

A dream come true for Msinga residents... *“as Midlands Region and NHBRC present certificates to Maintenance Programme beneficiaries”*

Story and photos by Sane Khumalo

What began as a minor thing turned out to be a big achievement and surprise for residents of Msinga area which falls under uMzinyathi District Municipality. On Friday the 20th of February 2015 was a dream come true day for the Public Works' Maintenance Programme beneficiaries who always had the desire and wish for education but did not get the opportunity until they received awards as qualified artisans (painters). It is all thanks to the KZN Department of Public Works, KZN Department of Education and National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC) which joined hands and provided training to 57 beneficiaries of Maintenance Programme in Msinga.



Principals of the schools and beneficiaries dancing and excited after the beneficiaries received certificates as qualified painters

The Maintenance Programme is a programme that focuses directly at poverty alleviation through identification of unemployed people from the poorest of the poor rural communities as beneficiaries. This programme is currently active in two municipalities; namely uMzinyathi and uMkhanyakude Municipalities with a total number of 137 beneficiaries and 39 sites. The programme is targeting the manual clearance of schools through utilizing the unemployed people as labour for the programme.

The Department provided these beneficiaries with an accredited training on Painting and this training is funded by NHBRC. Training in uMzinyathi Municipality – Msinga area commenced on 20 January 2015 until the final day on receipt of awards by beneficiaries on 20 February 2015 which resembled a day to remember for the jubilant beneficiaries.

Amongst the beneficiaries was Mrs Nyaba from Nocomboshe area in Msinga who thanked representatives from the KZN Department of Public Works, the KZN Department of Education, also Schools' Principals from schools around Msinga where the programmes are active, the representatives from NHBRC and all other officials from other departments who contributed towards this training. She said "I would like to thank principals for the good working relationship we had with them". She could not believe that she was essentially the owner of this certificate as she continued saying "it is unbelievable that today I am holding this certificate".

The mood was high amongst the guests and recipients during the presentation of awards accompanied by a lot of ululation, dancing and clapping of hands as the certificates were handed over to the beneficiaries. Mrs Nkala who is a Principal at Keates Drift Primary School also had a word of appreciation on behalf of all the principals present, she said "We are very excited if we see this beautiful thing in our area, I would also like to thank the beneficiaries because we worked well with them, there were no problems and these certificates will help them" she concluded.



Mr Richard Nukeri from NHBRC and Ms Thabile Mdlalose; KZN Department of Education handing over certificate to Ms Gcinekile Shabalala

It should also be reported and place on record that beneficiaries receive a monthly stipend of R1 200. 00 each respectively and the programme is ideally Performance based and daily timesheets are being kept in order to determine the work output and or deliverables. All sites (uMzinyathi and uMkhanyakude) commenced with the actual work in August 2014 after Public Works received confirmation of funding from the Department of Education for the 2014/2015 financial year.

In her closing remarks and vote of thanks, Ms Ningi Mbanjwa, the Assistant Manager for EPWP at Head Office was quite overjoyed and thrilled to see this fruitful event. This is quite evident that this is not an end for service delivery of this magnitude by EPWP.

Watch the space as in no time one will witness the joy of uMkhanyakude Municipality beneficiaries once they begin with their training.