

Presidential Employment Stimulus

March Progress Report



PRESIDENTIAL
EMPLOYMENT
STIMULUS

What is the Presidential Employment Stimulus?

There is no shortage of work to be done to improve our society – so why should there be a shortage of work?

The Presidential Employment Stimulus supports a range of programmes, from expanding public employment to protecting existing jobs and creating new jobs through market-based mechanisms. Its aim is to support livelihoods while the labour market recovers – investing in public goods and services, enhancing skills and employability, and boosting demand in the economy at the same time.

R100 billion

In April 2020, President Ramaphosa announced R100 billion in support for job protection and creation in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

R13 billion

Approximately R13 billion has been allocated to implement the Presidential Employment Stimulus this year.

R87 billion

The remaining funds will be allocated over the next three years.

Highlights



The first phase of the Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) was successfully implemented by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) with a total of 323 422 education and school assistants at schools in every province. Given the positive impact of the programme, intensive work is underway to prepare for a next phase of implementation.



The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development approved close to 120 000 applications for support from its Subsistence Producer Relief Fund. More than 50 000 payments have now been made, with the balance currently in process.



Over 25 000 applications were received from Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres for income support to more than 100 000 practitioners through the Department of Social Development. 140 civil society organisations assisted with the application process and have been conducting physical site verifications for unregistered centres. More than 23 000 practitioners have already received payment of their grants to support the survival of the sector.

Spotlight

Graduate employment is part of the stimulus

In the context of the coronavirus pandemic, labour markets are even more constrained than usual for young graduates. While much of the Presidential Employment Stimulus aims to support unskilled workers, there is also a cross-cutting component focused on using graduate skills.

Nkateko Silinda's story illustrates the challenges that graduates are facing. She has a BA in Humanities and is from Somerset Trust Village in Mpumalanga. She was unemployed for two years before being employed on a project supported by the Presidential Employment Stimulus at the South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA).

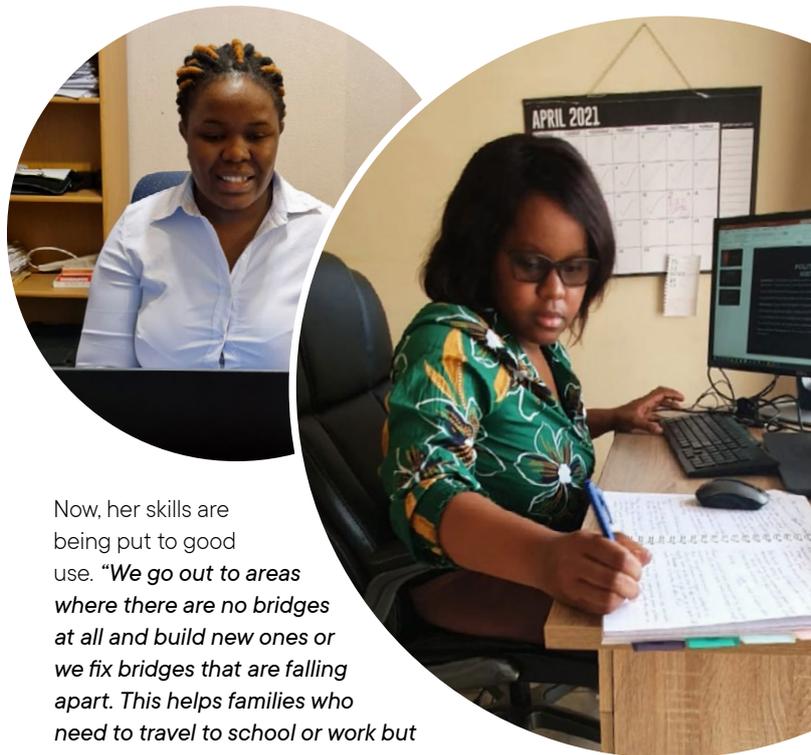
"I come from a low-income family and reside with my mother and young son. We rely on my mother's old age pension for survival. Being unemployed took away my dignity and confidence. When I lost my job, the father of my then unborn son left me because I was no longer earning an income. I was pregnant and scared. My world was dark in an unimaginable way. I went in and out of depression and 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."

Often, graduates and their families have made significant sacrifices to get their hard-won degrees. If that investment appears to pay no dividends, it can discourage people from making it – with negative impacts on skills development for the country as a whole.

Now, Silinda says: *"I love my work. I feel empowered and there is nothing I cannot do. I learn every day. Besides the power of being able to earn an income, I have regained my self-confidence."*

Samukelisiwe Linda is working on the Welisizwe Rural Bridges Programme of the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, which is funded by the employment stimulus – and which has placed 1 869 young professionals to date.

"I had a great career as a Civil Engineer within the private sector. But due to the impact of COVID-19 on my industry, I was retrenched in June last year. This really created a lot of anxiety and fear in my life about the possibility of never finding a job and being broke," she explains.



Now, her skills are being put to good use. *"We go out to areas where there are no bridges at all and build new ones or we fix bridges that are falling apart. This helps families who need to travel to school or work but because of poor terrain, are doing so with great difficulty."*

The Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) is also employing graduates through several of its agencies, including the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Bonolo Phete was unemployed for two years before the Water Research Commission placed her in a company specialising in water efficiency. *"The company really benefits the different communities it services. We manufacture and install grey water operating toilet systems which save water, simplify the toilet use process and encourage hygiene among our various communities."* She emphasises the project planning and management skills she is learning.

Within the environmental programmes run by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment is a component called "Groen Sebenza." This programme places graduates in various roles in the biodiversity sector, through a partnership between the South African National Biodiversity Institute and 32 other stakeholders in the sector.

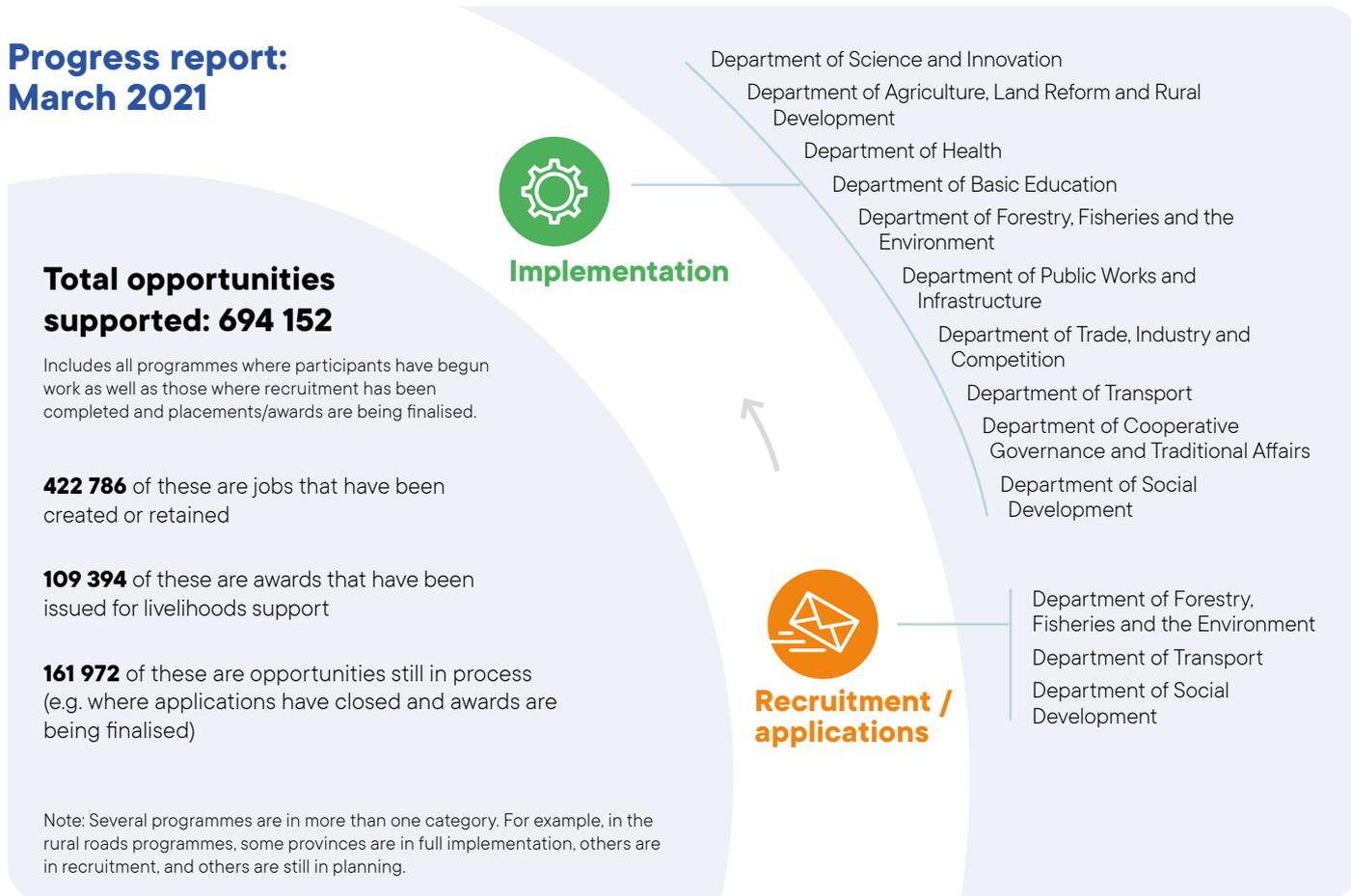
Getting young graduates to work is vital not only for the impact on their own lives but also because of what skilled graduates have to offer society. In an economy that is short of skills, we simply can't afford to waste any – or to let the significant investment in those skills be eroded by the effects of long-term unemployment.

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– Nkateko Silinda

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Progress report: March 2021



Detailed progress report

Department	Programme	Opportunities	Budget (R'000)	Progress
Basic Education	Education assistants and protection of vulnerable teaching posts	344 933	7 000 000	323 422 people were successfully placed as education and school assistants. For school assistants, DBE is rolling out training in curriculum support, ICT, infrastructure maintenance, Child and Youth Care Workers (CYCW) and Reading Champions. In addition to the school assistants, the programme has provided funding for 27 662 vulnerable teaching posts usually funded by school governing bodies but placed at risk by the impact of COVID-19.
Social Development	Income support and registration support for the early childhood development sector, and retention and recruitment of social workers	111 142	588 728	Awards for 23 079 ECD workers have been finalised. Over 25 000 applications from ECD facilities were received, for support grants to more than 125 000 ECD workers. DSD continues to process the applications. 1076 social workers are at work.

				
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development	Subsistence Producer Relief Fund, providing input vouchers to vulnerable small-scale farmers	74 626	1 000 000	Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has now issued over 50 924 vouchers for production inputs to farmers and is on track to meet its target. It has employed 1 464 agricultural graduates to do site verifications of applicants across all provinces, with this process nearing completion.
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries	Investing in the environment and natural resource management through public employment	50 311	1 983 000	Public employment programmes in Natural Resource Management and run by entities such as SANBI and SanParks have scaled up rapidly, reporting 31 926 jobs, while a number of other programmes have experienced procurement delays and are still in recruitment.
Transport	Provincial Roads Maintenance	37 079	630 000	Physical work on rural roads projects supported by the stimulus has begun in all provinces except KZN and FS, where planning is being finalised. The department has reported 10 245 jobs to date.
Sports, Arts and Culture	Support for the creative, cultural and sport sectors	34 070	665 000	The National Arts Council approved grants in excess of its budget and was forced to recall these, creating serious challenges for the sector. Action is being taken against those responsible, and funds have now been reallocated to all approved applicants. The National Film and Video Foundation has issued over 200 awards in the film and video sector, in relation to 4 streams of activity (see www.nfvf.co.za for details). In the sports sector, the job retention in sports federations exceeded their target and there is additional public employment by the department.
Cooperative Governance	Municipal infrastructure maintenance	25 000	50 000	The Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency (MISA) will capacitate and support 15 municipalities to adopt labour-intensive methods in the delivery of infrastructure maintenance projects, leveraging funds in the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG). This will roll out in the next financial year because of municipal infrastructure planning cycles.
Trade, Industry and Competition	Global Business Services sector development incentives	8 000	120 000	The Global Business Services incentive programme has now exceeded its target, supporting incentives for 10 245 jobs since October 2021.
Health	Expanding enrolled and auxiliary nurses	5 531	180 200	A total of 5 118 enrolled and auxiliary nurses have been appointed from existing databases of unemployed professionals.
Science and Innovation	Graduate programmes at the HSRC, WRC and CSIR	1 900	44 999	The department is supporting a range of programmes targeted at young science and social science graduates. All build on prior experience in similar programmes, and implementation is on track.
Public Works and Infrastructure	Public employment in water and energy efficiency, Welisizwe Rural Bridges programme, facilities management and waste management	1 560	158 880	A total of 1 875 participants have been recruited across various programmes, exceeding the target. This includes professional support to the Welisizwe Rural Bridges Programme.