

Coastal communities now also 'fishing for bricks'

- By [SAIMI](#)
- 12 December 2019



Pictured from left during the Alternative Livelihoods graduation ceremony in Kenton-on-Sea were FADI Project Manager Sulaiman Appoles, Graduate Mzamo Marwanqana, ETC HOD Peter John, Graduate Mkhuthazi Ndiqe, SAIMI research associate Adv. Akhona Baninzi, Graduate Meandr  Koeries, ETC CEO Neil Harilal and FADI CEO Jeremy Marillier.

The saying goes, teach a man how to fish and he will never go hungry. But this is not always the case for South Africa's coastal fishing communities who rely solely on the sea for an income.

Areas where people have made their living from the sea for generations, remain in poverty and increasingly these marginalised communities find it hard to make a living in off-seasons or times of unemployment or low fish stocks.

Building alternative livelihoods to sustain coastal communities during these difficult times is at the heart of a joint programme between the Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Institute (FADI) and the South African International Maritime Institute (SAIMI), which celebrated a major milestone in Kenton-on-Sea this week [Monday, 9 December 2019].

A group of 30 beneficiaries from the Alternative Livelihoods Project graduated with a National Certificate in Building and Civil Construction Masonry from Eastcape Training Centre (ETC).

Speaking at the graduation ceremony hosted at Ekuphumleni Community Hall, SAIMI Research Associate Advocate Akhona Baninzi said the purpose of the training was to equip beneficiaries with

new skills to access other ways of making a living, instead of relying only on fishing.

“We firmly believe that skills development and training must have a purpose, that it must lead to genuine opportunities for employment or for entrepreneurship – being able to build a business and even create employment for others based on the skills that have been learned,” said Baninzi.

FADI Project Manager Sulaiman Appoles said the graduates now have an opportunity to immediately begin providing for their families, by starting construction co-operatives.

“These certificates are only the beginning of your journey. Be prepared to take up the challenge. The hard work starts now. There are many opportunities, specifically for brick-paving, in the area. There shouldn’t be such a vast difference between the communities of Kenton-on-Sea and Ekuphumleni. We can change this area brick-by-brick,” said Appoles.

ETC CEO Neil Harilal said the training provided to the beneficiaries included basic bricklaying, health and safety, and scaffolding modules and the intensive training was conducted by ETC in Ekuphumleni over a period of 21 days.

One of the graduates, Busisiwe Venus Tobi, a mother of two, said she enjoyed the training and was looking forward to building onto her livelihood and providing for her family.

Youth member Meandré Koeries said achieving the certificate was something he never believed he could do. “I want to encourage other youngsters to believe in yourself and what you can achieve,” said Koeries.

Another graduate, Mkhuthazi Ndiye, said the graduation was a very special occasion. “This is a special day, not just for us personally, but for the community we serve. Government should invest more resources in opportunities like this to sustain our economy,” said Ndiye.

The Alternative Livelihoods Project was also presented in Ocean View and Saldanha Bay in the Western Cape. In total 90 beneficiaries received practical building and brick-laying training combined with entrepreneurship and business coaching in 2019 under the umbrella of the Alternative Livelihoods Project in the Western and Eastern Cape. As a result of SAIMI’s funding in providing these training initiatives, FADI will now guide the local communities in establishing co-operatives and has also committed to generously provide seed-funding for their businesses.

“Due to the urgency of the conversion of training to income generation, an initial activity of brick-paving will be pursued at all three locations. Each co-operative will receive an investment of up to R50 000 to buy the necessary machinery, tools and equipment, which they will own. FADI will assist the co-operatives in identifying public facilities in their areas in need of brick-paving work. FADI will also be approaching local government, municipalities and established fishing companies to partner with,” said Appoles.

FADI CEO Jeremy Marillier emphasised that the Alternative Livelihoods Project was intended to complement income from fishing, and not to replace it. "We are touched by the living conditions of the people in Kenton-on-Sea and we look forward to bringing more projects like this to you," said Marillier, during the closing of the graduation event.

About The Author

Cindy Preller on behalf of SAIMI

Contact:

SAIMI – Cindy Preller: 079 345 9516 / media@saimi.co.za