004) argues that researchers should consider past studies to develop research questions, data collection and analysis procedures. Taking cue from Shenton, this research applied thematic content analysis and data collection methods utilised in prior qualitative research studies by Thwala (2009) and Thwala (2016). Additionally, the application of thematic content analysis from a combination of data sources drawn from past studies to assess the evidence gathered from the interviews did not only improve the research trustworthiness, but also its credibility as well as the transferability of the results from the research (Gibbs, 2007). Furthermore, the interview questions for this study were informed from the theory of change and capability approach to ensure the data collection measured what it was supposed to, as recommended by Silverman (2000). Through this approach, the research managed to compare findings with those of past similar studies, existing literature on public works programmes and theoretical frameworks on youth development, thus increasing the credibility of the study.

This study reviewed past research to take cue on how to achieve research validity and reliability. In a study that focused on the management and implementation of youth development programmes in Mpumalanga, Thwala (2016) engaged four respondents (i.e. two beneficiaries and civil society representatives) on the observation from the study in order to enhance the reliability of the issues tabled in the report. Furthermore, the study ensured validity by using authentic data obtained from the relevant sources,

i.e. the department and its beneficiaries, and all forms of biases were avoided. In this study, it is mentioned that the research methods and techniques applied, and the reviewed literature, justified the replicability of the study in a different setting, although it may not emerge with exactly the same findings. However, the processes followed are replicable. In this study, the researcher believes that using different research methods to collect data and the literature reviewed will justify the replicability of the study.

To improve credibility of qualitative research, Guba (1981) and Brewer and Hunter (in Shenton, 2004) recommend that triangulation be applied. Triangulation refers to the application and use of various data sources and methods in the same research (Bryman, in Morris, 2001). This research therefore interviewed participants from different EPWP NYS projects in different locations in Gauteng. Furthermore, departmental reports, strategic documents, EPWP implementation frameworks and other relevant documents were used to triangulate the findings of the research and increase the trustworthiness of the study.

This study provides detailed information on the research context and research setting, as well as the processes and procedures involved, from conceptualisation to finalisation of the research. This was done to ensure the production of a detailed research report, rich in its account of activities involved, that would allow other researchers to make judgment on the transferability of the findings in other similar contexts (Bryman, 2012, Yin, 2003). In addition, complete records of all research data, including interview transcripts and audio clips, were kept, should the need arise for other researchers to establish whether proper procedure was followed throughout the phases (Bryman, 2012).

## 3.5 Research weaknesses – technical and administrative limitations

The nature of the study undertaken presents several limitations. Firstly, the subject for study is not well researched and limited literature is available to provide examples of how public works programmes can be used to promote youth employment. The research strategy adopted for this study is a case study, which carries the disadvantage of being context-bound and therefore unable to be generalised. Case studies are also said

to be more vulnerable to bias and subjectivity. Due to limited time and budget available, the researcher opted for a case study design with a focus on the EPWP NYS programme to be able to infer the findings of the study to the entire programme. The EPWP NYS programme is rolled out across the country and the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with participants from Gauteng only.

The researcher is a government official and is working in the EPWP branch of the national Department of Public Works. The branch is responsible for the overall coordination of the EPWP by developing strategies, policies and guidelines of how the programme should be implemented across all three spheres of government. In addition, the EPWP branch is responsible for consolidating reports on work opportunities created in the EPWP and to report performance information to various stakeholders, including Cabinet and NEDLAC, on a regular basis.

As the researcher is an employee in the EPWP branch responsible for the coordination of the EPWP, this might have brought about possible bias in the choice of recommendations made for this research, despite the fact that other studies have either supported the notion or discounted the feasibility of such interventions in promoting youth employment in the country. The researcher undertook this study for her personal development, however, and was not funded by the employer, allowing her to be objective.

The choice of research methodology in terms of the use of case studies might have been a limitation for the study in terms of plurality of views and recommendations. Even though limited information was available in the research process, the researcher believes that her experience of more than six years in dealing with strategic planning for the EPWP enabled her to identify relevant documents on the programme to help her complement the information acquired from the primary sources.

# 4 PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the empirical findings from the research undertaken in this study. To carry out the research, the study responded to the following research questions outlined in Chapter 1:

1. What is the role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment?
2. What are the critical factors of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme that promote youth employment?
3. What are the limitations of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment?
4. To where have the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service participants exited after participating in the programme?

This chapter presents empirical results for the research undertaken: Section 4.1 presents the findings on the critical factors of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) National Youth Service (NYS) programme that promote youth employment; Section 4.2 the findings on limitations and shortcomings of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment; Section 4.3 the findings on the exit areas for the EPWP NYS Programme participants; and Section 4.4 the findings on the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment.

As presented in chapter 2, three key attributes will be used to assess the outcomes of the EPWP NYS Programme in promoting youth employment (Section 2.5). Furthermore, Section 2.7 presents a research framework, which articulates the problem statement for the research as covered in Section 2.1 and 2.2. Section 2.3 provides the knowledge gap, Section 2.4 the research field of study, and Section 2.6 the frameworks that can be utilised to interpret the results of this research. A semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 1.1) was developed to collect empirical evidence for this research. The section below presents the research results based on themes generated from the analysis of the research interview results.

## 4.1 Factors of the EPWP NYS programme critical for promoting youth employment

Below are the findings on the factors of the EPWP NYS programme that are critical for promoting youth employment.

### 4.1.1 Relevant components of the EPWP NYS Programme for securing youth employment

According to the Department of Public Works (2017), the design of the EPWP NYS programme is premised on skills development and experiential learning to capacitate participants in the programme. Bokolo (2013) indicates a key core component of the public works programme is skills development. Through skills development, training in the public works programmes is provided to participants to assist them to secure permanent employment post their participation in the programme.

To answer the question of what factors of the EPWP NYS programmer are critical in securing future employment, participants were asked to indicate which components of the programme were relevant to them being successful in securing future work opportunities. Responses were divergent. Common, however, was that many respondents did not think the training offered in the programme would help them to secure future employment. The participants mentioned that the training did not relate to their formal school qualifications. Of interest was that most of the participants who responded in this manner were unemployed post their participation in the programme.

Similarly, this finding is presented in a study by McCord (2009), who indicates that while public works programmes have been effective in providing transitional employment, the EPWP has been ineffective in transferring marketable skills to enable participants to obtain jobs in a South African context in which intermediate and high skills are in demand. Additionally, a study on Mid-Term Review of the EPWP Phase 1 by Hemson (2007) indicates that the promise of training in the programme is normally inadequate at a large scale.

However, the views of respondents 1, 4 and 9, all of whom were in employment post their participation in the programme, differed in that they mentioned that the training offered was crucial to them securing future employment. They believed it gave them a better understanding of construction work, which includes a range of activities from bricklaying to costing of materials. Respondent 9, for example, indicated that *"the training assisted me because when on site, I know how to lay bricks and to set a wall"*.

In response to the question of what skills are relevant in assisting youth to secure future employment, many participants indicated that they believe the work experience offered by the programme is most relevant, particularly that which is aligned to the participants' fields of study, as well as recognition for work done on the job.

When asked to indicate what they consider to be crucial for absorbing EPWP NYS learners into companies, contractors said the technical skills participants had gained were most sought-after. In addition, they indicated that behavioural skills, particularly attitude, are critical when considering absorbing participants into companies. They mentioned that participants with a good attitude are easy to train because they easily take instruction, unlike those who expect to start at the top and refuse to do basic work. Contractors said they also take into account personal conduct in the workplace, potential to learn and grow, interest in the work, teachable spirit and honesty.

### 4.1.2 Training offered in the EPWP NYS programme

This section explores training received on the programme and looks at the following specific issues, which were covered in the interviews: delivery model of training; training courses offered; duration of training offered; satisfaction with training; how training could be improved; and how training in combination with work experience has assisted workers in finding employment subsequent to participation in the programme.

#### 4.1.2.1 Classroom Training

According to the Department of Public Works EPWP NYS Framework (2012), classroom training commences after the selection of participants and the signing of employment contracts. Classroom training is intended to last for a period of between

three and six months, and involves induction on life skills. The technical aspects of classroom training includes artisan trades such as painting, bricklaying, plastering, plumbing and electrical work.

To assess the classroom training offered in the NYS programme, participants had to indicate the type of training they had received. The majority indicated that the training covered the trades of bricklaying, plumbing, tiling, plastering and carpentry. One respondent received classroom training in the electrical and mechanical trade, while another who had been enrolled in the programme in 2010 before returning in 2015, indicated that *"no training was offered to me the second time I was in the programme, as I was trained on bricklaying in 2010. Even though, I have also graduated at the end of the programme with those that went for classroom training."*

The EPWP NYS programme design includes life skills and entrepreneurship as core elements of the training offered. Remarkable to note is that the majority of the participants indicated they did not receive training in these skills. A few respondents indicated that they had received life skills orientation, which included CV writing, presentation skills and professionalism. One participant commented that the life skills training was a "waste of time", as it was of no benefit and could not be used after leaving the programme. The absence of life skills training could possibly be the reason why contractors cited issues such as absenteeism after payday and theft of project materials as some of the major challenges they encountered when working with EPWP NYS learners. One contractor explained that most participants are naturally talented and able to quickly grasp the work, however, their poor conduct means they are unable to go far with their careers.

The EPWP NYS document stipulates that classroom training offered in the programme should last for a period of three to six months. In the study, participants were asked to indicate the duration of training for courses done in the classroom. The majority indicated that this was three months, however, some indicated that it ranged from two to 10 days. Contractors identified the short duration of classroom training as a limitation of the programme. They mentioned that for someone to understand the trade, training must take place over a period of at least three months.

Similar to this finding, a study by Bokolo (2013) confirms that the training provided as part of the EPWP is not long in duration and in some instances not accredited. As such, those who leave the EPWP are usually not equipped with skills necessary to gain employment elsewhere.

The research further revealed that classroom and on-site practical training occurred simultaneously. Some participants indicated that they started at the project sites first, before attending classroom theoretical training. This finding on the sequence of training not following the rollout plan for the NYS programme is similar to findings presented in a study by Thwala (2015), which evaluates the programme in Mpumalanga. Thwala (2015) explains that it emerged from his study that the programme implementers were not ready to implement the theoretical training and therefore participants started with practical training, contrary to the initial roll-out plan for the NYS, which was to start with theoretical training.

#### 4.1.2.2 Practical Training

In terms of the EPWP guidelines on NYS, all participants in this programme should undergo theoretical training in the classroom before being placed in the identified projects for practical training. The practical training gives the participants an opportunity to put into practice the theory they learned in the classroom and should last for a period of at least six months.

In assessing the practical training offered in the NYS programme, participants were asked to describe the work they did while on site. The findings of the research revealed that in some instances the practical training was not structured, and delivery differed from one project to another. For instance, some participants indicated that the practical training did not align with the theoretical training they had received. Most participants indicated that for the entire duration of the project, they worked as general labourers, doing elementary work ranging from concrete mixing and digging trenches to site clearing. As such, they were never assigned technical work such as the reading of building plans or drawings.

These participants further indicated that the experience they received did not meet their expectations of the programme. They said their concerns around this issue were raised with officials from the national Department of Public Works, but the matter was never resolved. Instead, some contractors informed them that they do not have time to offer appropriate practical training because they are under pressure to meet project deadlines. Similar findings reported on the misalignment of the practical and theoretical training are cited in a study by Mubangizi and Mkhize (2013), where participants from eThekwini Municipality had complained that due to administrative difficulties, they did not benefit fully from the EPWP's training objectives.

To address this shortcoming, one respondent recommended the following: "They [the Department of Public Works] should inform contractors on what the participants should do when they get on site. They must also try to get reliable contractors who will make sure they transfer skills to participants. Again, DPW must inform participants on what they can expect at the project site before they can sign the employment contract."

As mentioned above, the practical training differed from one site to another, with some participants indicating that they had received training in the trades of bricklaying, plastering, plumbing, ceiling installation, tiling, carpentry and electrical work. These participants indicated that the practical training offered was through observation, with a mentor or supervisor assigned to them to demonstrate how the work should be done before giving them a chance to repeat what they had been taught. There are participants, however, who indicated that insufficient time was given to job shadowing. As such, they were rushed, having to grasp everything quickly so that they could start doing the work because the contractors did not have sufficient experienced workers and so complemented their teams with the labour of the NYS participants. Unaware of this concern raised by participants, one contractor said, "*the allocation of EPWP NYS learners is very helpful to us, since most contractors do not have enough semi-skilled people in projects and with the help of NYS learners, who are semi-skilled, they are able to complete their projects on time*."

As stated above, practical training in the EPWP NYS programme should span a period of six months. In assessing the duration of the practical training offered in the programme, the findings revealed that participants had spent more than six months on the project site. Interesting to note is the fact that classroom training was not a conduit

for practical training, so a major focus has been on practical training. Participants raised this as a concern and said the delivery of the programme differed with the information they have been given by the Department of Public Works during the recruitment phase.

## 4.2 Limitations and shortcomings of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme in promoting youth employment

While conducting the interviews, several issues were raised by participants as limitations and shortcomings of the programme. The section below will discuss these issues raised under the following sub-themes.

### 4.2.1 Monitoring of NYS Projects

From the limitations provided by participants during the interviews, the research revealed that there was generally poor monitoring of the NYS projects. Participants believe this to be the cause of misalignment of work done at site level and the contracts signed upon recruitment into the programme. In raising this limitation, respondent 2 said, "*I was hired as a safety officer but I did not do any work on safety at the site. DPW never knew I was not doing the work I was hired to do because no one came to check us while we were working.*"

Furthermore, participants indicated that they believed that the department cared more about the contractors. They indicated that the department did not engage with them during or after project implementation regarding their experience of the programme. Since participants indicated that the Department of Public Works was not monitoring the NYS projects, they were asked about the mechanism in place to report on work undertaken while on site. The majority of participants indicated that they were given logbooks at the beginning of the projects that were to be used on a daily basis to report on tasks done at the project site. Site supervisors were expected to sign these logbooks each day to confirm that the information provided was correct. In certain projects, however, supervisors were unable to complete the logbooks since the work undertaken by participants was not structured.

As such, these participants explained that the non-completion of logbooks had affected them negatively because they had joined the NYS programme to acquire experiential learning, which was a requisite requirement for the completion of the qualifications they had enrolled. They indicated that logbooks were supposed to serve as portfolios of evidence to confirm the practical training done by individual learners. Contractors did confirm that in certain instances supervisors were unable to complete these logbooks because the programme management was mainly a function of the Department of Public Works. The reports that they compiled and submitted to the department were mainly on the project milestones and work opportunities created. Participants suggested that the department should look at this issue to improve the monitoring of projects. For instance, Respondent 3 said, "*The DPW should improve on the assessment of the programme, to check what is happening with the implementation of the projects to ensure that contractors do not take advantage of participants at site.*"

Poor monitoring of EPWP projects is also raised in a study by Magongo and Motimele (2011), indicating that this limitation affects all NYS governmental programmes, making it difficult to measure the impact of the programme in the end. Similarly, a study by McCord (2003), which assesses the potential of the EPWP and its adequacy as an instrument to address the problems of poverty and unemployment, highlights that the "public works programme monitoring and information systems tend to focus on the creation of 'jobs' per se rather than the social and economic impact of those jobs. Where performance indicators are monitored, these tend be quantitative input measures (e.g. units of training delivered, kilometres of road constructed, or number of workers recruited), rather than outcome indicators relating to the labour market, social or economic consequences of the intervention. There is little systematic monitoring of socio-economic and social development indicators, and this problem is compounded by the lack of baseline information on programme participants" (McCord, 2003, p. 14). The study concluded that the available data on the EPWP makes it difficult to show the anticipated broader benefits of the programme, in terms of improved livelihoods and the creation of sustainable employment.

In agreement with the findings provided by McCord above, the contractors interviewed for this study indicated that the reports they submitted to the Department of Public Works on a monthly basis focus mainly on the reporting of the following information:

a) the number of work opportunities created; b) demographic details; and c) expenditure against budget allocated.

### 4.2.2 Exit opportunities

At the core of the NYS programme is to assist youth with employment or exit opportunities post their participation in the programme. This is articulated in the EPWP NYS exit strategy (2012), which notes that the training offered to participants is not accredited in designated artisan trades. Participants therefore exit the programme with courses that do not bear any credit or recognition from the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) system in South Africa. The strategy further notes that this hinders their ability to progress to other economic opportunities. To address this, the NYS documents state that the programme has in place a further learning and training strategy to assist participants to receive recognised qualifications that they can use to chart their way forward in their chosen career path, whether it be for employment or small, medium and micro enterprise (SMME) development.

Participants expressed concern when asked about the exit opportunities offered in the programme. Respondent 7 said: "*Once people are trained in the NYS, the Department of Public Works does not create employment opportunities for these participants. For example, at the Gauteng Department of Infrastructure Development, priority for employment opportunities for skilled artisans is given to NYS learners before hiring external applicants*."

Surprisingly, even those participants who were employed post participation in the programme indicated that they believe the programme is not doing enough to assist youth with employment opportunities. Respondent 1 said: "*I think I am the only one who got employed after the project ended as most of the people I worked with are still unemployed and at home."*

Participants indicated that the only opportunities offered to them by the Department of Public Works were in short-term projects similar to those they had worked on while in the NYS programme. The majority of the participants said they did not take up these offers because they believed they required different opportunities that would move them to another level in their careers.

Similarly, a study by McCord (2009) states that while public works programmes have been effective in providing transitional employment, they have not been effective in transferring marketable skills to enable participants to obtain jobs once they exit these programmes in a South African context in which intermediate and high skills are in demand.

The NYS exit strategy indicates SMME development as an exit opportunity for participants. Participants, however, said the programme did not expose them to courses that would assist them in starting their own businesses. Respondent 4, who is self-employed, said: *"I have been always interested in doing my own business in construction, but no assistance was offered to us on how to open our own businesses."*

As such, it emerges from the study that participants who had started their own business had not registered them with the relevant authorities. As a result, they were unable to source business opportunities with government or the private sector because they were not aware of processes they needed to follow to register on existing databases for service providers. Instead, their businesses relied on referrals from their communities. Some of the self-employed participants indicated that running a business was a temporary thing, a means by which to earn an income until they could find permanent employment.

## 4.3 Exit areas of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme participants

### 4.3.1 Areas to which NYS learners have exited after participating in the programme

According to the Department of Public Works National Youth Services Framework (2012), the NYS programme is made up of three main components, namely structured learning and individual development, service element, and employment opportunities.

To assess the employment opportunities created for the participants post their participation in the programme, participants were asked to indicate their current

employment status and the type of work they were doing. The table below indicates exit areas for the NYS participants.

Table 4.1: Areas to where NYS learners have exited to after participating in the programme

| **Respondent Number** | **Current employment status** | **Type of work done** |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Employed | Quantity Surveyor work and cost estimation of projects |
| 2 | Unemployed | Not applicable |
| 3 | Unemployed (but was studying in 2017) | Not applicable |
| 4 | Self-employed | Construction |
| 5 | Self-employed | Construction work (drawing house plans) |
| 6 | Employed | Project manager (construction company) |
| 7 | Self-employed | Drawing of house plans |
| 8 | Unemployed (but was studying in 2017) | Not applicable |
| 9 | Employed | Maintenance attendant at a hotel |

Table 4.1 shows that three (i.e. respondents 1, 6 and 9) of the nine participants interviewed were employed within the construction sector in semi-skilled positions. Two of these participants indicated that the companies they worked for while participating in the EPWP NYS programme had employed them. They said that even though these same companies had employed them, their responsibilities were now at supervisory level. Respondent 9 was employed at a hotel as a Maintenance Attendant via a referral from a recruitment agency.

Three other participants (i.e. respondents 4, 5 and 7) indicated that they are self-employed and doing work within the construction sector. Of these three, two were drawing house plans as part of their business. Respondent 4 indicated that he was busy with sub-contracting work to pave a 5km road awarded to him by a company operating within the community. All three participants indicated that their businesses are entry level and they are still trying to establish themselves.

Of the three contractors interviewed, two said that their companies have each absorbed about four participants on contract basis. The third contractor stated that they had retained 20 participants at the end of the NYS project. These participants, however, were laid off when the project ended and only three were retained in permanent positions within the company. All the contractors interviewed indicated that their companies are involved in construction work, executing projects in building and renovations, civil works, roads, mechanical and electrical work. The work of some of the participants absorbed ranged from supervisory roles and site office administrators to site technicians.

The findings above confirm that both employed and self-employed participants remained in the construction sector post participation in the programme. This finding differs with that reported by Mubangizi and Mkhize (2013) in a case study done in eThekwini Municipality. This study found that some of the beneficiaries interviewed were happy to have found employment of any kind. Some respondents mentioned that they had received training in community development, HIV/AIDS counselling and gardening while working on the programme. Subsequently, most participants found positions within the municipality, where they continued to work on pertinent social development issues in communities.

Of the three participants who indicated that they are unemployed, two said they had gone back to school in 2017 to complete the courses required for them to attain their N6 qualifications. These participants indicated that, upon completion of their studies, their intention was to look for a job in a related field. Respondent 2, however, was still looking for employment in areas related to the experience she had acquired from her participation in the EPWP NYS programme, since she had Grade 12 as her highest qualification completed.

Even though the findings of this research show that participants of the programme have secured employment within the built environment, a study by McCord (2004a, 2004b, 2005) argues that while numerous researchers provide insight into labour market performance in the short to medium term, the long-term implications of public works

participation for subsequent labour market attachment cannot be inferred from the same studies.

## 4.4 Role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment

The primary research question for this study was to assess the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment. In answering this question the following themes are discussed.

### 4.4.1 The role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment

The Department of Public Works (2017) EPWP NYS Framework summarises the role of the EPWP NYS programme as follows: to engage young South Africans in service delivery in order to strengthen youth participation; to promote youth participation in the built environment; and to help youth gain work-related skills necessary to access sustainable livelihood opportunities. The Green Paper on NYS (1998), which states that the value adds of the NYS programme include, confirms this role: creating and encouraging a culture of service among young people in South Africa; developing the abilities of young people through service and learning; helping young people to enhance their employment potential and access to economic opportunities.

Regarding the main research question of this study, all participants were asked to describe their understanding of the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment. The responses of participants indicate that most understand the role of the programme, despite the fact that they have divergent views. For example, one respondent said: "*They talk to employers to ensure they hire youth that have been trained in the programme."* Another respondent said: "*NYS helps with skills because many people who get into the programme do not have skills required by the employers. Even though, not all people get employed after participating in the programme, but the skills they got from the programme can also help people to do work on their own."*

Some participants, however, claimed that they do not know what role the programme plays. For example, respondent 9 said: "*I am unable to provide the role of the NYS Programme because personally the programme didn't help me.*"

Despite the fact that the responses to the main research question differed, most participants indicated that the role of the EPWP NYS programme is to assist youth in entering formal employment through the development of skills.

Based on the design framework of the programme, another key role of the EPWP NYS is to engage youth in service delivery in order to strengthen youth participation in community services. Strangely, participants did not refer to this objective of the programme when responding to the main research question during their interviews. Upon further investigation, it was discovered that none of the participants, including those who were not employed at the time of the research, were involved in community service delivery initiatives. This finding is in contrast to a report published by SANGONET (2009), which indicates that evaluations from independent studies show that the majority of young people who participated in the programme over the five years since inception emerged with a sense of civic responsibility, patriotism and commitment to building caring and sustainable communities.

To ascertain whether the participants understood the role of the EPWP NYS programme in broad terms, they were asked to share their understanding of the EPWP NYS programme objectives. All respondents seemed to share a common understanding of the objectives of the programme, as they indicated that it helps unemployed youth to acquire skills and work experience. Respondent 7 gave the following response: "*It is a programme that seeks to provide technical experience to students from TVET colleges. Its objective is to give youth with experience and exposure to the construction sector."*

The findings reveal a common understanding of the objectives of the programme, but a study Samson (2007) opposes the notion that the programme is helpful in offering skills and experience. Samson (2007) advances the argument that public works employment contributes more to insecure forms of employment and poverty than to solutions, which contradicts the rhetoric surrounding the contribution of PWPs in improving the employability of the poor and reducing and/or eradicating poverty. He argues that

government continues to promote PWPs over other forms of social protection because it wants to be seen to be doing something.

### 4.4.2 Skills development in the built environment

In South Africa, skills development is one of the pillars of the EPWP NYS, to ensure that participants acquire skills that will assist them in accessing better opportunities post their participation in the programme. Johnson and Adam (2004), cited by Reddy (2006), suggest that investment in skills development makes a positive contribution to a country's economic development. Skills development does not take place only through the formal schooling process, but also via "learning by doing" in the workplace (Cypher, 2014). McCord (2005) indicates that the EPWP documents explicitly state that without skills development the impact of temporary jobs offered in the EPWP would be of limited value. The focus of the EPWP NYS programme is on skills development in the building/construction sector, where participants are developed to become skilled artisans.

As indicated in section 4.1.2 above, most participants confirmed undergoing training in the built environment trades as part of skills development. With regards to the duration of training offered in the programme, the research findings show that classroom training varies from one project to another, while a lot of time was spent on on-site practical training, where participants were learning by doing the actual work. Contractors pointed to this as a challenge, saying that short-duration theoretical training (over periods of only five days in some cases) implied that they would have to spend more time giving participant's practical training on site.

A central focus of the Skills Development Act (SDA) of 1998 is to promote high-quality education and training, and to facilitate mobility and transfer through the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Skills development is at the heart of socio-economic development to ensure skills are transferred to learners to prepare them for the world of work. Meyer and Orpen (2007) indicate that skills development interventions are crucial for supporting national growth as well as development priorities of the country. Hence, skills development should be seen as a vehicle to promote employment outcomes and sustainable livelihoods of participants.

Participants had gone through some type of training to acquire skills, and so were asked to indicate the type of qualification they had achieved at the end of the programme. Most participants indicated they were qualified as bricklayers and tilers. Furthermore, participants confirmed they had received a National Qualification Framework (NQF) level 2 certificate for courses done during classroom training. It emerged from the research, however, that not all participants received certificates at the end of the programme. Some who did not receive certificates indicated that they had been told they could not get certificates because they were not yet signed by the Department of Public Works, despite several follow-ups with the departmental officials responsible for the management of this programme.

The finding above deviates from a position advanced by Swanepoel et al. (2014, p. 553), who argues that the "skills programme should enable learners to attain a recognised qualification on completion of the programme, which will constitute employable skills and provide evidence of the learners' competency in a particular skill as to enable them to earn income". The failure by the department to provide relevant NQF certificates to some participants upon completion of the programme might be regarded as non-compliance with the requirements of the SDA of 1998. Slindile and Barnes (2017), however, indicate that the employability of a person is dependent not only on a certification, but also on various other factors, including a stable economy to create jobs. Perhaps this argument advanced by Slindile and Barnes could explain the responses by contractors to the question of whether they consider a certificate when employing participants. All contractors said certification or qualification accreditation is not a critical issue when considering absorption of participants. For example, one contractor remarked that "*in the construction sector, we are not much worried about the level of accreditation a person has, because there are people with qualifications but they are unable to do the practical work. Yet you find people with skills and no papers but they are able to do the work.*"

Possibly the issue of certification is not so significant within the construction sector as some participants, including those who did not receive certificates, were more concerned with the skills they had gained and not the certificates they had received. For instance, the majority of the participants indicated that the practical training provided in the programme is more relevant to them, provided the contractors understand what the programme is about and what it seeks to achieve.

Reflecting on the skills development aspect of the EPWP NYS programme, participants indicated that skills they acquired would help them to secure future employment. They mentioned that the exposure they had received through the practical training had given them a better understanding of the construction sector and an advantage over candidates who are qualified but have no work experience. One respondent said; "*I am grateful for the skills acquired during the experiential learning, because a certificate cannot translate to the experience/skills that one got since it is just a paper.*" All the contractors interviewed supported this sentiment, with contractor 2 remarking: "*Theory in the construction sector is good for the person to know the technology used, but practical skills help the participants to do the work."*

### 4.4.3 Contribution to living standards and material well being

At a broader level, the key objective of the EPWP is to boost incomes of the most marginalised households (Altman, 2007). Literature indicates that the value adds of the NYS programme include helping young people to enhance their employment outcomes and access to economic opportunities (Bodley-Bond and Cronin, 2013).

To assess how the EPWP NYS programme has helped young people to access economic opportunities, participants were asked to indicate how their participation in the programme had contributed to their living standards and material well-being. The responses varied, depending on the participant's state of employment at the time of the interview. For instance, one respondent said, "*I would not have managed to get a job if it was not for the NYS Programme.*" The respondent further said, "*The programme made me believe that not everything is about money in life, as from the little stipend I got, I had to learn to budget my finances and ensure I can pay rent, transport and food and still go to work."*

Interestingly, some participants who were unemployed indicated that the programme did not contribute towards an improvement in their living standards. They did say, however, that both the negative and positive experiences in the programme had changed their lives. One said, "*The programme did help me to learn to persevere in difficult situations and to work with different people.*"

Other participants, who were still unemployed, were optimistic, saying the programme had benefitted their lives in a positive way. For instance, respondent 8 said: "*Though not yet into formal employment, I feel my life would be better in the future once I get a job*." Reflecting on another aspect, one female participant had this to say: *"Before NYS, I didn't have the drive to get into a construction company because it is mainly male dominated. But, the programme gave us an opportunity to get into the sector and be able to do work and also dispel the myth that it is only for males*."

Past studies reviewed in this research suggest that, at a broader level, there is no substantive evidence of the anticipated medium-term outcomes with regards to the programme objectives of graduating participants out of poverty and into the formal labour market (Hagen-Zanker et al., 2011; Holmes et al., 2013; McCord et al., 2015). Hence, Philip (2013) indicates, many EPWP participants return to their unemployed status after participation in the programme because the oversupply of low- and semi-skilled labour means the market is not able to absorb labour exiting from EPWP employment.

## 4.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the research results in the context of themes derived from data. It presented the research results under the following research title: *Assessing the role of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) National Youth Service (NYS) in promoting youth employment*. The themes presented in this section were derived from this study research title. The results of this research are presented under the following statements: critical factors of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment; limitations and shortcomings of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment; exit areas of the EPWP NYS programme; and the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment. The results from the first research question show that skills development through classroom training and experiential training are critical factors of the EPWP NYS programme. However, the delivery of training is not consistent across all the projects. The second research question is presented in the form of a statement: Limitations and shortcomings of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme in promoting youth employment. The results from this question show a general lack of monitoring of project sites for the EPWP and a lack of exit opportunities for participants post their involvement in the

programme. The results of the third question are presented under the following statement: Exit areas of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme participants. The research results show that despite the fact that not all participants are in formal employment post participation in the programme, those who are, are involved in activities in the built environment. The main research question is presented under the statement: The role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment. The results show that the programme focuses mainly on skills development, with little attention paid to encouraging a culture of service among young people in South Africa and helping them to enhance their employment potential and access to economic opportunities.

# 5 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter discusses the research findings presented in chapter 4. In discussing the results, consideration will be given to the capability approach and theory of change developed in Section 2.6, drawing from the literature review, prior studies and other theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter 2. The discussions occur under three statements generated from the research questions. The first statement will focus on the critical aspects of the programme that promote youth employment; the second on the limitations of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment; and the third on areas to where participants have exited post participation in the programme. Lastly, the discussion will focus on the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment. Discussions will focus on the following key attributes: participation; skills development; living standards; and material wellbeing.

## 5.1 The critical factors of the EPWP NYS programme that promote youth employment

In developing the theory of change on youth development, an approach to the attributes of the EPWP NYS programme was built from a youth development perspective. A youth development approach is rooted within the capabilities approach from Sen Amartya (Sen 1999, Nussbaum 2001), which recognises the assets and capabilities that young people have, and seeks to understand the ways in which the programme can build on those to enhance their prospects of future employment. This section analyses and discusses the critical aspects that affect the implementation of the programme towards achieving the outcome of skills development.

### 5.1.1 Classroom and practical training offered in the EPWP NYS Programme

According to the theory of change for the EPWP NYS programme, the provision of technical and experiential training in artisan trades is one of the activities that enables the programme to achieve an outcome of skilled participants who are able to access formal job opportunities in the labour market. In the Department of Public Works EPWP NYS Framework (2012), classroom training commences after the selection of

participants and signing of employment contracts. Classroom training is intended to last for a period of between three and six months and involves induction on life skills. The technical aspect of classroom training includes training on artisan trades such as painting, bricklaying, plastering, plumbing and electrical work.

The findings of this research highlight a concern from participants about the duration of the training, which varied from as little as 10 days to a maximum of three months. This finding is to some extent supported by critics of the EPWP programmes, who point out that skills training is inadequate (Hemson 2008; Nzimakwe 2008). Graham and Patel et al. (2016) state that a study done in 2013 to evaluate youth development interventions like the NYS programme confirmed that they offer shorter-term classroom-based activities and longer-term work-placement activities. However, the same study argues that this picture changed somewhat when the programmes were revisited for evaluation in 2016. This is unfortunately is not the case for the EPWP NYS programme, where this issue was picked up at the time of conducting the research.

Another important aspect raised by the research results, and which relates to the classroom training offered by the programme, is the limited or zero provision of courses such as life skills and entrepreneurship. These should have been delivered during the classroom training as they are considered to be core subjects of the programme. This confirms a finding by Adams (2011, p. 3), which raises concern around the duration and quality of the short-term training. Adams indicates that most of the training programmes in the EPWP have not yielded positive results in terms of permanent placements, thus affecting the sustainability of skills programmes as training interventions.

The findings highlight an overwhelming concern held by participants that the experiential training offered at site level does not meet their expectations. Many participants mentioned that the work they did on site was elementary. Many contractors did not understand the concept of the EPWP NYS programme and mentoring of the learners they were allocated, and hence viewed the NYS learners as staff to supplement their teams of general labourers. This was, however, refuted by some contractors, who indicated that many participants did not understand that to become an experienced artisan, one has to start at the bottom and be introduced to the basics of the trades.

All participants mentioned inadequate monitoring of the NYS projects by the Department of Public Works. They complained of administrative difficulties, including failure to complete logbooks, which they cited as an obstacle to their ability to fully benefit from the EPWP's NYS objectives. The ILO Report (2016) highlights that monitoring and evaluation are crucial elements in the formulation, implementation, subsequent revision and improvement of any policy and programme intervention. Monitoring allows for the assessment of implementation of labour market policies to determine whether a programme achieves its objectives.

A key concern raised above relates to the monitoring and evaluation of projects. In a similar study, Thwala (2015) asserts that this issue affects all of the NYS governmental programmes, making it difficult to measure the impact of the NYS. This assertion is supported by Magongo and Motimele (2011, p.154), who state that the NYS government programmes have not been evaluated since inception.

Considering the findings presented above and the theory of change that has been developed for this study, it appears that the implementation and the design of programme are not aligned, placing limitations on the programme in achieving its intended outcomes. The theory of change developed for this study outlines certain activities and outputs required for the programme to achieve its intended outcomes. Misalignment of programme implementation and design, therefore, implies that the theory of change cannot be utilised to analyse the results on the factors of the EPWP NYS programme that are critical to promoting youth employment.

## 5.2 To where have participants exited post participation in the EPWP NYS programme

### 5.2.1 Exit opportunities and participation in the built environment

According to the theory of change developed for this research, one outcome of the EPWP NYS programme is to capacitate youth to understand and aspire to work within the built environment. This is despite the fact that the EPWP NYS exit strategy (2012) states that the training offered to participants is not accredited in designated artisan

trades, which implies that participants therefore exit the programme with courses that do not bear credit or recognition from the NQF system in South Africa. The exit strategy further states that the non-accreditation of courses offered to participants hinders their ability to progress to other economic opportunities. In addressing this gap, it is stated in the NYS documents that the programme has developed a further learning and training strategy that aims to provide participants with a recognised qualification that they can use to chart their way forward in their chosen career path, whether it be for employment or the development of small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs).

The research findings of this study show that only three of the nine participants interviewed were employed in semi-skilled positions in the construction sector, another three were self-employed within the construction sector, and the remaining three were unemployed – though two indicated that they were studying in 2017 to acquire qualifications in the built environment. Two of the three self-employed participants indicated that they were running their own businesses to earn an income while still looking for paid employment.

Even though most of the participants interviewed were actively involved in the construction sector in different capacities, they still expressed concern with regards to the exit opportunities offered by the programme. There was a general sense that the Department of Public Works as the custodian of the NYS programme is not doing enough to create employment opportunities for learners trained through their programmes. Participants indicated that other government departments with similar programmes prioritise their learners over external job applicants. Interestingly, participants who were employed after completing the programme shared the same sentiment, mentioning that most of the people who had participated with them were still unemployed.

It is evident from the findings presented above that participants aspire to work in the built environment. However, limited exit opportunities facilitated by the Department of Public Works EPWP NYS programme leave many hoping to secure employment opportunities in this sector in the future. In support of this finding, Nzimakwe (2008) and McCord (2012) argue that a lack of preparation of participants in the EPWP for jobs in the open labour market and a lack of skills transfer to enable them to pursue

livelihoods activities in the informal economy is the main reason why they have not been able to exit from the programme into formal employment opportunities. Furthermore, it is stated in other research that most of the programmes in the EPWP have minimal interaction with potential employers, which can explain why participants who have successfully completed the programme are still unemployed.

Providing a different view to the issue of limited exit opportunities, a study by Slindile and Barnes (2017) indicates that shifts in labour force demographics necessitate that individuals are prepared for both formal employment and opportunities to establish small businesses or cooperatives. Considering the findings of this study, it is obvious that participants in the NYS programme are not properly prepared either for formal employment or for opportunities to establish their own small businesses or cooperatives. The delivery of the programme contradicts its outcomes, as outlined in the theory of change developed for this study, which shows that the training provided to participants gives them the skills to access formal job opportunities in the labour market.

According to Swanepoel et al. (2014, p.492), "individuals are independent of organisations or environment and should be directed towards opportunities that will nurture creativity and talents." Based on the research findings presented above, it appears that participants receive no career guidance prior to joining or during the programme. This is evidenced by the fact that most of the self-employed and unemployed participants viewed the notion of employment in terms of securing a full-time job in which they can utilise the skills they acquired from the programme. Even though some participants did indicate that they are self-employed, the study was unable to establish the provision of courses on entrepreneurship to help them acquire knowledge on running their own businesses.

The capability approach maintains that the freedom to achieve complete well-being is based on what people are able to do and be, and thus the kind of life they are effectively able to lead. Failure by the EPWP NYS programme to provide career guidance to the programme participants limits their capabilities to achieve the kind of life they have reason to value post participation in the programme. This argument is supported by Patel et al. (2012, p.215), who indicates that "economic development alone is not

enough to help people escape poverty, and significant investment in human development, such as poverty reduction, local economic development, employment creation, urban and rural development, providing healthcare, housing, education, social protection and developmental welfare services, must be employed together to ensure the poor are advantaged to the full". In support of this view, Hawkins and Roa (2008) mention that three concrete components of social development are required for economic development, namely human, social and economic capital. The achievement of economic capital is related to vocational programmes, job placement, micro-enterprises, small-scale, individual or family owned business ventures, and neighbourhood-based cooperative enterprises (Hawkins and Roa, 2008, Gray, 2010).

## 5.3 The role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment

The primary research question for this study is to assess the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment. In responding to the research question, this section discusses and analyses the research results based on participation of youth in service delivery initiatives; skills development in the built environment; and contribution to living standards.

### 5.3.1 Participation of youth in service delivery initiatives

According to the theory of change, one of the key outcomes of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme is for youth to participate in community service delivery programmes post participation in the programme. This outcome is derived from the programme objective "engaging young South Africans in service delivery in order to strengthen youth participation in service delivery" (Department of Public Works, 2017). From this theory, it is anticipated that the programme will instil a spirit of patriotism in young South Africans.

According to Patel (2015), the social development approach is rooted in a human rights framework, which advocates for interventions that improve people's wellbeing. This approach departs from conventional approaches, which focus either on economic or social outcomes, in that it argues that interventions that seek to address both the social

and economic needs of people are critical to enhancing their wellbeing. Fundamental to the social development approach is a key principle that promotes greater participation of people in their communities and societies, for their own benefit (as a freedom that is important in and of itself in Sen's terms) and for greater participation, which may contribute to better development outcomes in communities.

The model used to implement projects undertaken by the Department of Public Works with a NYS component will be unpacked to assess whether the programme contributes to instilling patriotism in youth so that they participate in service delivery programmes within their communities. Projects implemented by the department include the building or renovation of public facilities and infrastructure (such as offices, clinics and prisons) for use by community members. In the implementation of these projects, the department hires contractors, with whom it places NYS learners. The EPWP NYS learners are youth from the communities where the infrastructure is being built. According to the Department of Public Works (2017), the concept of the NYS is premised on the involvement of youth in activities that provide benefits to the community, while developing their abilities through service and learning.

The study has confirmed that the participation of youth in community service delivery programmes is limited to the period in which they are part of the NYS programme. Based on the findings, the research could not establish whether the participants work in community service delivery programmes beyond the project life cycle, and if the programme is successful in instilling a sense of patriotism in the youth. The capability approach suggests that a key principle from a social development approach is to promote greater participation of people in their communities and societies, for their own benefit (as a freedom that is important in and of itself in Sen's terms) and for greater participation, which may contribute to better development outcomes in communities. This study is unable to confirm the achievement of the EPWP NYS programme outcome related to capacitating youth to participate in community service delivery programmes post their participation in the programme.

Poole (2013, p. 3) explains that, in simplistic terms, the word "patriotism" refers to a commitment to one's country in relation to its wellbeing (and perhaps that of one's fellow members), including the readiness to make sacrifices on its behalf, particularly in

times of crisis. Poole further explains that patriots are more likely to be measured by their commitments, and their responsible behaviour in respect of sacrifices they make to their communities and fellow members. As a concept, patriotism involves a relationship between the citizenship, the state and fellow citizens.

Based on this description of patriotism, it is difficult to ascertain from the research findings the level of patriotism of NYS programme participants, since most indicated that their participation in the programme was for the purpose of acquiring skills and experience. Secondly, it is not clear how the programme instils the spirit of patriotism in learners and infers its contribution towards developing patriotic citizens. The question posed here emanates from the fact that none of the participants interviewed were able to reflect on the role of the programme in relation to community service initiatives or to indicate their involvement in such initiatives post participation in the programme. Participants, however, did aspire to finding paid employment where they would be able to utilise the skills acquired in the programme.

### 5.3.2 Skills development in the built environment

The theory of change developed for this study identifies an additional key outcome of the EPWP NYS programme as the development of skilled participants who are able to access formal job opportunities in the labour market. The study investigated the type of skills development offered by the programme in order to determine the level of skills participants would need to access formal job opportunities in the labour market.

McCord (2005) mentions that skills development is a core component of the public works programme. Skills development does not take place only through the formal schooling process, but also via "learning by doing" in the workplace (Cypher, 2014). Skills development in the PWPs occurs through the provision of training so that participants are able to gain permanent employment or become self-employed. In the design of the EPWP, programmes like the NYS have a strong training component, which should upskill participants to be able to gain employment post participation in the programme. Furthermore, the EPWP policy framework documents clearly state that the skills development part of the programme is of great importance because it makes public works jobs sustainable (McCord, 2005). In other words, it is implied that upskilling those without jobs will help to meet the demand for skilled labourers.

The research findings of this study confirm that most participants were qualified and certificated in NQF level 2 as bricklayers and tilers. Some participants, however, said they were not exposed to other critical technical aspects of the construction sector, such as the reading of plans. Most participants indicated it is a requirement that qualified bricklayers should be able to read the plans of what is being built. The fact that limited qualifications are provided to the participants of the NYS programme begs the following question: Does the training in bricklaying and tiling sufficiently increase the skills level of participants to ensure growth, prosperity and promotion of life-long learning. Secondly, it is not clear whether the skills offered in these trades were necessary for job-readiness and self-sustainable opportunities in the end.

Skills development is a core objective of the NYS programme, but Bokolo (2013) argues that it is not always prioritised in the implementation of EPWP projects. Bokolo mentions that where training efforts are made, the skills provided are largely inappropriate to meet the demands of the mainstream economy, which is to some extent sophisticated. Bokolo suggests that a combination of formal training and apprenticeship programmes, with the involvement of the private sector, must be delivered for EPWP programmes.

Possibly, the argument advanced by Bokolo supports the findings of this research, with some participants mentioning that they were never exposed to critical technical skills appropriate to the demands of the mainstream economy – despite the fact that the NYS programme incorporates practical training that involves private contractors. It can be argued, based on this finding, that the involvement of the private sector in delivering the programme is not the perfect method since not all contractors understood their role in developing the skills of the EPWP learners placed in their projects. As such, some contractors used the participants as general labourers to assist in the delivery of their projects.

The discussion presented above resonates with information obtained from contractors interviewed in this research, who indicated that most participants were talented in performing the tasks given to them, but often lacked the soft skills to be considered for permanent employment. All contractors cited the poor conduct of participants as one of

the biggest challenges and believed that this might be a result of the lack of soft-skills training in the programme. A study by Adams (2011) indicates that modern employers place high value on a combination of technical, cognitive and non-cognitive skills as a prerequisite for employment. Adams (2011, p. 2) refers to "cognitive skills as the basic mental abilities of individuals to think, study and learn, and non-cognitive skills as the personality traits and behaviours". Emerging from this study is an indication that the concept of skills development in the EPWP NYS programme is not multifaceted. This makes it difficult to determine whether the programme has achieved its outcome of producing skilled participants who are able to access formal job opportunities in the labour market as envisaged in the theory of change outcomes of the programme.

These findings indicate that the EPWP NYS programme places more emphasis on technical skills, which could explain why some participants have been unable to secure employment after successful completion of the programme. Even though the findings indicate that participants did not receive training in soft skills, they do confirm that technical skills were provided. This is notwithstanding the fact that research done in the past by Rees (1986), Pauw et al. (2008) and National Treasury (2011), as cited in Routledge (2013), states that many unemployed youth lack "soft" skills such as communication skills, personal presentation and emotional maturity. Considering the capability approach, which evaluates interventions on what individuals can do (capabilities) and not what individuals can actually do (functioning), and the fact that the EPWP NYS programme provides its participants with some training, it can be said that the programme does capacitate the youth with skills to help them secure employment post participation in the programme.

### 5.3.3 Improvement to quality of life and material wellbeing

Many industries require skilled labour and so the ultimate goal of PWPs is to upskill participants so they are better able to access opportunities in the labour market and improve their standard of living. Regarding youth development interventions, Cornel, Gambone and Smith (2000, p. 285) state that the common goal is to develop youth who can "become economically self-sufficient", "to be healthy and have good family and social relationships", and "to contribute to their community". Primarily, it can be argued that developing youth ensures they become economically active and therefore self-

sufficient, able to support their families and contribute to their wellbeing and, through good social relationships, contribute to their communities.

The findings of this research show that participants have differing viewpoints as to how the programme has benefitted their lives and contributed to their material wellbeing. Most of the participants interviewed indicated that the programme had changed their lives, whether it be in a negative or positive manner. Those who were employed further stated that they would not be where they were without the NYS programme. Most participants, however, did not give positive feedback in relation to the question of material wellbeing. Most stated that the wages they earned while participating in the programme only catered for their basic needs and travel costs to project sites, but did not improve their material wellbeing.

Interestingly, from this research study the notion of improvement of life differs with the definition provided in literature rooted in Sen's capabilities approach (1999) on youth development. For Sen (1999, p.3), "development can be seen […] as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy". Thus, rather than seeing development as a measure of income outcomes only (or in the case of employability as employment and earnings outcomes), Sen advocates a much more human-centred view of development. This view insists on creating the circumstances under which people can be free agents in their own lives. However, Sen (1994, p.4) insist that freedom is also an end in itself and thus becomes a "constitutive part of development". Freedom in this context is understood as being a state in which people are able to fully realise their competencies and can take charge of their lives for an improved material well-being.

Fundamental to the social development approach is a key principle that promotes greater participation of people in their communities and societies, for their own benefit (as a freedom that is important in and of itself in Sen's terms) and for better development outcomes in communities. Applied to the world of work, a key principle enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is to free the potential of each person and improve the quality of life of all. Work is a central aspect of inclusion, growth and the freeing of each individual's potential (Aliber, Kirsten, Maharaj, Nhlapo-Hlope and Nkoane, 2006). The social development model is a pluralistic one, noting that the state, private sector and civil society all have unique strengths, positionalities in

society and access to different resources, and that when combined can bring about better outcomes in society. The proponents of social development argue that investments in social programmes enhance people's welfare, thereby achieving economic development. Assessment of development is primarily in terms of advances in social development, and achievement of development is thoroughly dependent on social development.

Within the context of public works programme, it is argued that providing skills development in the delivery of PWPs is crucial for participants to be able to access opportunities in the labour market and improve their standard of living. Todaro (2009), however, indicates three basic components or core values serve as a conceptual basis towards the understanding of economic development, and these include sustenance, self-esteem and freedom. These components relate to the fundamental human needs that find their expression in almost all societies and cultures at all times. Within the context of development by meeting human needs, the living standards of individuals and material wellbeing improves.

In assessing the improvement to quality of life and material wellbeing, it is argued that work should not only be simply about material well-being, although this is a central aspect of the capabilities approach (Sen 1999; Nussbaum 2001). Work must also be about the capabilities participants have to control over one's environment, exercise practical reasoning and enter into meaningful relationships or mutual recognition with other workers (Nussbaum 2001). Work, whether in the formal or informal sector, is therefore a fundamental aspect of capability and freedom as it addresses various aspects of the human condition. As many industries require skilled labour, the ultimate goal of public works programmes is to assist participants to be better skilled, to access opportunities created in the labour market and to improve their standard of living. In the context of this study, it is evident that the programme has in some way partly contributed to quality of life. This is due to the fact the youth that successfully completed the programme have been provided with experience and skills that they can use in the future to secure employment. This is confirmed by the research findings, which show that participants were optimistic that the experience they had acquired in the programme would assist them in securing future employment.

# 6 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the research. It considers the findings of the study and concludes by linking the purpose of the research, as outlined in Section 1.2.2, with what the study achieved. Based on the conclusions, the chapter highlights limitations of the research and recommends solutions to the research problem and for future studies.

## 6.1 Summary

Youth unemployment and the shortage of skills is a major issue that affects the socio-economic status of South Africa. Compounding the problem is the fact that the youth unemployment landscape is complex and multi-faceted. The country is grappling with how to implement employment-creation and skills-development initiatives that will effectively respond to this multifaceted challenge. This is notwithstanding the fact that government is already implementing interventions such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) National Youth Services (NYS) programme, which aims to not only strengthen youth participation in service delivery and the built environment, but also to assist youth in gaining the work-related skills necessary to access opportunities for a sustainable livelihood (Department of Public Works, 2017).

A study by Mokgohloa (2015) suggests that even though government is implementing programmes such as the EPWP NYS, the majority of young people believe that not enough is being done to create employment. Moreover, anecdotal evidence suggests that these programmes are less attractive to the younger age cohort because they are not well tailored and fail to address their aspirations. Despite the fact that EPWP NYS programme has been in existence for a number of years and monitoring takes place regarding the number of work opportunities created, there is no evidence available as to how it contributes to the employment outcomes of young people.

The purpose of this study therefore is to assess the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment in South Africa. The EPWP programmes have a target of 55 percent youth participation. This study, however, did not focus on the entire EPWP, choosing to limit its research to the NYS programme, which targets only youth. Similarly, the study limited its research to the outcomes evaluation of this intervention.

To undertake this research, the study responded to the following research questions: 1) What is the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment? 2) What are the critical factors of the EPWP NYS programme that promote youth employment? 3) What are the limitations of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment? 4) To where have the EPWP NYS participants exited after participating in the programme?

The research undertook an outcomes evaluation of the EPWP NYS programme to respond to these questions and assess the role of the NYS in promoting youth employment. Furthermore, the study employed qualitative research strategy, case study research design, document review, literature review and semi-structured interviews. The study analysed the research results using the capability approach framework, theory of change and results chain. Thirteen interviewees participated in the research and comprised both participants and contractors. The research participants were selected using a combination of purposive and convenience sampling, drawn from the databases of the EPWP NYS programme that were obtained from the Department of Public Works. The intention was to respond to the main research question by obtaining information from people who had participated in the NYS programme. The study population comprised youth who had participated in the programme from 2014 to 2016 and contractors who had employed some of these participants. The interviews were conducted in January and February 2018.

The findings of this study shows that the implementation of the EPWP NYS programme is inconsistent with the theory of change developed because training interventions were not structured to produce skilled participants able to access formal job opportunities in the labour market. Furthermore, the study confirmed that participation of the youth in community service delivery programmes was limited to the period in which they were part of the NYS programme. Based on this finding, the research could not establish whether participants had worked in community service delivery programmes beyond the project life cycle, or if the programme was successful in instilling a sense of patriotism in the youth as intended in the programme objectives.

Notwithstanding the limitations provided above, the study confirmed that the EPWP NYS programme places more emphasis on technical skills, with participants indicating that they had received no training in soft skills. This could explain why some

participants have been unable to secure employment after successful completion of the programme. However, considering the capability approach, which evaluates interventions on what individuals can do (capabilities) and not what individuals can actually do (functioning), it can be said that the EPWP NYS programme does capacitate the youth with skills to help them secure employment post participation in the programme.

Even though the research focus was on the outcomes evaluation, the findings presented above reveal limitations in the implementation of the EPWP NYS programme, including poor monitoring of projects, which participants cited as the cause of misalignment of work at site level and the contracts signed when recruited into the programme. Participants raised overwhelming concern that the experiential training offered at site level did not meet their expectations. Many participants mentioned that the work they did on site was elementary because contractors often neither understand the concept of the NYS programme nor the mentoring of the learners allocated, and hence regarded them as staff to supplement their teams of general labourers.

Furthermore, the study confirmed that fewer participants were in formal employment as a result of the NYS programme. For instance, most of those participants who were not employed were however actively involved in the construction sector in various capacities, including studying towards a qualification in the built environment or being self-employed. As a result, most participants expressed concern regarding the exit opportunities offered by the programme. There was a general sense that the Department of Public Works as the custodian of the NYS programme was not doing enough to create employment opportunities for learners who were trained through their programmes. Participants indicated that other government departments with similar programmes prioritised their learners over external job applicants when artisan posts were advertised.

## 6.2 Conclusions

The research was undertaken through a case study design and it should therefore be noted that the results of the study are not generalizable. The research has been done to enhance the understanding of the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting

youth employment. The themes from the study were refined to cover four major areas, for which interview questions were structured:

a) The role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme in promoting youth employment.
b) Critical factors of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme that promote youth employment.
c) Limitations of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment.
d) Exit areas for the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme participants.

The themes presented above were aligned to the research attributes presented in Section 2.6 to analyse and interpret the data. The findings presented in this research are based on the views and experiences of participants of the programme as well as contractors who were part of programme implementation. The findings of this study are presented according to the role of each player in programme implementation. Demographic details of participants are therefore included in this report to provide characteristics of the sample for credibility.

Emerging from this study is the view that the EPWP NYS programme has the potential to play a significant role in promoting youth employment. Lack of skills and experience are still regarded as key obstacles to youth gaining employment. A programme like the EPWP NYS. which is designed to offer theoretical and practical training, should be considered for revision and upscaling in order to make a significant contribution to increasing youth employment. The immediate challenge, however, is to ensure alignment of programme design and implementation so that the envisaged outcomes can be achieved.

In conclusion, the administrative and delivery methods used to implement the EPWP NYS programme limit its potential to promote youth employment. If the limitations presented in the findings of this study are not addressed, the intervention will not achieve its intended outcomes, which are outlined in the programme design.

## 6.3 Limitations

The study applied qualitative strategy and case study design and therefore the results cannot be generalised to the entire EPWP. Furthermore, the EPWP NYS programme is implemented across the nine provinces and only one province was selected for the sample frame of this study. The use of one province as a case study method poses the limitation of subjectivity and unreliable results because it relies on fewer people sampled rather than an entire programme population (Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2001, Bell, 2005). The findings of this research therefore cannot represent all nine provinces that implement the EPWP NYS programme. Furthermore, purposive and convenience sampling might have limited the research from having multiple perspectives, and the use of semi-structured interviews poses a limitation of reliability of information provided by participants. Triangulation was applied to address these limitations, using multiple data sources to verify information.

This study focused on the role of the EPWP NYS programme in promoting youth employment. The data collection method applied was qualitative research, which lessens the generalisability of findings. Qualitative studies require a narrow segment in terms of the number of participants and therefore only thirteen respondents (nine participants and three contractors) were interviewed. The findings reported also do not cover all projects in Gauteng, but rather only a few that were implemented between the years 2014 and 2016. Furthermore, the EPWP NYS programme employed various contractors to deliver projects during this period and only three contractors could be accessed from a list of 10 provided by the Department of Public Works Pretoria Regional Office. This is due to the fact that most contractors who met the set criteria were not available to participate in the interviews.

## 6.4 Recommendations

Based on the research results of this study, the following recommendations are made.

There is a dire need for the EPWP NYS programme to be aligned to the duration outlined in the programme framework documents.

According to the NYS programme design, the programme should delivered over the course of 12 months, with six months allocated for classroom training and six months for experiential learning. This study confirmed that the employment contracts of most of the participants were for a period of less than 12 months and that the classroom training was provided over a maximum of three months. As such, it can be advanced that this short-term training had a negative impact on the programme objective of helping young people to acquire adequate skills to secure future employment.

As cited in Slindile and Barnes (2017), the Department of Higher Education and Training (2013, p. 9) highlights that shifts in labour force demographics necessitate that individuals be prepared for both formal employment and opportunities to establish their own small businesses or cooperatives. As a result, the EPWP NYS should ensure that career guidance and information be provided as a critical skills element of the programme. This would empower participants to make informed decisions about their career pathways post participation. The Department of Public Works needs to capacitate programme participants on how to start businesses or cooperatives. This recommendation can be implemented with the assistance of its EPWP branch in-house expertise on enterprise development or through its partnerships with institutions such as the Department of Small Business Development.

The Department of Public Works EPWP NYS programme invests considerable financial resources in the training of youth in artisan trades. To derive the benefits of the investment made through the NYS, the department should put in place a strategy to absorb participants who have successfult completed the NYS programme into its employ in the department's workshops responsible for maintainance of government buildings.

The Department of Public Works, as the custodian of the EPWP NYS, needs to ensure that there is adequate monitoring and evaluation of programme projects. This would address the issue of non-structured programme implementation by private contractors, mainly interested in making profit and not really concerned with the skills development goals of the EPWP.

The study assessed the role of the EPWP NYS in promoting youth employment. There would be merit for future research to focus on the question of how the programme could facilitate exit and placement opportunities for participants. This future research could assist the Department of Public Works, as the custodian of the EPWP NYS, in effectively promoting youth employment. Furthermore, the research could identify areas for possible partnerships with other role players such as the private sector who can collaborate with government to create placement opportunities for youth who have successfully completed the programme.As the study applied qualitative strategy and case study design with a sample frame focusing only on one province yet the programme is implemented across aall the nine provinces in the country. There would be merit for future research to focus on the entire NYS programme across all provinces to verify if the findings discussed in this study are consistent in all provinces or they only exist in Gauteng Province.

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX 1.1 CONSENT FORM AND INTERVIEW GUIDE

**Research Title:** Assessing the role of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service in promoting youth employment

**Name of researcher**: Ms Lindiwe Nkuna

**Position of researcher**: Student at WSG

**Contact phone of researcher:** 082 413 9975 or 079 891 7675

**A: Consent Form**

Please initial box if you agree to the statement before proceeding with the interview

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | I understand that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions | |
| 2. | I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reasons | |
| 3. | I agree to take part in this study | |
| 4. | I agree to the interview and for the interview session to be tape-recorded | |
| 5. | I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publication of the research report | |

---------- ---------- ----------

Name of participant Date Signature

---------- ---------- ----------

Name of Researcher Date Signature

**PART A: PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

**1. DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS**

1.1 Date of Interview:
---

1.2 Province:
---

1.3 Gender
Female ( )
Male ( )

1.4 Age:
16 – 20 years ( )
21 – 25 years ( )
26 – 30 years ( )
31 – 35 years ( )
Above 35 years ( )

1.5 Highest education level completed

---

1.6 Nationality

---

1.7 When did you start participating in the EPWP NYS Programme?

1.8 What was the duration of your contract in the EPWP NYS Programme?

**2. Aspects facilitating the employment outcomes of participants from the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme**

2.1 Current employment status

Employed ( )
Unemployed ( )
Self-employed ( )
Volunteering ( )
Other ----------

2.2 If employed, what type of work are you currently doing?

---

2.3 If self-employed, what type of business are you currently doing?
---

2.4 If volunteering, where are you currently volunteering your service?
---

2.5 How has the EPWP NYS Programme assisted you in what you are doing currently?

2.6 Which components (i.e. classroom training or practical training) of the EPWP NYS Programme do you think has assisted you to be involved in what you are currently doing?

2.7 What are the EPWP NYS Programme components (i.e. classroom training or practical training) that should be changed to improve the employment prospects of participants post their participation in the programme?

2.8 What is your understanding of the EPWP NYS Programme and what does the programme seeks to achieve?

2.9 What role does the EPWP NYS Programme has in promoting youth employment?

2.10 When participating in the programme, what type of technical training did you receive?

2.11 What was the duration of the technical training offered to you during your participation in the EPWP NYS Programme?

2.12 Upon completion of the programme, what type of a qualification did you receive?

2.13 What type of a certificate were you given for the qualification you completed whilst participating in the EPWP NYS Programme?

2.14 How has the classroom training provided in the programme relevant to the practical training done during experiential training offered in the programme?

2.15 What components of the classroom training offered in the EPWP NYS Programme do you think will assist to secure employment in the future?

2.16 When participating in the EPWP NYS Programme, what type of work did you do for the practical training?

2.17 For how long were you involved on the practical training?

2.18 What components of the practical training do you think will assist you to secure work in the future?

2.19 What aspects of the EPWP NYS programme (i.e. skills or experience) do you think were relevant for the programme?

2.20 What aspects of the EPWP NYS programme (i.e. skills or experience) were not relevant for the programme?

2.21 What are the important factors of the EPWP NYS Programme that are relevant for assisting youth to secure future employment after their participation in the programme?

2.22 What type of skills acquired from the EPWP NYS Programme do you think will help you secure a job in the future?

2.23 What would you recommend for improvement in the implementation of the EPWP NYS Programme training?

2.24 What would you recommend for improvement in the implementation of the experiential training offered in the EPWP NYS Programme?

2.25 How has the EPWP NYS Programme contributed towards your living standards?

2.26 What benefits has the programme contributed towards your life?

**PART B: CONTRACTORS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

**3. DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS**

3.1 Date of Interview:

---

3.2 Province:

---

3.3 Name of Organisation

---

3.4 What is your job title?

---

3.5 What are your functions in this role?

---

**4. Aspects crucial for the employment of the Expanded Public Works Programme National Youth Service programme participants**

4.1 What type of work does your organisation do?

4.2 How many NYS learners were you allocated between the years 2014 – 2016?

4.3 How are these NYS learners recruited in your organisation?

4.4 What is the criteria used to select participants from the EPWP NYS programme in your organisation?

4.5 What type of training is provided to EPWP NYS programme participants is relevant for your organisation?

4.6 What training accreditation do EPWP NYS participants appointed in your organisation have?

4.7 How is the EPWP NYS Programme training accreditation relevant for the work done by your organisation?

4.8 What makes the design of the EPWP NYS programme to be relevant for the work done in your organisation?

4.9 How is the experience acquired by participants from the EPWP NYS programme assisting them to deliver the work they are appointed to do in your organisation?

4.10 What challenges have you encountered with the work of participants recruited in the EPWP NYS programme?

4.11 What are your recommendations for addressing these challenges?

4.12 What do you think are the critical aspects of the EPWP NYS programme that contributes to the future employment of the participants?

4.13 What would you consider to be a role of the EPWP NYS Programme in promoting youth employment?

# Appendix 1.1: TRANSCRIPT 1: INTERVIEW WITH RESPONDENT 7

**Date:** **18 January 2018**

**Province:** **Gauteng (Soweto)**

**Time:** **12h00 – 12h55**

**Interviewer** Ok**…** since you are agreeing to the things I said, I am going to tick these boxes for you to just to sign the consent form at the bottom.

**Interviewer:** Rikhotso wa vulavula? Ooh, a ni nga swi tivi. Surname ya wena a yi nga tsalanga ka database. Na mina na vulavula.

**Interviewer:** Age ya wena lembe leri yiri yini?
**Respondent 7:** 27
**Interviewer:** 27, so it is between 26 and 30.

**Interviewer:** Then highest education level leyi u nga yi completa I yini?
**Respondent 7:** National diploma.
**Interviewer:** So va yi vita yini, is it N6 certificate or it's a diploma?

**Respondent 7**: It is a Diploma.
**Interviewer:** Ooh, it is a Diploma in what?
**Respondent 7:** Civil Engineering

**Interviewer:** And then uve ka NYS programme rini or u participate ka NYS rini?
**Respondent 7:** From 2012.
**Interviewer:** Ok
**Respondent 7:** Then 2013 se ku hela programme

**Interviewer:** Va tlhe va ku teka futhi?
**Respondent 7:** Eya va tlhe va ni teka futhi hi 2014 to early 2015

**Interviewer:** I am thinking since ninga interested ka lava nga nghena from 2014, ni ta tsala 2015. So for the first time, kuve rini until when?
**Respondent 7:** 2012 to 2013

**Interviewer:** Ooh, se a wu ri returned soldier?
**Respondent 7:** Jaah…

**Interviewer:** Ok se loko u ri ka NYS hi 2014 to 2015, contract ya wena a yi ri ya ku fika kwini? Duration?

**Respondent 7:** A yi ri 8 months
**Interviewer:** 8 months neeh? So meaning u nghene towards the end of 2014?
**Respondent 7:** Ya.

**Interviewer:** Currently u endla yini, u le ku tirheni? Unemployed? Volunteering or self-employed or u le ku studyeni?
**Respondent 7:** Self-employed
**Interviewer:** Self-employed neeh?
**Respondent:** Jaah.

**Interviewer:** And then u endla yini ka company ya wena?
**Respondent 7:** I am doing Architectural business.
**Interviewer:** So what is Architectural business?
**Respondent 7**: Its drawings of plans.

**Interviewer:** I am just curious…Was it part ya NYS or was it something u nga swi dyondzela? Because I met someone na yena a endla same thing.
**Respondent 7:** No. It was not part of my training.

**Interviewer:** Oh, it was something u nga swi endla before NYS? Because ni hlangane na un'wani a Pitori na yena u endla the same thing so I thought it was something mi nga swi endla.
**Respondent 7**: Mhhh mmm (no)

**Interviewer:** Ok
**Respondent 7:** I can say ko va extra capability
**Interviewer:** Okaaay... Mara loko u endla your qualification was it something yo u swi dyondzile ku va u kota ku drawa?

**Respondent 7:** It's just basics, but remember loko hi endla a xikolweni a hi drawa... sweswiwa swilo swi ya swi karhi swi cinca
**Interviewer:** Se ku na ti software...
**Respondent 7:** Eya ti software ti kona.... (Names a few).

**Interviewer:** So Mara u sungule rini ku ri endla business leriwa?
**Respondent 7**: In 2014
**Interviewer:** Loko u karhi u endla NYS?
**Respondent 7:** Yes

**Interviewer:** ….and then...xana wati kuma ti clients?
**Respondent 7:** Ja!
**Interviewer:** Ok...

**Interviewer:** There is one question I forgot to ask, vaku ku recruite kwini?
**Respondent 7**: About that programme ya NYS?
**Interviewer:** Mmm…ni vula ku a va ku kuma kwini? Like first time u nghena kona a va ku accesse kwini?

**Respondent 7:** Well, actually in 2014 i registered a company. We were encouraged to register our own companies. I then did that towards the end of the year. I think it was September.

**Interviewer:** So Mara...then ni vula ku what were you doing before u joina NYS?

**Respondent 7**: Then mi vula ku...

**Interviewer:** Ku nghena ka NYS...a va ku kuma kwini for opportunity leyiwani? Because others were recruited loko va ha ri ku dyondzeni, van'wani while working for a construction company...so with you...?

**Respondent 7:** Mina ...a na ha ri ku studyeni.

**Interviewer:** Ok, a wu nghena kwini?

**Respondent 7:** A South-West Southern College.

**Interviewer:** Almost everyone u huma kwale…Yi hi kwini kasi?

Respondent 7: Yi la Soweto a Molapo.

**Interviewer:** Kambe vari i South West Gauteng…

**Respondent 7:** College

**Interviewer:** It is for the first time ni twa hi yona mara I think almost every second person ni hlangana na yena u huma kona

**Interviewer:** You said you are self-employed...

**Respondent 7:** Yes, but after programme liya ya NYS, a ni tirha ka Department of Infrastructure Development.

**Interviewer:** Gauteng DID...?

**Respondent 7:** Ya

**Interviewer:** A ku ri rini kona?

**Respondent 7:** From 2015 November.

**Interviewer:** November to…?

**Respondent 7:** To 2016 October.

**Interviewer:** A ku ri ntirho wa njhani?

**Respondent 7:** It was an internship programme

**Interviewer:** Ok. Aku ri internship on what?
Like ntirho wa kona a ku ri yini lowu a va mi teke for wona?

**Respondent 7:** Mina a ni tirha...mi vula position neh?

**Interviewer:** Yaah…

**Respondent 7**: A ni tirha as a Works Inspector as well as Project Manager.

**Interviewer:** Works Inspector, ok?

**Respondent 7:** Ntirho wa kona a wu ri na part ya Quantity Surveying

**Interviewer:** Ooh ok….

**Respondent 7:** Coz we used to do specifications like, develop project plans...and whatever.

**Interviewer:** Ok...ku va u ri self-employed...was it because you opted ku va u titirha kumbe...ko va hi ku you're still waiting for employment?

**Respondent 7:** Not exactly…
**Interviewer:** Ooh, ok
**Respondent**: Ni ta ku I cannot sit on my hands ni va a spectator.

**Interviewer:** Ku ve u na experience ya swo karhi
**Respondent 7:** Ja...

**Interviewer:** So meaning wa applyela in the meantime neh?
**Respondent 7**: Eyaa, na applyela. Actually, ni fambe ti interview ta ku tala nale kaya.
**Respondent 7:** Coz what I can say is a ni na ndhawu ya mina leyi ni nga ta ku "this is my permanent place lani tshamaku kona or I own this property...

**Interviewer:** Ooh, a hi le kaya lani?
**Respondent 7:** A hi le kaya, na renta

**Interviewer:** Oh, ok. I thought u huma lani. A kaya hi kwini?
**Respondent:** Ni huma a USG...Loko u fona aniri kwale.

**Interviewer:** Hi kwini a USG?
**Respondent 7:** United States of Giyani

**Interviewer:** *laughs* Oho...

**Respondent 7:** Loko u fona hi Tuesday I was in Giyani. So I came back yesterday just to come and meet you and now they're calling me back somewhere.

**Interviewer:** Oh, is it?
**Respondent 7:** Ja

**Interviewer:** Giyani kwini?
**Respondent 7:** Ni huma ka Ngove, a Giyani

**Interviewer:** Ok, ni na maxaka a Giyani. Straight
A ti A na le D2 na le ti E...
**Respondent 7:** Ok, that is great.

**Respondent 7:** Mara permanently nwina mi tshama kwini la?
**Interviewer:** Ni tshama a Pretoria. A Centurion. Mara a kaya hi le Bush, a Thulamahashe
**Respondent 7:** Ok

**Interviewer:** And then...in your own view, programme leya NYS yi ku pfune njhani ka ntirho lowu u nga le ku wu endleni sweswi?

**Respondent 7:** Actually because we used to have drawings when we were working, like we were taught even to interpret those drawings

**Interviewer:** Ok...

**Respondent 7:** It helped me develop interest in becoming a Draughtsman

**Interviewer:** Ok…

**Respondent 7:** So that is where I developed my interest in being a Draughtsman one day

**Interviewer:** So loko u ri ka NYS I understand ku va ta va mi nyike formal training na experiential learning…

**Respondent 7:** Learning...yes

**Interviewer:** Hi xini from the 2 xi nga ku pfuna ku u nga hleketa ku if you're not employed u nga ti endlela ntirho. So out of the 2 components - be it the training or the experiential learning, hi xihi xi nga trigger ku u hleketa ku in the meantime, na loko ni nga ri na ntirho I will be able to work on my own?

**Respondent 7:** Actually, let me say: training because training it is more of practical. Sometimes that's when you see things and think: some of the things you can do it on your own.

**Interviewer:** Ya…

**Respondent 7:** A ni ma vona sometimes loko mi nga se za mi tiva nchumu - mi nga se tshama mi swi vona ku swilo swi endliwa njani, a mi hleketi ku mi nga swi endla. But loko se mi karhi mi swi tirha mi vona ku mi nga swi endla, swintsongo sweswiya, hambi mo dyondza ti basics mi va na interest yo "No man, na mina ni nga swi endla."

**Interviewer:** Ok. Once mi va exposed ka swona?

**Respondent 7:** Eya, once mi va exposed ka swona.

**Interviewer**: Se ku ya hi ti components ta training na experiential learning, hi swini u feelaka ku swi fane swi cinciwa for improvements?

**Respondent 7:** I can say both

**Interviewer:** Why?

**Respondent 7:** Experience u nga yi kuma, u kuma ku va ku endlisa swilo swintsanana leswi nga light like, leswi nga ta, and loko swi ri swilo swa light it's not a good exposure.

**Interviewer:** Eh, u kuma ku wa tirha mara u kuma ku a hi experience ya ku yi related neh?

**Respondent 7:** Eh, ma swi vona?

**Interviewer:** Ok

**Respondent 7:** A ka ti training i kuma scope xo ku endleka yini a siting.

**Interviewer:** Se swiva complete neh?
**Respondent 7:** Exactly

**Interviewer:** So on this one basically you are saying ku ka the experiential learning va linka the work they are offering to what is expected from your studies?
**Respondent 7:** Exactly
**Interviewer:** Ok

**Respondent 7**: But sometimes va fika va ku endlisa *tiling*, which is something very light and a swi linki…
**Interviewer:** Eeh, van'wani a va ni byela ku a va mixer daka a karhi a endla Engineering.
**Respondent 7:** Ma swi vona?

**Interviewer:** ` And then if ku na munhu a lavaku ku twisisa hi NYS? U nga hlamusela njhani? How did you understand the concept ya NYS programme?

**Respondent 7:** NYS i programme...to me, neh? I programme leyi...to me, it's a starting point. Like vanhu vo tala lava ya ku ka NYS va va va ri na zero experience. And then va kota ku va va ku yisa to the next level leyi ku nga ya National Diploma.

**Interviewer:** So ku ya hi ku twisisa ka wena, NYS is there ku maker sure…yi pfuna vanhu ku mover from a particular point va fika ko karhi. So loko wa ha lava experience i bridge ya ku u kota ku lava…
**Respondent 7:** Eya, a ni a hi guaranteed employment mara at least u va u gaine something na wena u va u karhi u swi tiva ku "No man, with this experience na loko ni nga kumangi ntirho, mara diploma ya mina ni ta yi kuma and then ni ta kota ku ya mahlweni na vutomi
**Interviewer:** Ok, na vona.

**Respondent 7:** Na ku sometimes, loko se u ya sungula ku va exposed ka swilo swin'wani na swin'wani, na meehleketo ya pfuleka.

**Interviewer:** Ooh, Ja.

**Respondent 7:** U sungula ku la ku vona swilo hi ndlela yin'wani ya dyondzo nyana loko u tshamile u ri wexe.

**Interviewer:** Hi matwisiselo ya wena neeh, how does the NYS program promote youth employment? So do you think they're there ku va va pfuna vantshwa ku va nga kuma mintirho? If that is the case va va pfuna njhani ku va va kota ku kuma mintirho?

**Respondent 7**: NYS programme neh? I ri ni ku ya pfuna vhele yona neh?
**Interviewer:** Yaa…

**Respondent 7:** I bridge ya ku kota ku...as I was saying: I bridge ya ku kota ku ku tlurisela ka level yin'wani. Which means it can be another level of

employment, it can be another level of whatever that you're doing. It will lift you up.

**Interviewer:** Se Mara a hi focusi ka youth neh?
**Respondent 7:** Ya

**Interviewer:** Ku ya hi leswi swinga xi swona sweswi youth unemployment yi le henhla ngopfu. Do you think the way va yi endlaku hi kona, is it something lexi ku va targeta vantshwa ku va kota ku va va pfuneka ku va huma va ta kuma mintirho or ko va something va ku va ticka box ya ku: "hi traine" vantshwa mara a yi na...a makumu ka siku a yi va pfuni hi nchumu. Ko va something va ku: ni tirhile Mara a yi ni pfunanga hi nchumu?

**Respondent 7:** No...mina ni nga ku, ya pfuna because loko u fika u ta uri unskilled u vuya u ri skilled, it's something to me.
**Interviewer:** Ok.

**Respondent 7:** Na loko u nga ri skilled person, kumbe semi-skilled, at least u gaine something. It's a knowledge. Ende knowledge is power aniri?
**Interviewer:** Mmm…

**Respondent 7:** And loko se u ri na knowledge, na loko u nga yi u ya tirha ntirho wa mavoko, kumbe u nga yi u ya employa hi company yin'wani a handle, wena hi wexe loko u tshamile, u ta swi tiva ku "No man, ku na leswi na le kaya loko swi onhaka ni fanelaka ku swi endla hi nexe hi ku ni tshame ni swi endla somewhere. You are semi-skilled. So lexi nga kona i ku loko munhu a fika ka that programme a nga fiki a relaxa, a fika a tekela hansi programme ya leyo. Kumbe in terms of finance hi ku a yina mali ya le henhla. Vanhu va tsandzeka ku twisisa ku it's an empowerment. It is not employment. A hi guaranteed employment. Mara loko wena u ri karhi u hleketa wloko mihleketo ya wena yi pfulekile hi ku va u kume skill hi loko se u kota ku hundzela mahlweni na vutomi. U endla leswi u vonaku swi ta ku vuyerisa.
And ku na part yin'wani va mi tiselaku vanhu va mi motivate nyana ku pfula ti company…kwalhaya va mi byela ku mi nga pfula company as a group, then you come back to us- we will help you hiku ku na ti programme ta ti small enterprise ti pfunaka ti small enterprises

**Interviewer:** Ni kombela ku vutisa- 2014 a wu appointe hi yini contractor ya kona?
**Respondent 7:** Hi Afzim
Interviewer: Va kwini?
**Respondent 7:** Sweswi a ni tirhi

**Interviewer:** Mara nkarhi wa lowo a mi endla yini? Project ya kona.
**Respondent 7:** A yi ri ya building…maintenance ya police station

**Interviewer:** So in a way a va mi nyika access ka the technical work ya project ya ley neh?

**Respondent 7:** Ja, compared to ka liya yo sungula…liya yo sungula nkarhi wun'wani a mi ta ku…kova ku a ho tiyisela hi ku sometimes loko u nga se tshama u tirha…mina my wish a ku ri ku kuma diploma and a ni swi tiva ku ku marketa a hi swilo swo olova especially loko u suka college u nga se kuma ti skills.

**Interviewer:** Ja…

**Respondent 7:** Sometimes u fane u tiyisela hi ku va ri: Perseverance is the mother of success aniri? So compared to liyani hi ku liya…a wu kuma ku Bunu a ri ta ku nyika wheelbarrow u gonya na yona u tlhela u ehla na yona in a staircase.

**Interviewer:** A ku ri yini ntirho wa kona?

**Respondent 7:** A ku ri ku renovate a Court Chamber next to Johannesburg High Court.

**Interviewer:** Ja…wun'wani na un'wani u na different experience

**Interviewer:** Se u vuye u tlhelela even after that experience?

**Respondent 7:** Hi leswi hi kurisaka swona hi ta ku yini?

**Interviewer:** A ni ri kwala last week. Munhu loyi a ni tshame na yena u te ka mina...

Na loko ku ri na project yin'wani anaha naveli ni swi twile neh?

**Respondent 7:** Ya, Mmm...

**Interviewer:** Mara va kona vo fana na wena va tlhelerile even after experience yo sungula.

A ni hlangane na...loyi n'wana a ni hlanganangi na yena hi lo vulavula hi phone.
Lowu n'wana ni hlangane na yena a ni byela ku 'Ni tlhelerile - the second time around it was much better a hi nyikiwi exposure ya right na njhani njhani...

**Respondent 7:** The second one a yi ri kahle ka mina

**Interviewer:** Oh, ok…

**Respondent 7:** The only problem a ku ri ku…a ni tivi ku se ni ta va ni humile nyana…

**Interviewer:** No, its fine u nga vulavula.

**Respondent 7:** Compared to Department of Infrastructure Development…
A ni karhi ni va hlamusela ku problem leyi ni nga yi vona loko ni compara Infrastructure department…

**Interviewer:** DID?

**Respondent 7:** Ja, a DID na Public Works iku vanhu a va treatiwi ku fana, mara loko mo languta NYS leti nga ka Infrastructure people are trated with dignity.

**Interviewer:** A DID neh?

**Respondent 7:** A DID na le a Public Works a ku treatiwi ku fana.

**Interviewer:** In which way? Ku na ku antswa ka yini?
**Respondent 7:** Loko no ya a Public Works in Braamfontein a ni nge kumi na access ya ku nghena mi vonana na vona mi discussa any issue.

**Interviewer:** And then DID?
**Respondent 7:** Va mi nyika access to information.
**Interviewer:** Ooh…

**Respondent 7:** Vava ndlela na library loko ku ri ku na leswi mi fanelaku mi apply ava kota ku applya
**Interviewer:** I think I like that part… so in a way a hi leswo munhu u fane a tshama a fieldini ntsena?

**Respondent 7:** Eya!

**Interviewer:** In fact u hlamule question ya mina yin'wani, yima ni ringeta ku yi languta. A yi ri kona ku "I yini xi fanelaka xi improve.iwaka hi ku already u le ku ni byeleni ku "a ku vi na ndlela yak u ti participants, na loko va ri field.ini va va na access na tiofficials ku vava kota ku vatirhisa information?

**Respondent 7:** Mm…(yes)

**Respondent 7:** Xin'wani ni nga xi notice.a, I ku ni nghene ka Public Works hi 2012, ni huma 2013, ni thlela ni nghena 2014 ni huma hi 2015 futhi neh? Mara a ni se tshama ni yi vona post ya ka Public Works kumbe munhu a fika a ni komba circular ya Public Works a ku: "we have a current circular, yi na this and this and this..."Loyi a qualifyaku a nga applya

**Interviewer:** Ni kombela u khomiwa sweswo ni yi capturer.
*mumbles inaudible *

**Interviewer:** Ya, at least hi swi capture.rile swo tala.
**Respondent 7:** Ok

**Interviewer:** We still have 26 minutes left, so we might have missed about 10 minutes

**Interviewer:** Se loko mi ri ka NYS ni twisisa ku va rhanga va mi nyika induction and then ku va na training. And then ku va na site training and then ku va na...va swi vita yini kambe leswiwa? Like

va kota ku mi pfuna ku applya and all that...From all this things, hi swini swi nga important ku munhu a va a kuma ntirho?

**Respondent 7:** Leswi nga important ngopfu neh?
As I was saying I karhi ni compare.a .....(?) leti...leswi nga important I ku loko hi vulavula hi ku aka muchini wo karhi, wu sungula eka foundation

**Interviewer:** uh...

**Respondent 7:** Leswi vulaku ku foundation ya kona hi la munhu mi sungulaku ku n'wi komba ku...A ni ma swi tiva ku vo tala loko vo sungula ku ya lava ku applya ntirho a va swi tivi ku loko va fanele va applya ntirho, va sungula kwini...u ta twa va vulavula hi "connection". Loko va ku vona u mbale uniform, va ri: "U ni connecta".

**Interviewer:** Na hleka hi ku loko no nghena xitolo neh, vanhu lava nga ti till.ini, nkarhi na nkarhi va hi vona va ri "Eh, hi zameni hi mintirho". Mara loko u n'wi vutisa munhu loyi ku: " U na CV? U endle yini neh?...
Se ku ya hi wena neh...a wa ha hlamusela ku Foundation yi important...se from NYS hi yihi part leyi u vonaku ku yi endla ku vantshwa va kota ku va nga huma va kuma ntirho?

**Interviewer:** Oh, so more like life skills orientation?

**Respondent 7:** Even then ku va na workplace orientation...
Ku va na la a va hi dyondzisa hi ku endla CV...a proper CV leyi kokaku matihlo.

**Interviewer:** Oho

**Respondent 7:** Loko u Cheka CV u kuma ku a wu nga swi endli kahle. A wu applya kun'wani va ku fonela, ku n'wana a ok va favour vhele...not ku a hi endla swona. Kambe loko u sungula ku swi Cheka u kuma ku no, swin'wani a hi nga swi endli hi ndlela ya kahle.

**Respondent:** Se swi sungula ka ku tiva format ya CV

**Interviewer:** Swi tano hinkwako. Loko ni ri xikolweni na ha sungula undergrad, va tile va ta hi dyondzisa ku tsala CV. Same thing. So hina va ye: ' Tanani na CV ya n'wina', hi tsala Kirk na swilo swo fana na va "non-smoking ", I yini swin'wani hi rhandzaka ku swi tsala? "Healthy "

**Respondent 7:** Na va "Hobbies"

**Interviewer:** Jaaa..."no criminal record "- va ku: "Swi suseni. Swilo swa important hi leswiwa: "Experience ya wena yi relevant. Education...loko va yi languta, just one page va Kota ku vona ku

u na experience, u na qualification, and then leswin'wani a swi important swo va swo khavisa, mara a ni ri nkarhi wa kona a hi nga ri na experience? A wu la ku tikuma u ri na 2 pages, se va ku: "One pager" yi right. U dyondze yini? U le ku endleni ka yini? Information liya hi yona ya important.

**Interviewer:** And then...hi tini ti skills leti u nga ti kumaka NYS programme leti nga ku pfunaka ku ya mahlweni no titirha kumbe one day u kuma

**Respondent 7:** Ni twe ni pfuneke ngopfu hi ku loko va ku: "U ta ya site.ini, a ni swi tiva ku a site.ini ni ya hlangana na yini. I yini behavior ya le site.ini

**Interviewer:** Se na picture ya kona, loko no vutisa neh?
Ka training leyi a va mi nyika a site.ini hi xi hi lexi va nga xi improva? A ni wena u ti mi training hi ku va ku assign a na munhu. A mi dyondza tano.

**Respondent 7:** Sometimes va ta na xitafu xi nga helelangi, sometimes u kuma ku that's why ni ku mina with that experience, with those trainings Lexi n'wana va fanela ka va xi improver iku sometimes loko va appointed ti contractorors, contractor ayi fanelanga yi fika yi controla munhu wa ka Public Works.

**Interviewer:** As much as i project ya yena...

**Respondent:** Sometimes...which means ku fanele ku va na munhu wa full time a va kona a site.ini a ba nyika direction which means contractor yi ta communicator na yena ivi yena a communicator na vanhu va yena. Hi ku sometimes ku va na ti conflict

**Interviewer:** va holova...

**Respondent 7:** Sometimes ti contractor ti nyika ti orders ka vanhu lavaya.
Ende xi n'wana Public Works yi xi endlaku I ku loko yi yisa vanhu ka site yivheta yi ku xavisa ka Contractor yi ku: "Here is our slaves. Use them."

**Interviewer:** *Laughs*

**Respondent 7:** Then contractor yi sungula ku va na matimba ku xin'wani na xin'wani lexi yi lavaku ku xi endla.

**Interviewer:** Sometimes I ku learners are exploited by contractors...Point ya leyo a wo sungula ku yi vula, na van'wani va yi vurile. I ku I something. lexi fanelaka kuxi langutiwa hi ku ya hi wena ku va u participate ka programme leyi swi ku pfune njhani ku va u improva your living standard? Se living standard iku...maybe ku na swilo a wu nga koti ku swi fikelela Mara ku va u nghene la swi endle ku at least vutomi bya wena byi antswa nyana, so hi swini leswi u nga ku program leyi yi contributile ka ti living standard

**Respondent 7:** Eh...A ni swi tivi ku ni yi hlamula njani...

**Interviewer:** Se living standard...or maybe ni ku pfuna hi ndlela leyi neh? Eh...so how has it contributed to your living standard? So living standard means ...maybe u pfuneke ku u nga hetisa qualification hikuva u xotela hi mali se u kume ku sweswi neh, yi ku pfune u heta qualification.
Another issue iku yi kote ku yi ku nyika exposure ka swilo leswi a wu nga hleketi ku u nga kota ku swi vona. Ku va na mhaka ya ku...

**Respondent 7:** Se a ni swi tivi ku na ha ta yi hlamula njhani hi ku se...

**Interviewer:** He eh..ni lava ku twa hi wena, mina no nyika ti examples.

**Respondent 7:** Ok, loko ni fika ka...

**Interviewer:** Ni la ku twa ku ya hi wena. A no nyika ti examples...ku yi contribute njhani towards your...living standards? Like yi antswise vutomi bya wena njhani?

**Respondent:** Actually, eh...mina loko ni fika la ka programme liya, a ni give-upa nyana na le xikolweni. So with the advises leti a ni ti kuma ka vanhu lavaya a va ta va ta hi nyika motivations swi kote leswaku ni kota ku...a xikolweni. Ni kuma diploma ya mina. So with that diploma ni kota ku applya mintirho ku fana na munhu un'wana na un'wana. It's a good requirement. Hi leswi ni nga Kota ku fikelela swona. So no va na ku tshembha ku ku ya mahlweni...hi leswi ni nga swi kuma through this programme.
Swi le ku cinceni...

**Interviewer:** Hi fike makumu. A ku ri yona interview ya mina. Ni khensile nkarhi wa wena.

# Appendix 2.1: TRANSCRIPT 2: INTERVIEW WITH CONTRACTOR 2

**Date:** **25 January 2018**
**Province:** **Gauteng (Johannesburg)**
**Time:** **11h30 – 12h00**

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| Interviewer: | We can start. I have a few set of questions I will be asking as I'm taking some notes. The first question - in the company what is your job title? |
| Respondent 8: | I'm a Project Manager. |
| Interviewer: | Project Manager? Ok. And then from this particular function, what is your role? |
| Respondent 8: | Basically, to manage a project from start to finish The reason we take most of these projects is to make profit |
| Interviewer: | Ok, also doing the business. |
| Respondent 8: | Also, to have good relations with clients. |
| Interviewer: | So, I can call it more like Client Relationship Management? |
| Respondent 8: | Ja, also, there's a lot... |
| Interviewer: | Maybe you can expand on that? |
| Respondent 8: | Project management, it's like you're the face of the company to the clients and have to manage different teams that implement projects for the company. |
| Interviewer: | Ok |
| Respondent 8: | So, you I the different teams in the company? |
| Interviewer: | Ok |
| Respondent 8: | Whether it's a Quantity Surveyor, the civil guys... whatever Depending on the needs of the project. Make sure that the designs that come from a professional team are implemented so, Ja...so each and every project is different. |
| Interviewer: | So, you manage all of these projects that are done? |
| Respondent 8: | Not all of them. In the company there are many projects. We do |

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| | a lot of projects |
| Interviewer: | Alright. Oh, I see... We can then move to the next set of questions. |
| Interviewer: | You just mentioned now your company's involved in a variety of projects. Can you just share briefly the type of projects you're involved in? |
| Respondent 8: | Construction Projects...building and renovations, civil works, roads, landscaping, mechanical, electrical... |
| Interviewer: | So, you're a wholesale company? |
| Respondent 8: | Ja. Generally, I would just say we're a construction company |
| Interviewer: | And then, between the year 2014 and 2016 how many NYS participants have you worked with? It could be in the different projects you have done with Public Works... |
| Respondent 8: | NYS? |
| Interviewer: | My apologies, NYS it the National Youth Service. |
| Respondent 8: | Ooh…Yho! Sometimes a project can employ up to 30 or so people per project. |
| Interviewer: | It's an estimated number neeh? |
| Respondent 8: | It's an estimated number ...so we can assume somewhere around there..coz in 2014 I've done somewhere around 2 projects with DPW. |
| Interviewer: | I forgot to charge my laptop but I think it's about 2 projects reflecting on our database |
| Respondent: | Maybe 30 there, maybe 20 there... |
| Interviewer: | So, its roughly about 50 neh? |
| Respondent 8: | Ja |
| Interviewer: | Ok...From this 50 - I'm combining them. How many of those have been absorbed by the company permanently? |
| Respondent 8: | Yho. Hebana! Permanently? Let me just count.<br>I wouldn't say permanently. |
| Interviewer: | But you've continued to work with them? |

Respondent 8: Ja. We've moved with them from site to site.

Interviewer: Oh, so are they on contract basis?

Respondent 8: Ja on contract basis.

Interviewer: Ok, so for these ones that have remained with you after NYS how many are they?

Respondent 8: I think somewhere around 4 or 5
Interviewer: Around 4 or 5? Ok

Respondent 8: Also, these guys. We had some, but one that I can remember. Fortunately, he had a Driver's License. I told him "you can be a Driver" and he thought: "Ha! He needs to go for some training. But most of them were semi-skilled that we absorbed.

Interviewer: Ok

Respondent 8: So...

Interviewer: So, 4 to 5

Respondent 8: But the unskilled ones. Due to community projects we cannot take someone from Free State to North West

Interviewer: Iyaa that can be a challenge...

Respondent 8: That's a major challenge

Interviewer: Ok.

Respondent 8: They'll be up in arms saying: You brought an unskilled person here? You're taking our jobs.

Interviewer: What is the recruitment method you have used to get this learners?

Interviewer: From these ones which you have selected what was the criteria you've used to select them? So out of the 30 what makes them stand out.

Respondent 8: Let me not say for us but for me in particular - I've worked with a general foreman and site agents- they are the ones who identify that: "Oh! This guy has potential can we keep him?" They will end up keeping them longer than the others.

You must realize that a project starts with a large number of unskilled people, then as you progress you reduce the

number of unskilled in those specialized activities. So, if you see someone sticking around, there might be something special about that person in terms of being able to communicate and being able to take instructions so the criteria is from the site agents and the people that they've worked with and the supervisors- who they've worked with every day

Interviewer: So, they observe, who's interested,

Respondent: There's a lot of factors...some are honest. I remember there's a guy we took from another project to be a stores person. The guy was so honest that he was even hated by the other guys...So we took him and said "let's entrust him with the responsibility of being a foreman. A stores person.

Respondent 8: He was so honest. He wouldn't even steal a nail. We were saying: " Let's entrust him." So why not show appreciation?

Interviewer: My understanding is that when these participants are still in the NYS Programme while working for these companies, there's training-classroom training that they go through too
Which of this training do you think is most relevant- for the type of work you do in your organization? Probably we can look at the ones which you have even kept. The type of skills that they've brought in out of these classroom training. Which one do you think is relevant for the work that you do in your Organisation?

Respondent 8: I think all those technical skills.

Interviewer: If maybe I can ask as I'm perusing the documents I'm picking up the training provided is around bricklaying, plastering, tiling and there's electrical work. Is your company looking for a particular skills or most of these ones the basket of skills provided do fit in the work that you do in the organization?

Respondent 8: Ja. All of them fit. we realize that we don't have a large number of project managers. So, project manager is involved in a lot of projects. We can say: the electrician is involved in a lot of projects so if you have those EPWP employees that are good in electrical work, our electrical guy will be so keen to work with that person- he's able to run around the sites coz if he knows "if I leave someone there" even though they're semi-skilled, I can even go and check on them. even if he can go to another site and come back, he knows he will find people there in a bad

situation. So, you find that those skills which are technical care

Interviewer: They assist everyone

Respondent 8: They do assist everyone. Coz otherwise we have to employ a lot of skilled people then we'd need to offload them again after the project

Interviewer: Which is back to square one.

Respondent 8: Yes

Interviewer: Second question- which is still related to training. What type of accreditation that is given to the participants is relevant for your organization? So, from what I hear, they normally would get certificates at maybe NQF LEVEL 2, 4 and all that. Is your company interested in a particular level of accreditation or just someone with technical skills?

Respondent 8: You know what? We're not much worried about the level of education (or accreditation) The reason being there are people in the field that have got documents...(?) Good paperwork then you put them at the top. It's another story. And then there comes someone who people brand as unskilled. They surprise you. You're like: oh! Actually, this is...so a person can come with accredited documents and you even check it it's genuine. But come work, it's another story. Out there on the field...

Interviewer: It doesn't really matter that much.

Respondent 8: So, I'm not worried about the institution what I'm worried about is if the person can do the job and if the person is keen to learn and acquire new skills as we go with projects. Coz most of the stuff you don't learn from school

Interviewer: It's practical. It's the same everywhere. Office work you learn something at university. When you get to the office it's completely different so it's your application of how you get to do.

Interviewer: Ok, so in terms of the design of the program I did explain- there's classroom training and... practical training...yes

Interviewer: What makes the design of the EPWP/NYS Program to be relevant for the work that you're doing in your organization. So how it is structured. What component of it is relevant for your work?

Respondent 8: There's a joke that they usually do, these guys when we work. The Foreman sends you to the storeroom to look for a Flying Horse...

Respondent 8: The theory is good so that person will know the technology and then practical work is also good so that the person knows how to do the job

So, when someone sends you to the storeroom and you ask for a Flying Horse you look like a fool. People now understand that 'Oh this one is a new person and is unskilled because the moment you go to the storeroom and you ask for something that doesn't exist- it's a construction term but it doesn't stay in the storeroom. So, I do believe that both practical and theory work help coz when people are discussing, remember in construction we've got drawings. So also, being able to interpret drawings- it's a plus. You can have a skill but if you don't know what's written there on the paper it's also a problem. So, you must be able to open a drawing, be able to read it for yourself and then do the work.

Interviewer: I do know you're sitting here so chances are you're not engaging with them on day to day basis. But based on the experience that these participants have acquired how does it assist them to do the work that you're currently doing with your projects. The 4 to 5 participants that are continuing with you?

Respondent 8: *Mumbles something *

Interviewer: You said there are 4 to 5 participants...the experience they have acquired in the NYS. how is it helping them now as they're proceeding with the work in your company? So, experience more from the practical training- not the theoretical aspect?

Respondent 8: I've seen that it assists. It assists them because they're always employed

Interviewer: Ok...

Respondent 8: When we get projects, we call them again and say: Come. ...and even if it's not their community that they get to...they're skilled to a certain extent so I think it helps them to become independent even though we don't recruit them again. Some of them can start to do their own jobs in their communities. I've realized that it

empowers them to be able to make some money from what they've learned.

Interviewer: Alright and then…

Respondent: I forgot to mention that some...I know one guy who became interested to
a point that they went on a course for drafting plans

Interviewer: I met with 2 participants or 3- they're doing that on their own. After NYS they're into drawing of plans

Interviewer: It's unfortunate, sometimes we think a success is when a person is permanently employed yet if a person is skilled to do or use on their own it's still a success

Respondent 8: It's a success, Ja

Interviewer: I always say the reports we normally get do not show the other aspect. We focus on how many of those are now getting a monthly salary. Yet there's that other one that is able to do something on their own. Or perhaps at a later stage can even appoint other people

Respondent 8: The other thing with us... let me just say. Let me not use the term "us".

Respondent 8: For a Project Manager to be successful, you must have a team that you've worked with for years....

Respondent 8: They shouldn't say: "today we give you a new project," you build another team...as years go by you must earn those stripes that show *ukuthi* this project I finished it, but I've also earned this person. He's part of my team. Whenever I'm appointed to another project, I'm going to call so and so and we'll build a team together

Interviewer: So, you rely on them...

Respondent 8: Ja. So, if you finish a project and you've transferred skills, then you know that

I've trained someone and I can go with them to another project; it's a success. It means you...first you can do one project. Second, you're able to do 2 projects at one time. Then...thirdly you know you can do more than one project at one time because you've transferred skills. You're building...once you cultivate that culture of building people... you're able to grow. Not personally, but growing as a company. That's what I'm saying.

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| | So, you don't keep on teaching people because it also costs you. If now new people are coming...they don't really know the job it means spending more time on supervising |
| Respondent 8: | You know with transferring instructions it's rare for you to get someone who understands you to that point. |
| Respondent 8: | So just imagine each and every time you meet new people...but if you know that "Ja. I have one. They understand me very well. They've got the skill. I'm benefitting from this person and the project will benefit from that skill. |
| Respondent 8: | So, the person comes one, tomorrow is two...like that and that...and they even respect you for giving him a chance |
| Respondent 8: | It's not that there's favoritism. Because someone will be saying: " Why am I chosen among this big number. They'll try not to disappoint you |
| Interviewer: | That's true. It's like that throughout. I sometimes say there are people that when we started working they nurtured the talent so years back even if you're no longer working with them...you look back and say: "If it was not for this person I wouldn't be where I am because they paid special attention...at one time I remember where I was working, I asked my boss: "Do you think I can do this?" He said: "That's why we brought you here." |
| Interviewer: | Now based on the experience you had with the NYS, what type of challenges have you encountered from working with these learners? |
| Respondent 8: | You know the major challenge is that some communities are not the same. There are some communities where it's difficult to find youth and even on your labour report people think that you're segregating them. It's difficult. You'll be having old people looking for work. For you to have youth...I mean, they'll be there in the community, but maybe busy with alcohol and drugs. |
| Interviewer: | But not interested, neh? |
| Respondent 8: | Ja |
| Interviewer: | But from these ones that you normally will get, what challenges have you encountered from working with them? |
| Respondent 8: | From working with the youth? |

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| Interviewer: | Especially those that have been part of the programme. |
| Respondent 8: | Let me tell you one thing about working with the youth. As I was saying...<br>Sometimes when a project comes into the community it's something that they've been waiting for and I've just realized that the way that they've spent money. There's that thing whereby you pay people and its fortnight, and the following week they my must come back to work... |
| Interviewer: | *laughs* It's interesting I was in Pretoria yesterday and I heard a similar story |
| Respondent 8: | I've had challenges whereby it's a fortnight and you...like the pubs- because it's a community, most of the projects are in the communities so the pubs benefit from the projects |
| Interviewer: | So, they get paid... |
| Respondent 8: | They go to the pubs and each and every community has got its own ideals to show that "I've made it" or "I've got something " so you discover that there are some communities whereby you cannot just go from work to home. You must maybe go home then go to the pub.<br><br>Just imagine if it's an 18-month project and they do that. And you appoint someone from the beginning to the end. That project will end and that person will feel it's back to square one |
| Interviewer: | They have nothing to show |
| Respondent 8: | And they have nothing to show for working there.<br>And you'll have those people that will end up feeling like "Haa! I've helped build this thing but I don't have anything. |
| Respondent 8: | Eish, it's tough now saying goodbye to such people.<br>And they always come with other issues just to make some money. Some end up stealing. They go there and see the project is ending so they start stealing |
| Interviewer: | This is a common thing. Yesterday I was in Pretoria- different project...but similar sentiment shared. Because they don't spend their money correctly, they end up resorting to quick things. they're an electrical company. So copper theft...so every day we were... |
| Respondent 8: | Copper theft is common. |

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| Interviewer: | Ey! It's quite sad because opportunities again are limited so if you mess up one, chances are no one will ever appoint you. |
| Respondent 8: | It's not always that we get projects in high density areas. If you go to...let's say you...we once had a project in a low-density area. You know pubs? There are no pubs there. The kind of employment that they want. It's high contractive. But in high density areas, you're talking about a high number of people. But you'd expect that since there are more black people and you expect that at least they know how to stand for themselves and employ others so the major challenge... |
| Respondent 8: | I don't know if it's our town planning that also encourages...just imagine if someone has money and he passes by a pub and his friends are there - they'll call him: "Heeey! Come here!" |
| Interviewer: | Socialization |
| Respondent 8: | So, I'm not sure- some of these pressures you can blame them - maybe they come from the environment... |
| Interviewer: | Socialization... like you were saying for someone to say "I've arrived- I'm making it- to them it's a status. "Now I must be seen "- unfortunately it's an individual that suffers at the end of the day.<br>So, what will be your recommendation about addressing these challenges? Especially the conduct of these participants that you find are not really up to the level of...conducting themselves in a workplace. |
| Respondent 8: | That's why I'm raising this one. Because it pains you to see wasted talent. There are people who are skilled...let me not say skilled. |
| Interviewer: | Talented |
| Respondent 8: | Yes, talented. |
| Interviewer: | Naturally |
| Respondent 8: | Naturally talented and they pick up some of these skills that they are being trained...let's say, to plaster. He comes there he doesn't know how to plaster. After a few weeks he can do it. He comes there, he doesn't know tiling. So, there are people who are talented. |

Respondent 8: But just because of these cultures where they don't spend their money wisely, you feel the pain when you discover that this person is a drunkard. Having nothing else to do but just to drink. Drowning themselves in that culture of alcoholism. But that person will be skilled.

Interviewer: Do you think perhaps from Public Works they can introduce Life Skills courses?

Respondent 8: I believe so because it's not like them being youths, not having jobs.

Respondent 8: There's something lacking. Some of them are skilled. Some of them are intelligent. But you find there'll be...some communities have got gangsterism, for your information. You find that there there's thuggish behavior in that community. You'll hear of this talented young man. You hear: "that guy was arrested..."
Ash! That guy?! Why?

Interviewer: Eish

Respondent 8: Because of this, that...you can feel the pain. Like: "Aah! He looked like a quiet young man!" And then you realize: this area! That's when you realize it's not his problem only.
It's a community problem. For sure! For us to finish projects in those areas will be very tough. You'll even see it. Because thugs they want something without doing anything. It can be a headache for supervisors. Do you know, there are some sites where people come with guns, and the supervisor we tell him he must supervise that person...we'll tell him: "He ndoda you must... "But, how can he?

Interviewer: So, people come with guns to work?!

Respondent 8: It's a community thing. People there carry guns.

Interviewer: So maybe even the criteria. I know maybe you want to widen the net. There must be some criteria of how these people get selected. Because I can imagine you cannot pick up those elements, but you can't rule them out but in a way it's just a human being is difficult. Because a similar thing we have in offices. We have someone...their conduct differs to how they presented them in an interview.

Interviewer: It's a challenge like: how come I never picked it up? Their conduct and what you picked up are 2 different things.

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| Respondent 8: | The major challenge which I have not mentioned it. Let's say the foreman must supervise someone and you didn't know they've been threatened also. Why are you reporting this about me and you were reprimanding me about that?<br>You know the foreman will keep someone there but that person is just a parcel. Actually, they won't transfer any skill. They say: "Eish if I talk a lot, it will be known that this information comes from me coz I'm the one who supervises them...I'm the one who sees that Aah "this person does not work. He's lazy. |
| Interviewer: | Maybe if I can ask how is the reporting done on this NYS to the department of Public Works? |
| Respondent 8: | Reporting the number of people, hours worked ...how much they've earned... |
| Interviewer: | So, it's not much of the qualitative aspect where you can narrate?<br>So, it's reporting somehow is limited. It only focuses on certain set of indicators |
| Respondent 8: | Ja it's about jobs created in the project. This is how much we have spent |
| Interviewer: | Maybe if I can then ask. So, you have this participant that is a parcel- not doing their job. Are they not supposed to be also compiling their log books where the supervisors get to sign at the end of the day? |
| Respondent 8: | As I'm telling you- we do community projects. We take you as a company...as a foreman. We say: "Go there and stay within the community." |
| Respondent 8: | And then you discover there's hooliganism in this community. Or this person that you've employed is infamous for this behavior. What do I do? You don't just jump to conclusion and say: I don't want this person working on the project. By the time...there are some who are misunderstood, but there are some who want to be known: "You don't know me. I'm going to actually show you. You come here and you...no no no... this is how we do. As a person who came to work...you just tell yourself...let me just give it some time, maybe it will work out |
| Interviewer: | So, having said everything about the programme. |

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| Interviewer: | What do you think are the critical aspects of the programme that assist youth to be able to secure future employment once they have left the program? |
| Respondent 8: | Maybe if you rephrase it? |
| Interviewer: | You've actually already said it. Will it be more of the skill a person has, or is it more of the qualification people have? |
| Respondent 8: | I think it's both.<br><br>It can be both but mainly the skill.<br><br>Let's say you want to rehire that person.<br>The reason for you to rehire them is because they've left an impression...it's more of the skill |
| Interviewer: | The last question. In your own view, what will you consider to be the role of the EPWP National Youth Programme in promoting youth employment? |
| Interviewer: | So, in your own understanding what is it that they play a role in assisting young people play a role to get future employment? |
| Respondent 8: | Their role is to train them.<br>Because in the construction industry, you can even make money. Maybe semi-skilled so even though they cannot train to an extent that they know everything but you can still train them to an extent that they make money. |
| Respondent 8: | Well their role is to make sure that... well the youth are marginalized in terms of employment- people want experience. People want someone that they know already knows something... So EPWP helps so they learn some of these things. Women don't usually want to...<br>I don't know if it's a natural thing but women don't want to be involved in some of these things, but EPWP makes sure that there are skills across the demographics. It's not a "man thing" |
| Interviewer: | Thanks a lot for your time. That was very useful. |

# Appendix 2.2: TRANSCRIPT 2: BIOGRAPHY OF LINDIWE NKUNA

Ms Lindiwe Nkuna holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and a B. Admin Hons (Public Administration) from the University of Pretoria. Her interest in Public Management started after she was awarded a scholarship by the Public Policy Partnership (PPP) of South Africa to further her studies in Public Policy at post graduate level. Through this scholarship, she completed a six (6) weeks winter institute hosted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Her career stint started in 2006 at the Council for the Built Environment (CBE) where she worked as a Research and Policy Analyst Intern. Subsequently, Ms Nkuna worked in the Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) before joining government at National Treasury in 2008, where she worked as a Budget Analyst (Energy and Telecommunications) in the Public Finance Unit. Her responsibilities ranged from budget analysis, policy analysis and strategic development support for the Department of Energy and Communications including their entities.

In 2011, Ms Nkuna joined the Department of Public Works EPWP branch and has since worked in various positions including working in the Monitoring & Evaluations unit where she conducted evaluations studies and commissioning research studies for the EPWP. Her notable achievements in the EPWP include her nomination to serve in a task team that developed the EPWP Phase 3 approved by Cabinet for implementation from 2014 – 2019. In 2015, Ms Nkuna got promoted to a Senior Management Position. Her responsibilities in this post included the analysis of the EPWP Performance, compiling quarterly performance reports for submission to various stakeholders such as Cabinet and NEDLAC, developing the EPWP Branch Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans (APPs) and it's reporting. Additional to her responsibilities, from 2015 – date, Ms Nkuna also served as the Secretariat for the Public Employment Programme Inter-Ministerial Committee (PEP-IMC) made up of Ministers and Deputy Ministers, Chaired by the then Deputy President and now President of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa. In this role, Ms Nkuna has been instrumental in coordinating IMC quarterly meetings where strategic issues affecting the EPWP are discussed as well coordinating site visits to EPWP project sites for exposing the political leadership to the work done by government through the EPWP. From 2017 - date, she has assumed a new role focusing on amongst other things the development of the EPWP Policies and Strategies. Amongst her achievements in this role, she has developed the EPWP Recruitment Guidelines approved by the Minister of Labour. She is currently doing a Master's degree in Public and Development Management with Wits University and she is funding the studies on her own. There are no obligations for Ms Nkuna to her employer for undertaking this studies.