

## **Deputy Minister promotes partnerships between TVET colleges, industry**

28 January 2016 - Today, the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Mduzisi Manana, MP, visited captains of industry's workplaces in Polokwane in a bid to bring to the fore the need for employers to play a significant role in artisan development and training by partnering with nearby TVET colleges.

'The relationship between colleges and industries are, with some exceptions weak. Some students at colleges are unable to find workplace experience, which is required to complete National Diplomas but valuable for all students. Furthermore, most of the colleges have almost no formal linkages with industry, except where they are offering apprenticeships, learnerships or other skills programme that have inherent practical workplace requirements' said the Deputy Minister.

Currently, the workforce is not keeping up with the skills needed to remain competitive in an increasingly knowledge-based economy. There is a need to ensure the continuous upgrade of skills in the workforce, to help ensure a measurable increase in the intermediate skills pool, especially in artisan, technician, and related occupations attributable to increased capacity at education and training institutions and increased workplace experiential learning opportunities. The Deputy Minister said, 'It is for this reason; that the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) deem it fit to engage employers to partner with us, by opening up your workplace doors for experiential learning for the young people (learners) of our country'.

The campaign is the Limpopo leg of Deputy Minister Manana's flagship project of the Decade of the artisan (2014-2024) where he travels quarterly to provinces to advocate about artisanship to employers; youth not in employment, education nor training (NEET) and high school learners.

The need for the development of qualified artisans to support the economy remains a high priority, especially when considering that a large number of qualified and competent artisans are required for the government's strategic infrastructure projects like building roads, schools, ports, universities, colleges, power stations and all the other projects. Most of these projects have been developed in line with the National Development Plan (NDP), 2030.

Government expects that Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges will become the cornerstone of the country's acute skills shortage. 'Hence, the partnership between the employers and the colleges is integral to advance artisan development in order to meet the 30 000 per annum artisans by 2030 as required by the NDP' said the Deputy Minister.

Ms Rhulani Matshidze, General Manager of Eskom Limpopo, committed to working closer with the Capricorn TVET College and pledged that 'through these engagements, Eskom will for this period provide N6 experiential training and apprenticeship to Capricorn TVET College learners as well as assist the College lecturers during holidays with technical exposure. from She also made a call to other employers in all sectors to support the Decade of the artisan campaign.

The Sector Education and Training Authority's (SETAs) play a vital role in facilitating workplace learning partnerships between employers and educational institutions. The Deputy Minister thanked TETA (Transport Education and Training Authority) for hosting the event together with the Capricorn TVET College. He also thanked the host employers, Toyota, Prime Furnitures, Eskom and Tsogo Sun for opening their boardrooms for this noble cause.