

Collect-a-Can helps empower KZN poor

The Siyazenzela Waste Management Project, Collect-a-Can, the Department of Transport and Msunduzi Municipality are striving to decrease poverty and unemployment in KwaZulu-Natal through an environmentally conscious and self-sustaining infrastructure of waste management, it was announced yesterday, Tuesday, 7 July 2009.



The Siyazenzela (meaning, we do it ourselves) Project is part of an expanded public works programme and was launched in April 2007 to introduce a waste-management infrastructure in an area where none existed before, while actively engaging the residents of these areas in the process. Participants collect waste in their area and take it to central depots where municipal vehicles can remove it to landfill sites. In return they are reimbursed with food and vegetable parcels.

Modelled on Brazilian project

The concept was introduced by the MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison in KwaZulu-Natal, Bheki Cele, who had witnessed similar successful projects in Brazil. The project runs in two-year cycles, meaning that every two years a new group of participants will benefit from the initiative. It is hoped that, when their time working on the Siyazenzela Project comes to an end for each group of participants, entrepreneurial skills will have been imparted and they will be able to create their own sustainable opportunities within their community.

“Through education and mentorship we hope to empower the people to start collecting cans for their own gain,” said Vincent Zwane, regional manager for Collect-a-Can in KwaZulu-Natal.

For more information, go to www.collectacan.co.za.