

UNIQUE COLLABORATION

for skilling entrepreneurs



NSF funding of R84-million over a three-year period entails the training of about 200 Entrepreneurial Development Practitioners who would, in turn, provide skills development training to 2 000 emerging entrepreneurs in all nine provinces.

The new project is aimed at contributing to alleviating high levels of unemployment and poverty, the gap between rich and poor, and the slow economic growth since the 2009 recession.

One of the biggest problems facing emerging entrepreneurs is a lack of skills, but often an even bigger problem is that they cannot find anyone to teach them these skills. A unique partnership between the DHET and the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), with funding provided through the NSF, has aimed at solving both problems at once.

NSF funding of R84-million was granted in 2011 to SEDA over a three-year period for the Basic Entrepreneurial Skills Development (BESD)

programme, which entails the training of about 200 Entrepreneurial Development Practitioners (EDPs) who would, in turn, provide skills development training to 2 000 emerging entrepreneurs in all nine provinces.

The project was aimed at contributing to alleviating some of the challenges facing South Africa including high levels of unemployment and poverty, the gap between rich and poor, lack of skills and the slow economic growth since the 2009 recession.

Phase 1 started in early 2013 with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit providing SEDA with technical assistance.

The BESD programme provides training to emerging entrepreneurs operating in the informal economy by the Entrepreneurial Development Practitioners who are previously unemployed young people who are hired and specially trained to become practitioners.

The programme is aimed at promoting sustainable livelihoods through skills development – both for the development trainers and for the entrepreneurs.

The BESD approach, designed with German-government support, utilises one-on-one coaching at the site of the entrepreneur's business to reinforce business skills transfer and

developmental support.

All the basic skills are covered, including entrepreneurship, bookkeeping and financial management, marketing, customer care and business planning.

More than 100 unemployed youth and around 800 emerging entrepreneurs have participated in the EDP and emerging entrepreneurs courses respectively.

Over 90% of the unemployed people trained as EDPs successfully completed the course.

Of the 80% of emerging entrepreneurs who completed the programme, the majority of their businesses showed

substantial improvements including more customers and higher incomes.

While there are currently 108 EDPs training entrepreneurs at 12 sites, the project has proceeded slowly and the number of entrepreneur participants has been relatively poor.

This has been attributed to the fact that some entrepreneurs did not meet the criteria, had the wrong expectations of the programme and were slow to hand in applications.

And on SEDA's side, some of the reasons identified were marketing and staff issues.

Source: National Skills Fund Annual Report

Injection of funds for maritime research

THE National Skills Fund has pledged R290-million towards South African International Maritime (SAIMI) Institute to enhance maritime research, education and training.

The NSF worked with (SAIMI), which was formed in 2014 to assist in realising the objectives of Operation Phakisa by promoting and coordinating skills development and training, research and innovation.

SAIMI's primary role is to facilitate linkages and collaboration among role players in maritime research, education and training in South Africa and to work closely with similar institutes in Africa and the rest of the world.

The first cadets of the National Cadetship Programme were trained at the Grindrod Shipping Training Centre in Durban.

The NSF funding is being used for:

- The establishment and operationalisation of SAIMI;
- The appointment of key resources including the CEO and executive team;
- Facilitating and coordinating all skills development initiatives in the maritime sector nationally;
- Training cadets over a period of three years;
- Research and knowledge generation for the maritime sector; and,
- Other operational costs.

The NSF plan is to try to make funds available to ensure that people are trained and increase their employability by encouraging workplaces to accommodate interns and learners for practical training.

Source: National Skills Fund Annual Report

