

By Justice Mohale

Before 1994, many South Africans had few skills they could sell on the job market. This was because the apartheid system neglected the education of the majority of South Africans. The National Skills Development Strategy adopted in 2001 changed this. More than 6 million people have completed skills training in different programmes run by the Department of Labour.

■ Improve skills

The training has been done through government organisations like Sector Education Training Authorities (Setas) and the National Skills Fund.

The programmes are part of the National Skills Development Strategy. They are part of the government's plan to improve skills in the country and to make sure that people who have no skills get training so that they can make a living.

Some of strategy's aims are to:

- help create an environment that would grow the economy;
- support job creation for unskilled people; and
- promote the growth of small businesses.

To create opportunities for training, the government formed 23 SETAs. The Setas give workers, ordinary unemployed people and young peo-

ple opportunities to become part of skills training programmes.

■ 6-million trained

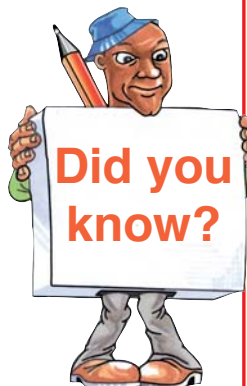
By March 2004, 109,647 unemployed people under the age of 35 had received training on learnerships coordinated by the different Setas. Three quarters (75%) of people who had completed this training were employed on a full or part time basis.

By now, more than 6 million workers have received training through different Setas.

The Department of Labour provincial offices have spent R1 billion every year to support skills training projects for unemployed people.

These projects have helped:

- as many as 47,189 learners



Available Skills Development programmes:

■ Department of Water Affairs

Funded courses include water management, hydrology, geohydrology, aquatic sciences, water care and engineering. Contact- 012 3367757

■ Department of Agriculture:

Youth Programmes which assists unemployed agricultural students; Adult Basic Education Training - R10 million available to train farm and general workers in agricultural sector; Mentorship programmes - assists those who are beneficiaries of land and new employees in agriculture. Contact: 012 3197028

■ Department of Housing

Internships are available for students doing construction-related work. Contact: 012 4211452

with Adult Basic Education Training;

- give 44,201 people additional skills training;
- train 29,200 small business-people and give tips on how to do business;
- 9,332 learners receive learner-ship qualifications.

The Minister of Labour Mthembu Mdladlana said creating quality training places for people with no skills is a challenge. He said more work needed to be done to ensure that everyone gets an oppor-

Some places to go for help:

- Construction Seta: **011-265-5900**
- Services Seta: **011-276-9707**
- Bank Seta: **011-805-9661**
- Transport Education and Training Authority: **011-781-1260**
- Media Advertising Packaging and Printing: **021-910-3001**
- Mining Qualifications Authority: **011-630-3500**
- Police Private Security, Legal and Correctional Services: **011-347-0200**
- Primary Agriculture Education and Training Authority: **012-325-1655**
- Manufacturing Engineering and Related Services: **011-484-9310**
- Council on Higher Education: **012-392-9100 / 9126**
- Chemical Industry Education Training Authority: **011-726-4026**
- Clothing, Textile, Footwear and Leather Seta: **031-702-4482 / 041-585-9371**
- Energy Seta: **011-689-5300**
- Education Training and Development Practice: **011-807-5621**
- Financial and Accounting Service: **086-101-0001**
- Forest Industries Education Training Authority: **011-712-0600 / 1**
- Food and Beverages Manufacturing Industry: **011-253-7300**
- Health and Welfare Seta: **011-607-6900**
- Insurance Seta: **011-544-2000**
- Local Government and Related Services: **011-456-8579.**

YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT THE GATEWAY CALL CENTRE: 1020

tunity for training.

■ Reduce poverty

Mdladlana said the skills training projects would help promote the government's plan to reduce the levels of poverty.

Skills development is part of other big government programmes to fight poverty and create jobs such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

