

KZN partnership to prepare over 100,000 youth for job market

The KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Government has cemented a strategic partnership with the private sector that will result in the creation of job market and entrepreneurship opportunities for over 100,000 young people in the province.



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The provincial government launched its partnership with the eLan Foundation's Shift Africa Project, which will see a massive training and skills development project that will serve as a gateway to occupationally directed skills development for the identified youth.

The economic spin-offs and job opportunities are a result of the eLan Property Group's R16bn Blythedale Coastal Estate Resort development.

Speaking during the partnership launch this week, KwaZulu-Natal Premier, Sihle Zikalala, said the Shift Africa Project is strategic because it talks to economic growth, redistribution and creation of jobs.

"We are launching this project, Shift Africa, where the eLan Foundation and eLan Group, which is a property investment group, have partnered with government, especially the Department of Social Development, to train young people and ensure that they are employed in the property development of the project, which will be implemented in the Ilembe District.

"One of these projects is the Blythedale Coastal Estate Resort, which is a mega catalytic project that will attract international

investors. It will be the biggest resort in southern Africa and result in the employment of more than 100,000 people during the construction phase, and yield more business opportunities for SMMEs [small, medium and micro enterprises],” Zikalala said.

He called on the business sector to continue working with government to implement high impact projects that will see the reduction of unemployment and ensure skills development.

“This project will help us reduce unemployment and provide skills training for youth and women. The eLan Group has been given a database of young people that have been trained by the Department of Social Development, and some of these trainees are ex-offenders.

“No one must be condemned, and there is a need to rehabilitate ex-offenders. It is important to give them a second chance in life. The ex-offenders, who have been trained, will also be given an opportunity to work in the Blythedale Project and make a meaningful contribution to the growth of our economy,” Zikalala said.

The partnership with eLan Group will, among other objectives, lead to:

- The development of entry level programmes, which will serve as a gateway to occupationally directed skills development for the identified youth.
- Short-term employment and procurement expenditure during construction.
- 20,000 trained personnel will be placed in permanent jobs.
- Incubation of 4,000 SMEs, with guaranteed contracts as per their services.
- Develop sustainable income streams for co-operatives and beneficiaries thus reducing poverty. Guaranteed contracts will lead to the sustainability of the co-operatives.
- Green Economy programmes and the development of social enterprises will provide business spin-offs.

The KZN Department of Social Development has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the eLan Group, in its capacity as property developers.

The MoU will result in the implementation of development programmes that will respond to socio-economic difficulties facing young people in the province.

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