



# PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMMES AND THE SOCIAL ECONOMY: BUILDING PATHWAYS OF SUPPORT TO LIVELIHOOD AND SME DEVELOPMENT



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At present, less than ten percent of the unemployed actively looking for work are absorbed into the labour market each year. What about the 90% who will not make it? What are our strategies to support the economic inclusion of this large group of people – who are mainly young? This Development Dialogue is focused on lessons – and opportunities – from the Presidential Employment Stimulus, which has supported over two million jobs and livelihood opportunities since its inception in 2020. It will focus on the role such publicly-funded employment programmes can play in support of complementary livelihoods, self-employment and enterprise development pathways for those marginalized from other employment opportunities in our economy - and what that means for how such programmes are designed.

## OUR SPEAKERS



Dr Saul Levin, (TIPS)  
**Chairperson**



Duma Gqubule,  
(columnist & independent economist)  
**Discussant**



Dr Kate Philip  
(PES)



Zak Essa, (PES)



Bhavanesh Parbhoo  
(IDC)



**05 March 2025**

11h00 - 13h00 (SAST)



TIPS Office, 234 Lange St,  
Nieuw Muckleneuk, PTA



Via Zoom

# AGENDA

11:00 – 11:10 Opening Remarks by Chairperson: **Dr Saul Levin** (TIPS)

11:10 – 12:30 Presentations and discussion:

- **Dr Kate Philip** (Presidential Employment Stimulus) - *Taking public employment to the next level of impact*
- **Zak Essa** (Presidential Employment Stimulus) - *Public Employment and Livelihood Trajectories in South Africa's Constrained Labour Market*
- **Bhavanesh Parbhoo** (IDC) - *How social employment is building the social and solidarity economy*
- **Duma Gqubule** (columnist and independent economist)- *Discussant*

12:30 – 12:55 Discussion

12:55 – 13:00 Closure

## ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

**Dr Saul Levin** is the Executive Director of TIPS. He has worked at a senior level in several government departments, at Standard Bank, and in enterprise development.

**Dr Kate Philip** is a development strategist, focused on employment creation. This includes not only her current focus on public employment programmes (PEPs), but many years focused on rural and township enterprise development also. She currently heads the Presidential Employment Stimulus, which has supported the creation of over 2 million jobs and livelihood opportunities in PEPs since its inception in 2020, in partnership with over 15 government departments. Her previous work in support of PEPs has included support to the Government of Greece at the height of the Greek crisis, through the ILO. She is also the author of 'Markets on the Margins: Mineworkers, Job Creation and Enterprise Development', reflecting on her experiences supporting enterprise development in South Africa's mining communities – rural and urban.

**Zak Essa** is a programme analyst supporting the Presidential Employment Stimulus and a PhD candidate at the London School of Economics. His work focuses on two questions: how social protection can create sustainable pathways out of poverty, and how it might respond to mounting climate challenges.

**Bhavanesh Parbhoo** is an experienced development financier who has worked within the Industrial Development Corporation for the last 10 years. In this time he managed commercial and development investments into a number of sectors including the media and tech industries. His current role sees him head up the Social Employment Fund - a programme within the Presidential Employment Stimulus which creates and supports employment for 50,000 individuals annually. Bhavanesh is a Chartered Accountant by qualification and holds an MBA from GIBS.

**Duma Gqubule** is a columnist and independent economist. Duma has spent the past two decades as a financial journalist, analyst, advisor and consultant on issues of economic development and transformation.

*TIPS Dialogues bring together academics, policymakers, civil society organisations, workers, and practitioners to discuss important issues and share ideas on industrial policy.*

About the Development Dialogue Seminar Series: The objective of the seminar series is to provide a platform to share views and ideas on development and policy issues. These seminars are geared towards individuals that are involved in the policy development process. To access the presentations of seminars which have already taken place, visit the [TIPS website](#) under events. This Development Dialogue will be held in a hybrid format allowing for both in-person and virtual participation.