



Social *responsibility*

The department's social responsibility programme was launched in 1999. It was originally managed as the Poverty Relief Programme by a group of professional service providers based in both the national and provincial offices. The objective of this approach was to gradually capacitate suitable government personnel and thereby internalise management of the programme.

Since 2003, the social responsibility programme has been managed by DEAT officials as a function of the Social Responsibility, Policy and Projects (SRPP) Unit in the Office of the Chief Operating Officer. Over the years, the staff complement has grown to 139, with representation at national and provincial levels. It provides a dedicated focus on hands-on support for the planning, overall approval, management and implementation of the programme.

In 2006, the department started placing local government support officials in district municipalities to assist local government with issues around the Urban Renewal Programme and Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme. In this way, social responsibility projects could be integrated into municipal IDPs. However, local government support officials were only placed at the specific request of the municipality. These officials were initially called community environmental workers and supported skills audits that were undertaken on projects funded by the department. This arrangement was aimed at supporting provincial government as part of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in relation to cross-cutting environmental and tourism-related matters.

The department's social responsibility programme is now implemented under the auspices of the EPWP and addresses the department's core responsibilities in a manner that contributes to job creation, empowers communities through training programmes in the tourism and environmental spheres, stimulates the development of SMMEs, uplifts households, especially those headed up by women, and creates sustainable enterprises that will result in permanent job opportunities.

The social responsibility programme started with a budget of R75 million in 1999. This amount increased steadily, and in 2008 stood at R610 324 million.

As a leading department in promoting the sustainable development agenda, DEAT has

an opportunity to work with communities and other stakeholders to contribute to alleviating poverty, while engaging in its core business. SRPP sought to identify and support projects in the broad focus areas of tourism and the environment. These projects include Working for Tourism, Working on Waste, People and Parks, Working for the Coast, and Sustainable Land-based Livelihoods.

The success of the programme can also be attributed to its unique management system, supported by a web-based, computerised project management system that facilitates communication between various stakeholders such as the department's provincial project managers, provincial training coordinators, the project implementers and head office. The programme is constantly updated to ensure that DEAT remains at the cutting edge of programme implementation and management. The system therefore provides up-to-date, 24-hour accessibility to information.

This programme has created community assets that can be used as a basis for equity participation with the private sector. It has also created the leverage with which access is gained to donor or other funding. The programme continues to make a difference in the lives of the people of South Africa, in particular the poorest members of society. The department has more than tripled the number of temporary jobs originally targeted when the programme was initiated in 1999. Other targets that have been significantly exceeded are in the areas of skills development and the number of SMMEs used in the implementation of projects.

SRPP has delivered the following results over the past ten years: 123 041 job opportunities have been created, of which 3 675 have been permanent jobs. This includes the use of 892 SMMEs. Furthermore, over the past ten years, 130 tourism initiatives have been developed, 43 camp sites and trails funded, 90 wetlands rehabilitated, 47 greening initiatives undertaken, and 4 106 hectares of land and 3 981 kilometres of rivers, lakes and rivers cleared.



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Skills development

The high level of unemployment in South Africa makes job creation a crucial challenge. However, job creation without skills development and training does not lend itself to sustainable employment. Training is therefore a crucial element of all social responsibility projects. A condition for the funding of projects is that 7% of the project funds must be set aside for skills development and the training of project workers, for which the department appoints qualified training implementers in a particular specialist field to provide training that will lead to SAQA-related credits at NQF levels 1 to 4. Since the inception of the programme, 983 423 training person days have been provided in literacy and numeracy, tourism, tour guiding, conservation, agriculture, horticulture, business and project management, and construction skills. Through the SRPP, DEAT is championing the development of SAQA unit standards and qualifications in the marine, conservation and aquaculture focus areas at NQF levels 1 to 4 in order to address the need and the gap that currently exist in the country.

A successful partnership between SRPP and Marine and Coastal Management has been the development of marine aquaculture. The department has allocated R150 million for the MTEF period 2008/09 to 2010/11 to promote and develop a marine aquaculture programme in five coastal areas. The funding will be utilised for the implementation of pilot projects at selected sites. The selection of the sites was based on a need to invest in areas (high unemployment and lack of economic opportunities) affected by abalone closure and the need to unlock the potential for aquaculture. The target or main beneficiaries are second-economy individuals who have a history of involvement in fishing or who are dependent on coastal resources for their livelihood.

National Youth Service Programme

The National Youth Service (NYS) is a government initiative launched in August 2004 to engage young South Africans in community service activities in order to strengthen service delivery, promote nation-building, foster social cohesion and assist the youth in gaining the occupational skills necessary to access sustainable livelihood opportunities. The primary beneficiaries of this second-economy intervention are the communities receiving services.

The unskilled and unemployed youth are secondary beneficiaries. The NYS seeks to give further meaning to the constitutional principle of citizens' rights and responsibilities. It offers the youth an opportunity to express their civic responsibilities in a structured manner, while at the same time earning a wage and developing skills.

Part of the social responsibility allocation has been set aside to implement the NYS Programme in the tourism and environment sector. A total of R25 million was approved for the implementation of this programme over the 2008/09 and 2009/10 financial years, with a target of enrolling 500 youths in the programme per financial year.