

The Community Work Programme
An Introduction

Background

- The Community Work Programme is a partnership between the Second Economy Strategy Project and DSD
- It is testing a South African adaptation of the concept of a minimum employment guarantee;
- It is targeting SA's social protection gap;
- It is designed as an **employment safety-net**: not as an employment solution;
- It complements and does not displace other forms of EPWP; it forms part of EPWP Phase 2.
- If the pilots are able to demonstrate impacts, the intention is for the CWP to be institutionalised as a government programme, funded through National Treasury. The question is: how? And with what institutional arrangements?

The Purpose

1. The Community Work Programme is designed to provide access to regular and predictable work opportunities
ie 1-2 days a week or one week a month;
2. It is an area-based programme, intended to become a permanent feature at the local level, initially targeted at the poorest areas;
3. The CWP uses community development approaches to identify 'useful work' and priorities at community level;
4. In this way, the CWP builds participation and social participation as well as creating community/public goods and local services.

Why 'regular and predictable' work?

- There is a need for **ongoing** forms of support: 'exits' into sustainable alternatives remain elusive: market-based jobs are not keeping up, sme survival rate is low;
- The intention is not to disrupt existing livelihood strategies, but to supplement them;
- Research on social protection illustrates that households receiving a grant are more likely also to invest in economic activity: predictable income mitigates risk, allows for financial planning:
 - Can the CWP achieve the same effect – but by providing 'work'?
- Evidence of young people leaving education to earn an income;
 - Could this make a difference?
- Informal sector activity often yields little/no returns in the first 6 months: making it unaffordable for many:
 - Could an earnings safety-net assist people through this phase?
- The pilots are trying to answer these and other questions.
- But how to operationalise?

There are four 'pilots'

- In Munsieville, Mogale City: weekly work;
 - In Bokfontein, an informal settlement near Brits – a Saturday Work Programme
 - In Alfred Nzo, in the Eastern Cape, in 10 villages: participants work for one week a month;
 - In Sekhukhuneland, the 'Working for Woodlands' programme – a part of EPWP – is adapting its systems to a 'one day per person per week' model.
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- Each pilot is different
 - The project management arrangements differ: but common elements also
 - Different community development approaches are being tested;
 - The wage rates are set locally, based in most cases on prior arrangements/ local benchmarks
 - The process is meant to test what is possible, what kinds of capacities are required, and what trends and impacts arise.

Testing innovative approaches to community development

- DSD has supported an approach called the Organisation Workshop;
- Two of the pilots are testing how it might be adapted to act as the 'inception phase' for the Community Work Programme.

- What is an Organisation Workshop?
 - Origins in Brazil: De Moraes
 - Intensive community-wide month long process;
 - Teaches work organisation and task management skills at the local level
 - Combines learning with production;
 - Builds leadership, empowerment and capacity.

Monitoring and evaluation

Khanya-aicdd is tasked with M+E; tracking the following:

- The number of participants;
- The consistency of participation over time;
- Demographic/social profiles: gender, age, education, previous work experience;
- The types of tasks identified and undertaken;
- The assets created locally;
- The cost structure;

And as far as possible:

- Changes in household income status;
- How participation impacts on other livelihood strategies, job search and economic investment;
- How the income is spent
- The impact on savings.

Key Questions for the CWP

Discussed at recent CWP workshop

- Who is benefiting? What are the trends in participation?
- Does it make a difference to poverty and unemployment? What kind of difference? How can we tell?
- Is the work genuinely 'useful'? Does it improve the quality of life in poor communities? In what ways?
- Does the CWP empower people, and/or promote social inclusion? If so, in what kinds of ways, and how is this being achieved? How is it evident – both within the CWP and in terms of what they do beyond the CWP?
- What are the impacts of the CWP in the local economy?
- And how could all of these impacts be strengthened?

Key design issues

(and issues raised at the recent EPWP Conference)

- How to institutionalise the relationship with the state;
- Alignment with municipal processes and planning:
 - how do CWP priorities relate to the IDP process?
 - What protocols are required with local government where the CWP gets involved in delivery that's covered in the IDP?
 - What if the CWP starts doing work that's supposed to be done by municipal employees?
- Alignment with national/provincial programmes:
 - Concern where CWP starts delivering against the mandates of government departments.
 - How to create a constructive linkage: where the CWP assists departments to achieve such mandates? Through what mechanisms and protocols?
- Ownership and maintenance of assets – a critical issue where public goods are created: partnership with local government needed;
- The process is meant to promote LED: needs clear (fair) processes for local procurement. But need to separate from an enterprise development function – and facilitate the linkages to such agencies instead.

Key design issues (2)

- How does the CWP draw in appropriate technical support? Lots of concerns about the Bokfontein road....
- Is the work really 'useful'? What are the trends in the kinds of work?
- What budget mechanisms and agency relationships are required to channel government funds to the programme?
- What is the scope to scale up the CWP significantly? How best can this be done?