

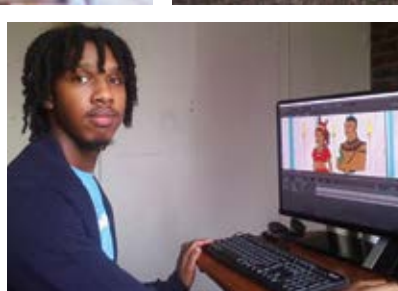


The Presidential Employment Stimulus

Building a society that works

A million jobs, opportunities and more

February 2023





The Presidential Employment Stimulus is funded from the fiscus and is implemented by participating departments. Strategic oversight is provided by the Project Management Office in the Private Office of the President. The PMO is grateful for support from development partners to the PES team, that allowed for its rapid establishment in a context in which no such function had been envisaged. Development partners continue to provide invaluable technical and research support for the PMO's role.



As a development partner the **European Union** has supported the Presidential Employment Stimulus team in the PMO since the inception of the programme. In Phase 1 and 2, this was through the Capacity Building Programme for Employment Promotion (CBPEP), housed in the Government Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC) of National Treasury. Currently, support is provided through DNA Economics. This strategic partnership has been catalytic.



With support from the EU's facility on Inequality and Poverty, the **Agence Française de Développement (AFD)** has supported a research agenda on the stimulus effects of this intervention and on the role of public employment programmes in the Just Transition.



The **GIZ** has seconded personnel to support the PMO in its Monitoring and Evaluation, mainly in relation to the data collection and capture of reports from participating departments.



The **DG Murray Trust** is supporting the PMO to undertake research into institutional lesson-learning from the PES, and is also supporting communications.

Publication issued by The Presidency, South Africa, February 2023.

For more information see <https://www.stateofthenation.gov.za/employment-stimulus-dashboard>





Loxion Mobile Library - supported by the Social Employment Fund

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In October 2022 the Presidential Employment Stimulus reached the million-participant milestone.

**“We’ve come far
in creating jobs
and supporting
livelihoods – but we
need to go further.
Let’s keep our foot
firmly on the accelerator.”**



The Presidential Employment Stimulus was established in October 2020 in response to the devastating economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Its aim is to create jobs and strengthen livelihoods, supporting meaningful work while the labour market recovers – augmenting existing commitments to these outcomes. It also recognises that the pandemic created opportunities for change – for new ways of working and of responding to a crisis of unemployment that pre-dates the pandemic – and will last beyond it also.

‘Since its launch in October 2020, over a million people have benefited from jobs and livelihood support opportunities from the Employment Stimulus, benefiting communities across the country. When we talk about one million South Africans we are also talking about one million households.

‘Its implementation has involved a ‘whole of government’ effort – and a ‘whole of society’ one too. It has taken a huge amount of collaboration between the Presidency and the 15 departments that have risen to this occasion – along with partners in the private sector and community-based organisations across the country. This is an example of what the social compact can look like in practice; it is an example of what we can deliver when we work together.

‘Certainly, participation changes lives for participants. But the work undertaken is making a difference to communities too: strengthening learning in schools, upgrading informal settlements, supporting victims of gender-based violence, investing in the environment, innovating in waste-recycling and far more.

‘The work experience provided in these programmes increases people’s work-readiness and hence productivity in the wider economy – vital to a growth trajectory, and to reducing the costs and risks of hiring people with no prior work experience for the private sector. This has benefits not only for pathways to employment – but for the potential success of self-employment and enterprise activities too.

‘And then, of course: the incomes earned provide a vital economic boost to small enterprise and the informal sector in local economies across the country. School assistants employed in Umgungundlovu are spending their wages in Umgungundlovu. So too in Putsonderwater. This is the opposite of ‘trickle down’ economics.





'Instead, this puts money in the hands of people and communities that need it most, to trickle up into the wider economy from there. That's why we call it a stimulus. And the entire economy benefits – along with society.'

“ **When Covid-19 plunged us even deeper into our crisis of unemployment, we needed to act. And we did. And we need to continue to do so, because the crisis of unemployment has not gone away.**”

'We needed the Employment Stimulus as part of our response to the pandemic – and we still need it now, not as an alternative to market-based recovery, but as a contribution to it.'

'The bottom line is that through the Stimulus, we have unlocked energy, commitment, creativity, innovation – and opportunities. In the process, **we are building a society that works.** That is indeed our challenge and our goal.'

President Cyril Ramaphosa



The Presidential Employment Stimulus was launched in October 2020 as part of South Africa's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, in response to the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Building on a long history of support to public employment through the Expanded Public Works Programme, the PES has provided an 'innovation sandbox' for scaling up publicly-funded jobs and livelihood opportunities. It has done so at unprecedented scale, reaching over 1 million direct beneficiaries in under two years.

The PES is part of an integrated and mutually-reinforcing suite of programmes coordinated by the Project Management Office in the Presidency, to drive structural reforms and enable employment creation. This includes Operation Vulindlela, which addresses the structural barriers that hinder the private sector from creating more employment in the economy. It also includes the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (PYEI), which seeks to coordinate, accelerate and enhance existing programmes while driving innovation and creating pathways to earning for young people at scale. The PES supports the goals of the PYEI by directly delivering employment opportunities for youth. In turn, the PYEI supports the PES through mechanisms such as its National Pathway Management Network.

The programmes that form part of the Presidential Employment Stimulus undergo a rigorous evaluation process against agreed criteria, with budgets allocated by National Treasury. These funds are transferred directly to approved programmes in participating departments and public bodies. The PMO in the Private Office of the President provides design input and strategic oversight.



Presidential Employment Stimulus

Over a million jobs and opportunities delivered

October 2020 – December 2022



BENEFICIARIES

1,085,095
Target 1,251,042

PERFORMANCE

83% youth | 63% female

BUDGET FOR PHASES 1 + 2

Phase 1 : R12.6 billion
Phase 2 : R10.9 billion



Jobs created

Achieved: 795,151
Target: **879,031**



Livelihoods supported

Achieved: 249,415
Target: **311,269**



Jobs retained

Achieved: 40,529
Target: **60,742**



JOBS CREATED BY DEPARTMENT

Basic Education	596,109
Trade Industry & Competition	57,907
Women, Youth & Persons with Disabilities	45,167
Forestry, Fisheries & the Environment	29,088
Cooperative Governance	14,855
Transport	10,245
National Treasury	15,721
Health	6,961
Social Development	5,399
Science & Innovation	3,062
Public Works & Infrastructure	1,881
Sport, Arts & Culture	1,914
Agriculture, Land Reform & Rural Development	1,464
Employment & Labour	213
Higher Education	1,701
Tourism	941

LIVELIHOODS SUPPORTED BY DEPARTMENT

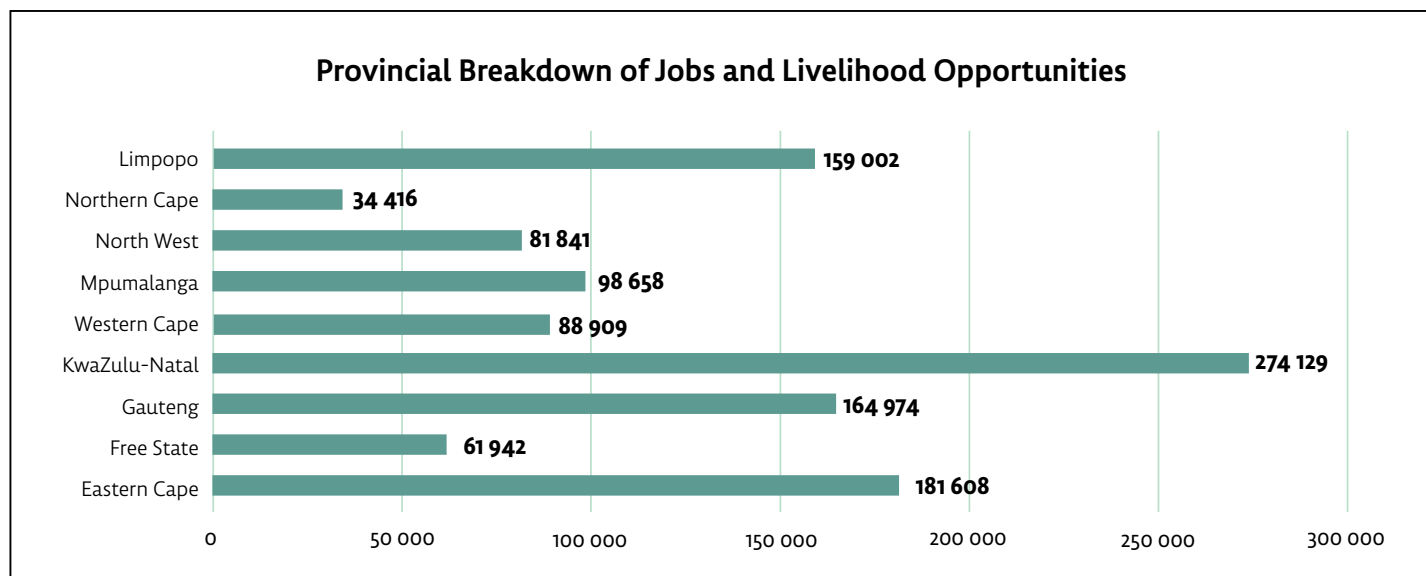
Agriculture, Land Reform & Rural Development	161,055
Social Development	59,077
Sport, Arts & Culture	27,278
Women, Youth & Persons with Disabilities	2,005

JOBS RETAINED BY DEPARTMENT

Basic Education	31,114
Sport, Arts & Culture	8,339
Social Development	1,076

Under-utilised funds for job retention during strict lockdown were used to extend the duration of selected programmes.





Continuity enables planning for quality outcomes

The Presidential Employment Stimulus was announced in October 2020 and initial implementation deadlines were to March 2021. These were often referred to by public officials as ‘hostile timeframes’ in which to deliver at a scale that had never been achieved before – under the unique conditions of lockdown. Yet many public officials put up their hands to be part of this process – to take on stretch targets and to go the extra mile to serve the country and its people.

The Stimulus has since been extended. Funding is currently confirmed to March 2024. This has allowed for a longer planning horizon than was the case initially – and with that comes new opportunities for quality outcomes.

The focus of the data provided here is on Phases 1 and 2, in a context in which some Phase 2 programmes will continue to report results up to the end of the 2022/23 financial year. This is as a result of implementation by public entities as well as rollovers of funds.

Meanwhile, Phase 3 is also now in process, with a budget of R9 billion and with continuity between the phases for many programmes. This allowed the Basic Education Employment Initiative, for example, to align placements of school assistants with the school year. Technically, this meant that for most of the second cohort of school assistants appointed, their participation straddled Phase 2 and Phase 3, for an eight to ten month placement period. This varied depending on the contribution provinces were able to make. While technically, they worked across two phases – and utilised budgets from both phases – they are not counted twice. They are counted from their start date within Phase 2. This is to avoid double-counting of the number of people benefiting from the stimulus. The new cohort of 150,000 that started from 1 February 2023 will be reported as part of Phase 3 when those reports are due.





**In 2023
a further 255 000
young people will be
placed at over 22 000
schools, bringing the
total to over 850 000
since October
2020**

The Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI)

IMPLEMENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

In under two years, the Basic Education Employment Initiative (also known as PYEI-DBE) has placed nearly 600,000 young people as school assistants in over 22,000 schools across the country. This happened in two cohorts. In 2023 a target of 255,000 young people will be placed, with 150,000 starting from 1 February 2023.

The BEEI includes opportunities for all skills levels. Education Assistants (EAs) support teachers in the classroom or are deployed to do admin or IT. They require a matric, with graduates prioritised. General Assistants (GAs) do not need a matric, and assist with tasks such as school maintenance, security, food gardens, sports and after-school care.

The BEEI has provided an example of how public employment programmes can go rapidly to scale, creating meaningful work at decent standards for young people, while delivering real public value. This is enhanced by investing in the skills of participants – optimising their impacts on the learning environment while supporting their own pathways forward too.



NUMBER OF YOUTHS TRAINED BY CATEGORY

Province	CVCW	Handymen	Reading Champions	Sports & Enrichment Assistant	eCadres	Curriculum	Total
Eastern Cape	100	1 100	5 330	1 637	4 216	7 351	19 734
Free State	442	456	1 078	883	1 012	3 474	7 345
Gauteng	0	0	2 753	3 874	1 345	2 040	10 012
KwaZulu Natal	158	5 819	3 958	313		19 147	29 395
Limpopo	1 696	3 827	3 646	350	3 004	12 131	24 654
Mpumalanga	0	1 595	2 643	1 602	2 000	11 833	19 673
Northern Cape	304	284	602	341	389	3 085	5 005
North West	0	1 601	440	396	1 371	5 407	9 215
Western Cape	108	3 736	321	606	10 242	10 786	25 859
National Total	2 808	18 418	20 771	10 062	23 579	75 254	150 892

‘They are so good at technology, they are teaching the teachers.’

For a taste of its impact, social media platforms provide real insight – and have been used by the Department of Basic Education to enable feedback and engagement that is often robust but that also demonstrates an embrace of open communication in the programme.

There are pictures of zinc zozos and housing improvements, posted with pride by participants who say they have been enabled by their earnings on the programme. There are pictures of graduation ceremonies, with thanks to the programme for enabling payment of outstanding fees.

One young father posts a picture of his toddler son with a new pair of shoes.

‘Thank you DBE’, he says, ‘for making me a supporting father.’

Research shows that under the right conditions, school assistants can effectively improve learning outcomes. Funda Wande selected, trained and mentored school assistants in 120 schools in Limpopo. A rigorous impact evaluation found this to be highly effective in improving reading and mathematics in the Foundation Phase. By term 3, grade 2 learners were estimated to be around 1.25 years ahead of their peers in control schools in both literacy and numeracy.

Ardington, C. 2023 Impact Evaluation of Funda Wande Teacher Assistant Intervention in Limpopo Province: Year 2. SALDRU, UCT.

As much pride is taken in the work undertaken: of reading corners and libraries established, videos of newly-trained sports enrichment coaches running exercise classes, before-and-after pictures of barren school grounds now bursting with cabbages, dull and dilapidated classrooms gleaming with new paint, participants at laptops doing school administration on DBE’s new data management system – which the school assistants often have to help the teachers to navigate. ‘They are so good at technology, they are teaching the teachers’, says Lala Maje, National Project Lead for the programme in DBE.

The training options available for school assistants have strengthened with each phase. Their development has relied on partners in the education sector. Participants are trained to support core curriculum outcomes such as maths and literacy, with many also trained as Reading Champions. The National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) credits the Reading Champions with strengthening the culture of reading in schools, by running reading groups, setting up library corners, reading stories and giving one-on-one support to struggling learners. The E-cadres learn digital skills.

As one participant posted on social media,

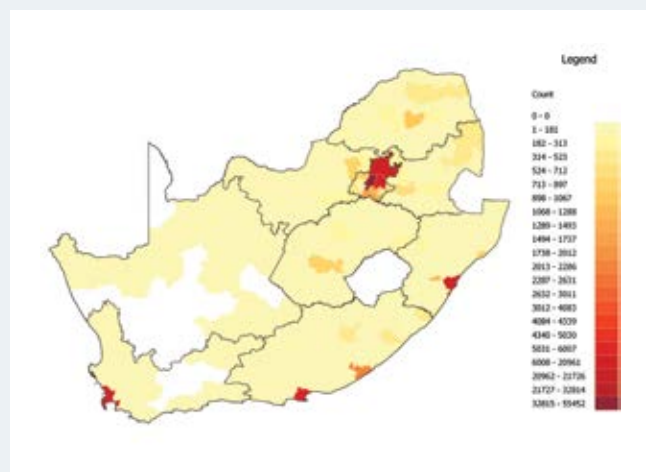
‘My CV is no longer empty. Before this programme it was blank, now it has five certificates.’



REACHING THE 'JOBS DESERTS' FOR YOUTH...

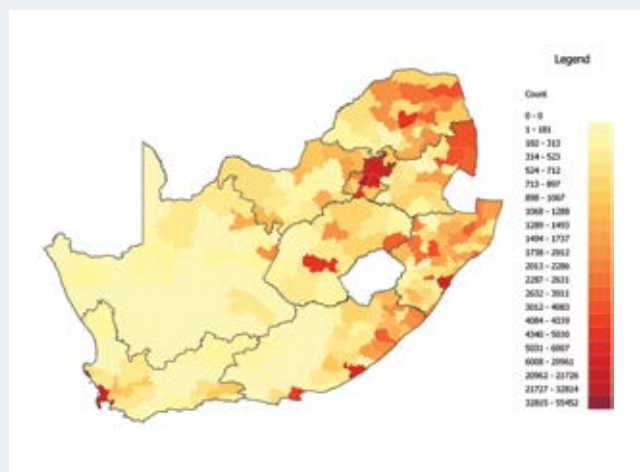
The BEEI has a highly equitable spatial footprint that reaches even the most remote and marginalised communities – because every community has schools.

Figure 1 Youth Employment Density by South African Municipality [2020]



Source: Harambee EJ Survey (2020) for 161,097 responses

Figure 2 Youth Employment Density by South African Municipality [2022]



Source: Harambee EJ Survey (2022) for 315,650 responses

The map on the left illustrates the distribution of employment opportunities for youth without the programme; the map on the right shows the difference the BEEI makes. Instead of 'jobs deserts' for youth across vast areas of the country, the BEEI brings opportunities.

According to Harambee, each recruitment cycle is activating increasing participation and engagement from young people from marginalized areas, with the latest round including a higher percentage of work-seekers applying to the most poorly resourced schools. Such applicants are twice as likely to come from rural areas and provinces with higher youth unemployment, with strong participation by young women.

The programme has been embraced by teachers and principals.



72.3%

of participants interviewed said this was **their first work experience**



94.6%

of teachers surveyed want the programme to continue – **and believe it strengthened learning outcomes**



94.2%

of school assistants surveyed said their participation in **BEEI was a positive experience**

Where to next for participants?

The school assistants exit into a tough labour market. Much effort is going into supporting them to transition to other opportunities. DBE has promoted Funda Lushaka bursaries and other scholarships for those who want to pursue careers in education. There has been CV-writing support, letters of reference from principals and engagement with stakeholders, including in the private sector to encourage all who can to assist these young people to find pathways to new opportunities – and to post such opportunities on SAYouth.mobi. The sector has absorbed some into literacy, library and after-school programme.

Some school assistants are now self-employed as tutors – amongst other entrepreneurial initiatives taken.



SA YOUTH

As an Education Assistant, 20-year-old **Wade Janniker** gave a helping hand in computer labs at Range Primary School in Elsie's River.

'I learned how much my help was valued. It was such a privilege to have that experience. In our neighbourhood, other people stand on corners and ask for R2.00. I don't want to be like them. My duties included assisting the deputy principal and teachers with admin work, but mostly I was in the computer lab. That's where I discovered how much I love computer work. It was very rewarding to see children wanting to learn.'

After exiting the programme, Janniker was able to find permanent employment.

Schools for children with disabilities have welcomed the school assistants with open arms. According to **Emily Xoliswa Didi**, the Principal at Phololo Special School in Mangaung,

'The learners here have special needs, but the group of school assistants we had were so eager to learn. After just a month, it was as if they were professionals, they were part of us.'

Recruitment for each phase of the BEEI has been done on SA Youth platform – with the first phase catapulting the platform into at-scale recruitment before it had even been formally launched.

SA Youth is a zero-rated digital platform run by Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator that aggregates opportunities 'for learning, earning and volunteering' to make these accessible for young people wherever they are. This reduces the costs of work-search. The platform also provides resources and workseeker support such as how to draft a CV. SA Youth is part of the National Pathway Management Network (NPMN) of the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention, which aims to provide a single network for stakeholders supporting youth employment to share opportunities so that for young people, opportunities and information are accessible in one place.

In the latest round of recruitment, over 1,5 million young people applied for the 255,000 school assistant posts for 2023. Harambee's call centre took 75,000 calls from young people wanting support in the application process; walk-in support was also provided by NYDA Centres, Department of Employment and Labour Centres across the country. At the end of the process, SA Youth provides each school with a list of eligible applicants, with the schools then doing interviews and making appointments in relation to their own specific needs.

For those applicants who were not successful, their registration on SA Youth gives them access to support resources and other opportunities, making this an important instrument for the wider economic activation of youth across the country.

Support to subsistence farmers to build food security

IMPLEMENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The pandemic illustrated the vulnerability of our food production and distribution systems. Although exempt from the strictest lockdown regulations, the sector faced severe challenges with disruptions to production and marketing experienced by many small-scale farmers. The Presidential Employment Stimulus provided production input vouchers to subsistence farmers, to assist them back into production.

In a context of urgency to deliver support, coupled with lockdown conditions in the initial phase, DALRRD opted to innovate by using a USSD platform for voucher applications and also for issuing the vouchers. The process was accessible on all mobile phones. At first, there was concern that the use of digital technology might exclude the most marginalized farmers. In fact, the spatial distribution of applications shows strong uptake, with real benefits to farmers in remote areas. To access support, they no longer had to get into a bakkie, drive many kilometres to the nearest town and then queue to fill out a paper-based application form.

This digital process then also provided DALRRD with a geo-spatially referenced data-base of subsistence farmers for the first time, along with a breakdown of the production categories in which they are involved, providing insight vital to strengthening subsistence farmer support strategies. This was enhanced by on-site visits and vetting of applicants, undertaken by agricultural graduates and extension officers.

Payment systems for suppliers redeeming the vouchers were also digitized. This enabled significant improvements in payment turn-around times, with payments to suppliers done within three to five days. The volume demand for input supplies



There are now over 492 agricultural suppliers registered with DALRRD

generated by the scheme also highlighted gaps in access to agricultural supplies and has led to an expanded supply response in under-served areas. There are now over 492 agricultural suppliers registered with DALRRD – more than triple the number registered with DALRRD before the Employment Stimulus was launched.

At one stage, however, the programme had to be suspended because of abuse of the voucher scheme by certain private sector suppliers, who were taking a cut of the voucher value. The digital nature of the scheme made this easy to trace, with those suppliers removed from the scheme, which was reinstated in February 2022. By January 2023, 157,226 vouchers had been issued to farmers. Repeat vouchers have been issued to farmers able to show sustained or increased levels of production.

January 2023



157,226 vouchers issued



Nozipho Cekwana from Impendle received a R5,300 voucher as part of support to subsistence farmers.

‘You know how it is. The community always keeps us informed. So I kept hearing about this PES programme. After doing some research, I applied on my phone. It wasn’t difficult.’

The voucher allowed Cekwana to buy maize seeds, manure and food supplements for her livestock.

‘Every cent really helped,’ she told agricultural officials on a site visit.



‘The PES allows young farmers like ourselves to dream beyond small-time farming. Our belief is that if we put in hard work, we will be rewarded for it,’

says **Phindile Ngcoya**. Ngcoya is one of ten members of a family farming cooperative in Phatheni, Richmond, KZN. Every day, the 36 year old mother-of-one walks with her nine siblings from the family homestead to work in their one-hectare field of vegetables.

Standing amid the vegetables soon to be reaped, Ngcoya said:

‘All of this was made possible by a PES voucher. We could buy seeds and seedlings. The planting continued and now we are selling lots of produce.’



‘How on earth did they know we needed such help? It has lifted me up and made me the happiest woman!’

Nomusa Khanyile from Mpolweni, Kwazulu-Natal received a production input voucher on her phone. During the pandemic, with prices rising, Khanyile was running out of feed for her 107 pigs. “When I had only one sack of pig food left, I asked: ‘What am I going to do?’” That’s when she heard about DALRRD’s Production Input Vouchers for subsistence farmers. The process was simple, she says - and it provided much-needed relief.



Social Employment – work for the common good

IMPLEMENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND COMPETITION

‘We are working on the premise that there is no shortage of work to be done to address the many social problems in our society. The aim is to support the considerable creativity, initiative and institutional capabilities that exist in the wider society to engage people in work that serves the common good.’

President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The Social Employment strategy aims to support civil society organisations to create employment by building on the work so many of them already do, to enable community-driven solutions to local problems – building the strength and sustainability of development implementation capacities in communities in the process.

This strategy forms part of **the dtic’s** support to the Social and Solidarity Economy, with the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) as the fund manager for the Social Employment Fund. Currently, 28 Strategic Implementing Partners (SIPs) are rolling out work that serves the common good in communities across the country.

‘Work that serves the common good’ is intentionally broad, to enable communities to define their priorities for themselves. In practice, it includes a wide array of activities, including care, Early Childhood Development, combating gender-based violence, community safety, placemaking, informal settlement upgrading, support to creative initiatives and much more.

The first call for proposals was hugely oversubscribed, illustrating that this is a strategy that can easily go to significant scale, with huge impacts on community development.

Social Employment offers 16 hours of work per week, at the National Minimum Wage. The rationale for this is to provide support ‘scaffolding’, that enables participants to get the benefits of participation in work, while also enabling engagement in complementary livelihood, work-search and/or skills development opportunities.

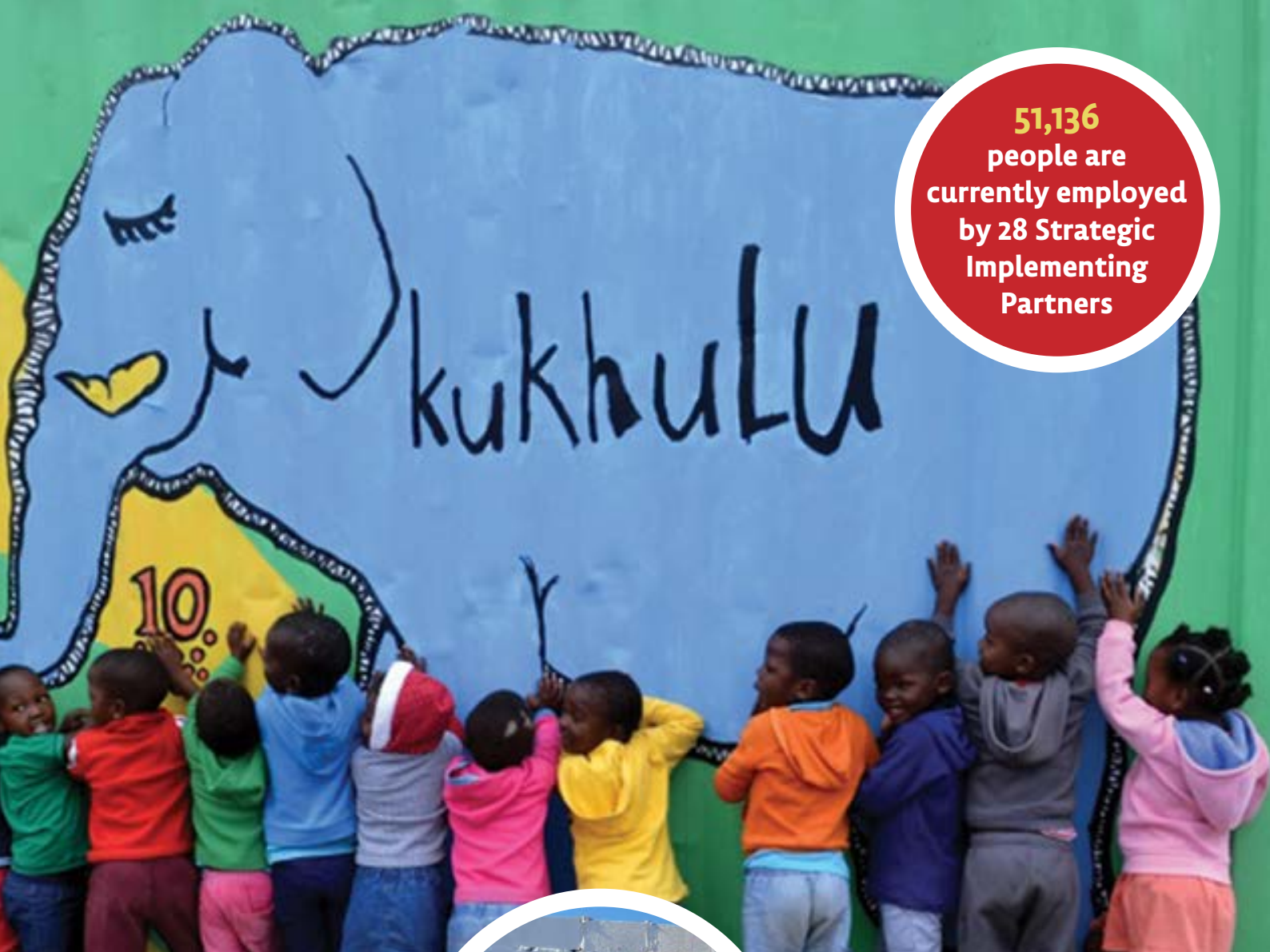


A mobile library

One children’s book was all it took for Litha Sam-Sam from Vrygrond in Cape Town to start a children’s reading and literacy initiative at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic – now supported through the Social Employment Fund.

During lockdown, Sam-Sam, aged 20, noticed that children were roaming the streets with nothing to do. He started reading to them. The idea caught on; others volunteered to do the same. Now, children in Vrygrond and adjacent townships wait with excitement for the yellow bicycles of the Loxion Mobile Library to arrive, with books in a basket. It’s story time!

Through support from the Social Employment Fund **Assitej** is now expanding this local initiative.



51,136
people are
currently employed
by 28 Strategic
Implementing
Partners

Tackling GBV

Community-based activists and paralegals who support victims of GBV have been given a boost through the Social Employment Fund – with over 2,000 Sisterhood Advocates employed across four provinces, by the **Hlanganisa Institute for Development Southern Africa**.



‘The Social Employment Fund has allowed us to expand the scope of our work several times over. Before, we were able to handle an average of 391 GBV cases per month; now we can handle about 6,500. This has translated into 5,494 more cases lodged and approximately 1,000 police cases filed.’

Bongiwe Ndondo, Executive Director: Hlanganisa Institute for Development Southern Africa

Indigenous knowledge

In Ugu and Umdoni in KZN, **Siyavuna Development Trust** is supporting the transfer of indigenous agricultural knowledge from older farmers to 992 young people – creating inter-generational engagement in the process. This Social Employment project links indigenous and organic agricultural practices, with participants getting SETA-accredited organic food-production skills. The project also links them into agricultural value chains and markets, so that they are able to transition out of the programme as entrepreneurs.



The Creative Sector – support to the Soul of the Nation

IMPLEMENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE

Over
30,000 jobs and opportunities
have been
created



Under lockdown, there was no loud applause in jazz venues, no curtain calls for the dancers, no tourists in craft markets. No segment of the creative sector was untouched. So, in Phase 1, through the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, the PES provided a significant scale of stimulus to the creative and cultural sector – which referred to it as the PESP.

Over 30,000 jobs and opportunities have been created to date. A new phase of job creation is rolling out in 2023, with calls for proposals from the National Arts Council (NAC), the National Film and Video Foundation (NFVF), the National Heritage Council, Business Arts South Africa and the Art Bank all completed.

Most of the jobs and opportunities have been created by the sector itself. In Phase 1, this was through a stimulus provided to the NAC and NFVF. This stimulus recognised that many people in the creative sector are self-employed in the gig economy, are in NGOs or run small enterprises. The main aim was to help them get back on their feet. So rather than offering a classic public employment

programme – which would have required them to leave their entities in order to take up employment – they were invited to propose ways to create employment for themselves and others in the sector. In the process, a wide range of new creative work was supported.



'The PESP came at the absolute right time and enabled me to go forth and make the [movie] sequel 'Happiness Ever After', now streaming on Netflix in 190 countries to over 200 million subscribers.'

Bongiwe Simelani, Producer

Support was given for digital content creation and e-commerce platform development. One such project was the **Puku Children's Literature Foundation**, which was awarded the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) King Sejong Literacy Prize 2021 for its programme, 'Using digital technologies to promote children's literature in South Africa's indigenous languages' – a boost for children's literature.



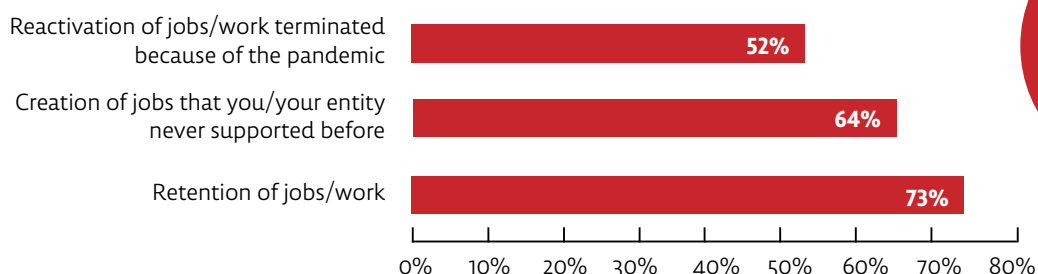
Support to Arts Institutions too



- Striking murals were painted in small towns, as part of support to public art – with poetry and drama supported too.
- Records were digitised in the National Library and National Archives.
- Through SACO, artists received marketing support from commerce graduates.
- Cultural facilities such as museums, galleries, theatres and other venues which lost revenue due to the lockdown received support to retain jobs.
- Artists were placed in art centres and through the Arts Bank Programme and the SA Heritage Resource Agency created jobs too.

THE CREATIVE SECTOR STIMULUS OF THE PES

FIGURE 1 – WORK/EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES SUPPORTED BY THE THE PESP*



42% of respondents said that some of the jobs created became permanent

*Respondents could contribute to more than one category.

FIGURE 2 – TYPES OF ADDITIONAL INCOMES EARNED

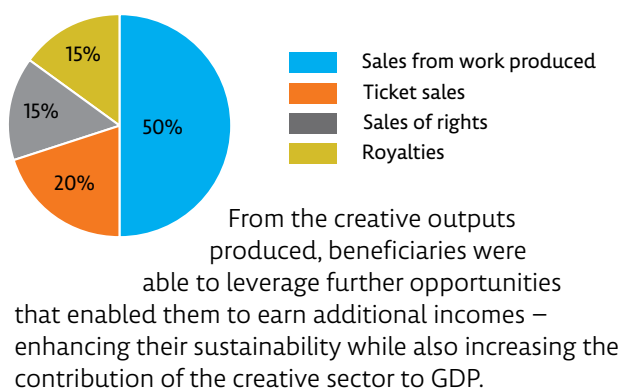
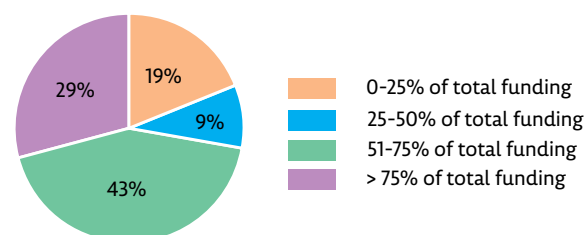


FIGURE 3 – FOR THOSE THAT HAD OTHER FUNDING, WHAT WAS THE RATIO OF PESP FUNDS TO OTHER FUNDS??



Only 36% of respondents had access to other sources of funds with which to undertake their projects. For 72% of these, the PESP was the main contributor.



PRESIDENTIAL
YOUTH
EMPLOYMENT
INTERVENTION



Presidential Youth Employment Intervention

The PYEI was launched in 2020 to successfully transition young people from learning to earning, prior to the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic – and before the PES was initiated. The PYEI integrates with other interventions coordinated by the Project Management Office in the Presidency to drive structural reforms and enable job creation.

PES provides funding for several PYEI components – showcased here – as well as directly delivering employment opportunities for youth. In turn, the PYEI's National Pathway Management Network supports the implementation of PES programmes, by ensuring that young people have line of sight of opportunities being made available, through recruitment support through the Employment Services of South Africa (ESSA) platform of the Department of Employment and Labour and the SA Youth platform – with these platforms supporting exit strategies for PES participants also.

In summary, the PYEI seeks to coordinate, accelerate and enhance existing programmes while driving innovation and creating pathways to earning for young people at scale.

**45,167 youth
service placements
were supported
in 2022**



Revitalised National Youth Service

The Revitalised National Youth Service is creating opportunities for young people to contribute meaningfully to their communities and to develop critical skills required to participate effectively in the economy, build confidence and expand their networks and social capital. The Youth Service program is structured to support service work for 16-hours a week and channels young people's energy into advancing social cohesion, nation building and development.

This leaves them with room to explore further opportunities for training, employment or entrepreneurship during their term of service. This eases the transition into follow-on activities.

The NYS has a strong focus on supporting complementary income-earning opportunities. The NYS is led by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD), and implemented by the [National Youth Development Agency \(NYDA\)](#) in partnership with GTAC, with the Jobs Fund as the Fund Manager.



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The National Pathway Management Network

The PYEI's National Pathway Management Network (NPMN) is a 'network of networks', that brings major stakeholders contributing to youth employment into one common national network. This allows young people to access opportunities and information more readily – with the aim of creating one common digital platform from which young people can have line of sight of multiple opportunities. The implementation of the NPMN is led by the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) in line with its employment mandate. The department is also a key partner in the NPMN with its Employment Services of South Africa (ESSA) platform and 126 labour centres across the country;

Among others, the network partners include:

- the [Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator](#) who manages the [SA Youth platform](#);
- the Gauteng Provincial Government's [Tshepo 1 Million platform](#);
- private sector initiatives such as the [Youth Employment Service \(YES4Youth\)](#);
- the Department of Higher Education and Training's (DHET) [Kheta career advice portal](#).

The PES has supported the appointment of an Eco-System Manager for NPMN. The PES is also supporting its Innovation Fund.

A Pay-for-Performance Skills Development Model

The PYEI contributes to developing an agile workforce through demand-led skilling approaches and improved responsiveness of the skilling system.

In one of its interventions, with support from the PES, the PYEI has partnered with the National Skills Fund to pilot a pay-for-performance (P4P) model to support young people with digital skills training and immediate access to employment opportunities upon completion. The P4P mechanism places strong emphasis on the realisation of desired employment outcomes.

These interventions are led by the [Department of Higher Education and Training \(DHET\)](#) and delivered through its Skills Strategy for the Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan (ERRP).

For more information on PYEI, see <https://www.stateofthenation.gov.za/presidential-youth-employment-intervention>



The Labour Centres of DEL are part of the National Pathway Management Network. The PES has supported DEL to place 177 psychologists as counsellors at Labour Centres. According to DEL, this has resulted in a significant increase in the number of people counselled, allowing them to exceed previous targets.



Green jobs for the future of the planet

IMPLEMENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT (DFFE), THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND INNOVATION (DSI) AND BY CITIES AS PART OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME OF NATIONAL TREASURY (NDPP)

The work undertaken in environmental programmes has touched the length and breadth of the country, from coast to coast, including bushveld, grassland, fynbos, wetlands, mountains, water bodies, catchment areas – and urban areas, too. The work undertaken affects the air we breathe, the water we drink, the energy we use and the food we eat, supporting a wealth of biodiversity resources and ecological systems essential to life on earth and to the future of the planet.

South Africa was an early mover in the development of public employment in the environmental sector, as part of the Expanded Public Works Programme, before climate issues were as prominent in the public imagination as they are today. The PES supported expanded employment in a range of environmental works, building on existing lessons and partnerships.

For **Zama Mnisi** from Mpumalanga, SANBI's Wildlife Economies Project, supported through DFFE, was her first job – and an eye-opener.

'The experience gave me the opportunity to meet farm owners and managers and learn the challenges they face. Most importantly I learned that there is a huge difference between knowing how to work the land and how to manage the farm as a business. The discussions about land degradation and the economic opportunities from wildlife also gave the farmers new ideas on how to grow their businesses and create more jobs in the community.'



Imvelo Ethu Nobuntu: Our Nature and Humanity

The Amanzi Ethu Nobuntu programme was established by the Duzi uMngeni Conservation Trust (DUCT) in association with various other stakeholders, with support from the Department of Science and Innovation. It links projects across the Duzi uMngeni catchment area that have a common purpose of keeping the river system healthy. Through the PES, the programme has employed teams at 20 project sites across the catchment areas, equipping youth with 'citizen science' skills to monitor water quality, illegal dumping sites, leaking sewers, and burst drinking water pipes. All the data they gather gets fed into a mobile app which then provides a bigger picture of the health of the catchment area. Participants not only monitor the river system – they help clean it up, too. Now, a community of practice of stakeholders involved in catchment management across the country are exploring how to institutionalise area-based partnerships that can deliver integrated approaches at the catchment level.

These interventions enhance not only the quantity but also the quality of water, reduce siltation in our dams and mitigate flood risks – with evidence from the recent KZN floods that interventions made by the programme did indeed do so. The economic case for integrated catchment management is as strong as the social and environmental one. The challenge now is to find ways to recognize – and monetise – that economic value, so that public employment jobs can become sustainable ones.



In eThekweni Municipality, the **Transformative Riverine Management Programme** has been launched in 28 wards starting mid-

July 2022, supported by the NDPP as part of the Cities Programme.

In each ward teams of Enviro Champs are working in their own neighbourhoods. They learn to identify environmental challenges that impact on their community and to develop Change Projects to address these. In a great example of collaboration, the programme is being supported by graduates from DUCT. They engage in income-generating recycling activities also. The teams use Field Survey, a mobile app, to collect data on solid waste, alien vegetation and water and sewer leaks. These are geo-located and help the municipality to plan action.

Through the PES, the TRMP has employed teams at **28 project sites** across the catchment areas



Public Employment and the Just Transition

South Africa made its mark with the Just Energy Transition Investment Plan at the 2022 COP in Egypt. The central commitment of the Just Transition is that the transition should not lead to social or economic distress for those workers directly affected, nor for their communities or the wider society.

Yet most stakeholders agree that market-based investment in renewable alternatives – or any forms of investment in the affected areas – **are unlikely to enable seamless transitions to new jobs for current employees**. Such jobs are unlikely to be created at the scale required, initially at least. They are also unlikely to be created in the same places as the jobs being lost – nor at the same skills levels. This likely outcomes mismatch already represents a looming crisis for the Just Transition process and with it, the legitimacy of the transition to renewable energy.

Public employment programmes have a key role to play in this process – building on South Africa's significant track record in this area, through the EPWP and the more recent experience of the PES.



Creating work from waste

IMPLEMENTED BY: DEPARTMENT OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE, METROS SUPPORTED BY THE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP GRANT IN NATIONAL TREASURY AND THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

In too many communities, waste collection isn't working. It's affecting people's health and well-being and it's bad for the environment, too. So multiple stakeholders seized the opportunity of the Presidential Employment Stimulus to create jobs from doing it differently.

The waste programme run by the **Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency (MISA)** in COGTA provides an example of how a public employment model can be used to seed sustainable enterprise development. 'Community awareness is the starting point,' says programme lead Lutando Maboza.

'We train ward-based peer educators. They distribute colour-coded bags for sorting at source in the community, they run ward-based clean-up campaigns, monitor illegal dumping and assist with collections.'

Transporting this waste to waste facilities for sorting provides one of the enterprise opportunities. Three-wheel vehicles are used in rural areas or informal settlements that are otherwise inaccessible. Maboza explains:

'We look at the entire waste value chain to identify ways in which local enterprises can generate revenue.'

In response to demand from municipalities, they have had to augment the allocation they received from the PES from their own funds.

MISA is now partnering with the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA) of the Department of Science and Innovation to test a range of waste technology options.

'The MISA programme has exposed communities to business opportunities. Those with an entrepreneurial mind and passion for a clean environment have grabbed this opportunity to tackle the challenge of solid waste management. This is a great initiative for people who love a clean environment and who want to become entrepreneurs. Aside from instilling a sense of pride in one's surroundings, this project inspires hopes and dreams. Many of the people working in this project are energetic young people who were previously sitting idle at home with nothing to do.'

Xolani Sisetsha, Msunduzi.

MISA has supported the development of

115

small enterprises



44

municipalities



in Eastern Cape, KZN, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and Gauteng.



Little do competitors in the Duzi-Umgeni Canoe Marathon know how much work has gone into keeping the river clean. Here, participants from the Duzi Umgeni Conservation Trust (DUCT) programme (supported by the Department of Science and Innovation) tackle the challenge.



The Presidential Employment Stimulus convenes a Waste Innovation Forum for stakeholders to share experiences. This has included exploring earning opportunities in carbon credit markets.

Don't let carbon credits go to waste...

The carbon credit market allows emitters of carbon to off-set their carbon footprint by trading with entities taking action to reduce carbon emissions. A range of actions in the waste sector qualify to be traded in this way. It's a complex process – but holds out potential to create an income stream that can help incentivise waste recycling.

Waste matters in the metros

The Neighbourhood Development Partnership Programme in National Treasury supports public employment programmes in all eight metros as part of the Presidential Employment Stimulus. Many metros have undertaken programmes in the waste sector. In Buffalo City, before and after photos show the impact of concerted clean-ups, with the operationalisation of buy-back centres providing new revenue sources for poor households.

eThekweni is building integrated systems on the back of their Transformative River Management Programme (TRMP) in 28 wards. This is giving them capacity to identify sites for the aggregation of materials collected by informal waste-pickers. District-scale Materials Recovery Facilities then recover recyclables. Plastic and glass are directed to circular economy producers – including for the production of 'green concrete'.



The eThekweni Municipality through the Green Corridors NGO has developed a green concrete premix consisting of 88% by volume of recycled materials, including glass, building rubble and 35% of otherwise non-recyclables, (plastics, shoe rubber and fabrics). The screed mix is achieving an impressive strength of 18mpa. An emerging partnership with commercial property developers is now affording the opportunity to establish green concrete manufacturers in the north and the west of eThekweni to produce the screed mix, concrete pavers, bollards and street poles.

This is an example of how public employment interventions at the community level can enable jobs all the way up the value chain.

Supporting small enterprise. Building entrepreneurs.

If our aim is to support successful entrepreneurs, then we need to create a pipeline of work experience opportunities from which they can graduate. In a labour market that does not offer many of these, public employment programmes are vital. In addition, many of the PEPs in the PES create deliberate pathways into enterprise activity.

The PES has a livelihood stream that has supported entrepreneurs of different kinds – subsistence farmers, Early Childhood Development practitioners, people in the creative sector and youth enterprises supported by NYDA. In addition, many of the public employment programmes also integrate deliberate support to entrepreneurship and small enterprise development.

For example in the **waste sector** the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency in COGTA illustrated how public employment can seed and support early-stage enterprise activity. A public employment model was used to mobilise community participation in separation of waste at source.

Entrepreneurs with work experience are more likely to succeed.

Similarly, the **Department of Tourism** supported a hybrid model, with public employment coupled with support to 37 small enterprises which were contracted to restore, refurbish and upgrade tourism facilities in a range of national parks.

In addition, in 2023, the **school assistants programme** is introducing entrepreneurship training for participants. This aims to serve a dual purpose. They will support this learning stream in the classroom, but it also empowers them to explore this option when they exit.

NYDA Enterprise Programme

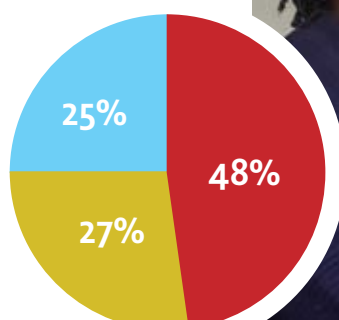
Kealeboga Tshikohvi was inspired by opportunities in renewable energy. Her company, Lamo Fuels, is based in Dikweng Village in Kuruman. Her vision is to accelerate the use of sustainable energy sources including the supply of bio-diesel. Support from the National Youth Development Agency allowed her to purchase equipment, which has allowed her to increase her revenue and employ two more people. The NYDA supported 2005 enterprises.



In the creative sector, the awards were a boost to enterprises of all kinds.

In what capacity did you make your proposal?

- Company
- Non-profit organisation
- Self employed



Social Employment and Youth Service both offer 16 hours of work per week. This part-time model provides a form of ‘support scaffolding,’ while actively encouraging and enabling complementary livelihood, enterprise, skills development and other activities in the balance of participants’ time. This can ‘de-risk’ early stage entrepreneurship by providing a regular income stream. What is remarkable is how often participants use their modest earnings as seed capital for enterprise activity.



In the case of **Elias Nkuna**, from Bela Bela in Limpopo, ‘seed capital’ from his wage income did in fact buy seeds. He started his organic nursery business, Ntivo Seedlings, within weeks of being employed by Organisation Hands On – supported in turn by Seriti Institute, a Strategic Implementing Partner of the Social Employment Fund. He is able to balance his part-time working hours with the needs of his growing business.

Asked about his profit, he smiles widely and says

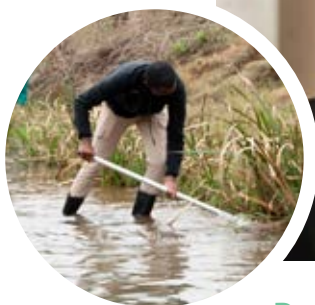
‘That is my secret! I want Ntivo Seedlings to grow and become recognised. I’m hoping to invest in a tunnel to improve the growing conditions for my seedlings.’

If he can expand, he plans to become an employer himself.

Manzipreneurs – innovating in the water sector

IMPLEMENTED BY THE WATER RESEARCH COMMISSION, THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

The Manzipreneurs Programme challenged 317 unemployed graduates to innovate in addressing community challenges, through the development of business ideas in the green economy. The programme gave them the tools to do so, with modules around water, energy and agri-tech opportunities. The Youth Bridge Trust (YBT) then supported the business ideation process.



‘They had to pitch their business ideas to a panel which gave them ideas and tips, and we coached them not only around their business plans but on what they should highlight to potential investors.’

Ntsiki Gumbe, Acting Executive Director.

The business ideas developed by Kimsha Sewpal and Sibongile Sithole took them all the way to the African Climate Launch Pitch Competition. Sewpal went on to represent South Africa at the global level with her aquaponics concept for breeding marron crayfish, as an alternative to overfishing of rock lobster.

Power to the electrical engineers

Sibongile Sithole grew up with no electricity in rural KZN, which motivated her to graduate as an electrical engineer from the Durban University of Technology. When she was retrenched from her job during Covid, she used her savings and UIF money to set up a business focused on plumbing and electrical home maintenance. Through the Manzipreneurs programme, she shifted her focus to solar energy.

‘The programme helped us to be open and innovative and it motivated me.’

She found the mentorship invaluable and says that she uses the skills learned from the pitch process to market her business.

Support to graduates enables growth

DBE	The Schools Assistant Programme prioritises graduates in its appointment of Teacher Assistants.
DHET	26 universities have placed 1 702 interns in work related to their qualifications.
DSI / WRC	The Water Graduates Employment Programme has placed 962 graduates in 62 host institutions.
DSI / CSIR	The CSIR's Experiential Training Programme has placed 448 graduates in host institutions, many in manufacturing.
DSI / DUCT	The Duzi uMngeni Conservation Trust has employed 63 graduates as part of its river health initiative with local partners.
DSI / HSRC	934 graduates employed as health promotion agents
DFFE / SANBI	The SA National Biodiversity Institute has employed 3 073 graduates.
DFFE / Groen Sebenzas	The Groen Sebenzas programme employed 252 environmental science graduates in their weather services.
DPWI	1 560 graduates placed in programmes like Welisizwe Rural Bridges, facilities maintenance and construction.
DOH	2 203 staff and assistant nurses placed in clinics.
DEL	213 psychologists placed as counsellors at Labour Centres.
DALRRD	1 464 agricultural graduates appointed to verify status of voucher applicants.
DSAC	635 graduates involved in audits and digitization of records

Yes, graduate unemployment is lower than for unskilled workers. But in an economy that is short of skills, we simply can't afford to waste any.

They are vital for growth. Nor can we let the significant public investment in those skills be eroded by a lack of opportunity to apply them. In addition, if graduates are struggling to find work, this can negatively affect the wider incentives for participation in higher education and the real financial sacrifice this can entail, particularly for low-income households.

For graduates, work experience is often the only missing piece of the puzzle on their CVs – yet lack of work experience can be a major obstacle to employment. It's a vicious cycle, but one that well-designed public employment programmes can break.

Graduate support is a small part of the overall stimulus, but a number of dynamic programmes are showing strong results.

Nkateko Silinda from Mpumalanga has a BA in Humanities. She was unemployed for two years before being employed on a project of the South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA), supported through the Department of Sports Arts and Culture.

'I come from a low-income family and reside with my mother and young son. We rely on my mother's old age pension for survival. Being unemployed took away my dignity and confidence... My world was dark in an unimaginable way. I went in and out of depression but tried to stay strong for the sake of my child. Unemployment also turned me into a laughing stock in my community. People would say, "But you went to university, how come someone like you is suffering?" This sunk me deeper into the darkness.'

Supporting participants to transition into jobs

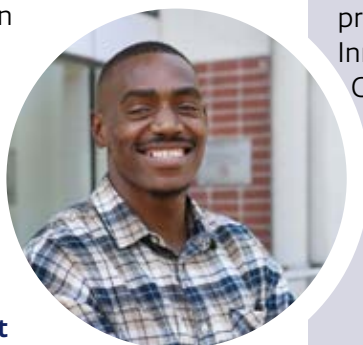
As part of the PES Programme of the Department of Science and Innovation, the Water Research Commission (WRC) placed **962 graduates in 62 host organisations** where they could apply their skills. The WRC also developed an intensive mentoring programme, providing workplace skills including presentation skills, the use of virtual platforms, MS programmes, financial planning, budgeting and more. They were each supported to take the plunge and promote themselves. Here are some samples from the pitches they made. [See more here.](#)





Interns create value for their host institutions

Sihle Maphukatha from the Eastern Cape was an intern at the University of the Western Cape (UWC), as part of PES support to graduates being rolled out at 26 universities by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). At a certification ceremony held at UWC in November 2022, Maphukatha talked about his experience – speaking on behalf of other interns also.



‘In the past six months, we have acquired hard and soft skills that we believe are key for our future opportunities. The internship has made us step out of our comfort zones and realize the potential that we have as individuals. For some of us, the internship has boosted our confidence and made us discover our potential and strength within the professional space.’

‘In my case, for the past six months I have been placed in the Business Intelligence Unit within the Institutional Planning Department at UWC. I created a web scraper tool for the university, to develop a funding database where students can easily access funding opportunities. I created a student enrolment dashboard that provides departments with enrolment data and tracks student performance. I was privileged to be given the opportunity to train the heads of departments on the dashboard. I am proud to say that with all the experience I have acquired in this internship, I have been employed by a global software company as a software analyst.’

Rita Mofokeng, a Biotechnology student from Vaal University of Technology, was hosted at the Limpopo Agro-food Technology Station as part of the CSIR’s Experiential Training Programme.

‘The programme has helped me immensely by equipping me with the necessary knowledge and experience that is required by employers. I have received industrial exposure, worked with SMEs, and have had the opportunity to work with high technology equipment to do microbial analysis. This gave me vast knowledge in product development, food safety and quality control. I also learnt how to write scientific reports.’



Lindokuhle Nobute studied Mechanical Engineering at Walter Sisulu University. Through the Experiential Training Programme (ETP) of the CSIR, also a programme of the Department of Science and Innovation, he was placed at Dinky Manufacturing Company in Berlin in the Eastern Cape.

‘I was engaged in production and learned how to improve production efficiency. I learned to operate different machines such as CNC’s, presses, drills and many more. I gained problem solving skills using engineering tools. I am a financially disadvantaged student and without this programme, it was not going to be possible for me to complete the experiential components required by my training.’

Nonjabulu Mnguni worked at Midmar Dam, as part of the WRC programme.

‘We are responsible for ensuring that the water is safe and that water released from a nearby wastewater treatment plant does not pose any threat to aquatic life or pollute the water supply to surrounding communities. So my job includes laboratory work and research, testing for e.Coli and bacteria. Water is also important for so many industries, so better management of water resources also creates jobs.’



Digital innovation in a time of crisis

Delivering at scale during lockdown certainly meant doing things differently. For many departments, that meant taking a leap of faith into the use of digital solutions – without which, a range of programmes critical to the recovery could not have been rolled out.

For the PMO in the Presidency, this began with the innovations required to enable the roll-out of the Social Relief of Distress Grant. This was a case in which policy approval of the grant depended in no small measure on providing a convincing case that delivering it was technically feasible. Under lockdown conditions, digital processes of application and verification were required – which SASSA had never done before. It also required joining-up critical data-sets in government, including data bases on existing social grants, unemployment insurance, SARS data and banking data to enable an automated exclusion and approval mechanism – also for the first time.



The breakthroughs that enabled the rollout of the SRD grant to over 10 million people have inspired continued work within the Presidential Employment Stimulus, which includes the promotion of a ‘citizen-centric, joined-up government’ approach achieved through systems and data interoperability across the public sector. Many of the government departments participating in the stimulus have also embraced digital solutions in their processes of programme roll-out – such as DALRRD’s USSD voucher application and delivery system and the river-health monitoring app used in DUCT’s catchment management programme – both explored on earlier pages.

Vetting School Assistants as fit to work with children

Any person working with young children needs to be vetted in relation to the following:

- **The Department of Justice’s National Register for Sex Offenders (NRSO)**
- **The Department of Social Development’s Child Protection Register (CPR)**
- **A police clearance certificate from the Department of Police.**

In relation to the NRSO, the current process involves finger-printing at a police station at a cost of R150 and then a wait of about three months for a result from the Department of Justice.

Right now, the PMO is supporting the Department of Basic Education to put in place biometric ID verification. This would use a photo taken on a mobile phone at the school coupled with a copy of the ID, uploaded to the Home Affairs data base to provide almost instant confirmation of ID validity, at a cost of less than R1. Processes of engagement with the Department of Justice and the Department of Social Development are underway to explore how digitisation of their data could then enable vetting of the ID against their register to be completed in real time. Engagements in relation to police clearance will follow. If this can be achieved, the same solution can be provided at a society-wide level. Automating any or all of these processes would hugely reduce red-tape associated with clearances required by law for all forms of work with children – and police clearances required for a wider range of forms of work.



SAPS



PAY R150

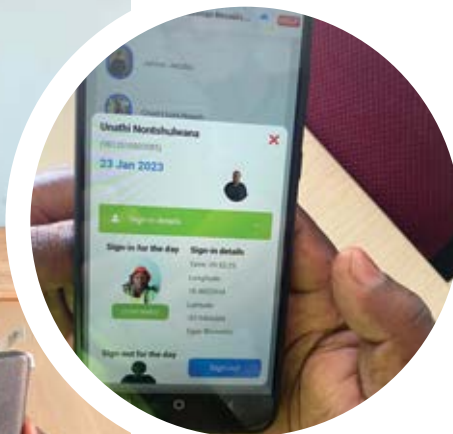


FINGERPRINTS



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**VETTING
AGAINST NRSO**



system. This verifies their ID and confirms that it is the identity associated with the bank details they have provided.

This technology eradicates common forms of 'ghost-working': using fake IDs – including of dead people – or collusion by implementing bodies to pay people not actually present at work. It also protects participants from scams relating to false bank accounts.

As fund manager, the Industrial Development Corporation also pays all wages to participants through a central payment system – based on the signed-off digital timesheets. This removes the hassle of payroll management from implementing partners, provides a water-tight audit trail and reduces opportunities for wages to be 'top-sliced' anywhere along the way.

Integrated digital reporting and payment systems

The Social Employment Fund

Remember timesheets? For most SEF participants, they're a thing of the past. The Kwantu app uses facial recognition to confirm clock-in and clock-out times – with GIS location confirming that the participant really is on site. This data can be captured even at remote sites with no connectivity – and downloaded later for report purposes.

The process starts when a participant joins the programme. Their photo, ID number and banking details are 'pinged' against the data base of the Department of Home Affairs via the banking

Examples from the SEF Impact Dashboard

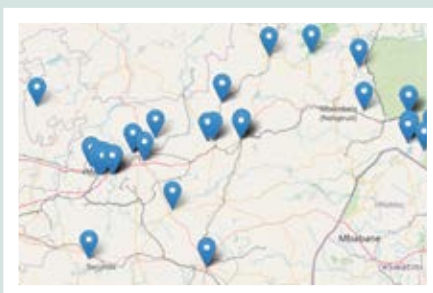
Gender Based Violence	Cases successfully completed	3 218
	Maintenance orders applied for	1 081
	Cases referred	5 705
	Protection orders applied for	902
	Women admitted into Domestic Violence shelters	252
Early Childhood Development	ECD Programme Days delivered	35 469
	Meals served to children	500 864
	Children at ECD centres supported	31 561
Food and Nutrition	Current food gardens established	1 753
	Current seedlings planted	37 816

All worksites are geolocated. The sites can be filtered in relation to work types, illustrating which ones are engaged in food security, for example. These can be filtered further in relation to key indicators – such as 'Number of meals provided to children.' If the mouse hovers over a site icon, it gives you details of the site and can be linked to performance outcomes.

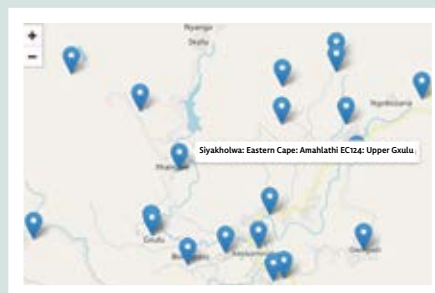
Map 1: All the SEF work-sites dealing with Education and Early Childhood Development.



Map 2: All the SEF work-sites dealing with Greening and the Environment in Limpopo.



Map 3: All the SEF work-sites dealing with Food Security in Amathole, Eastern Cape.



Lessons from work in progress



Building the institutional architecture for scale

The challenge of unemployment is huge. Yet so often, initiatives to address it are at the project scale, reaching under 10,000 people. We will never dent unemployment at that rate. Yet the opportunities to think big have been rare. The PES provided a unique window in which to demonstrate what delivery at scale can look like. This includes taking advantage of distributed networks such as in the schools programme.

In addition, mechanisms that solicited proposals were generally significantly oversubscribed. Within government, rather than the PES and its targets being imposed from above, a platform and an opportunity were created for great ideas to surface and to be supported: putting the initiative in the hands of those expected to implement them.

Outside of government, the process illustrated the significant capacity that can and should be harnessed from the wider society. The creative sector stimulus was hugely oversubscribed. Based on the scale of submissions, the Social Employment Fund could have created 300,000 jobs instead of 50,000.

Management matters

So many development programmes fail because of 'poor management'. So why is spending on programme management so often treated as a form of leakage? Quality outcomes require quality inputs. Of course, management must be efficient. But cutting programme management to the bone is a false economy. Rather than this money going to fund additional jobs – as is often argued – it can place the quality of all the jobs on a given programme at risk. Particularly where exponential scaling is required, then so too is growth in the capacities and systems that support strong work experiences, real social value creation and all the corollary outcomes we see from well-led programmes. Often, this requires a hub and spoke model rather than trying to replicate (and duplicate) systems and capacities at every site.

Partnerships and 'whole of society' approaches

For the PES, one of the criteria of support for programmes was that they build partnerships beyond the state. There are great examples of this happening: but procurement of joint action often posed a constraint. Fund mechanisms provide a solution. So for example: catchment management requires integrated, area-based approaches that involve a wide range of roleplayers – such as private landowners, a traditional authority and an informal settlement. Supporting an agenda of collaborative action is a procurement nightmare for any public body. Yet a fund mechanism designed to support integrated approaches can mean that all the partnerships are brokered at proposal development stage and funded as a package – including co-funding components. This is exactly the kind of innovation the PES hopes to support in the future.

Momentum and multipliers grow over time

So, a lot has been achieved. But the really exciting ideas to take this work to the next level are now emerging from experience, from success and failure, from light-bulb moments and opportunities for joined-up approaches. It's really now, for example, that great ideas are emerging on how public employment programmes can seed market-based jobs and opportunities. It's now that transitions into self-employment and enterprise opportunities are manifesting. It's now that opportunities as part of the Just Transition are becoming apparent.

Building a society that works

Inequality, unemployment and poverty are interlinked; so are their impacts. There is no silver bullet to solve them all. Instead, solutions must be multi-dimensional. Certainly, unlocking an economic trajectory that creates sustainable jobs is an over-riding priority. But while that happens, the impacts of unemployment and poverty are having devastating impacts in communities and on our social fabric. This raises the risks of social instability – which could sabotage the prospects of the economic recovery on which sustainable solutions rely.

Interventions such as the Presidential Employment Stimulus are part of turning this vicious cycle around: because there is in fact no shortage of work to be done to make South Africa a better place. So let's get to work: on terms that build work experience, that create real public value, that address our social challenges and that unlock community agency and creativity to help to do so.



‘We’ve come far in creating jobs and supporting livelihoods – but we need to go further. Let’s keep our foot firmly on the accelerator.’

President Cyril Ramaphosa

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Pages 20-21: Khaya Ngwenya
Page 22: Lulamile Feni
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February 2023

