

# The Community Work Programme: potentials and problems

Gavin Andersson and Peter Alexander<sup>1</sup>

[gavin@seriti.org.za](mailto:gavin@seriti.org.za); [palexander@uj.ac.za](mailto:palexander@uj.ac.za)

## Abstract

This article provides a detailed and critically reflective 'insider' account of the origins and development of a Community Work Programme as a public employment programme intervention. The article explores the significant potential of such a Community Work Programme to reduce unemployment and improve socio-economic livelihoods for programme participants, and its potential to model public/private alignment across sectors that complements what can be accomplished within the budgetary constraints of the central government alone. It also describes the challenges of programme implementation as a social policy intervention, arising in part from the difficulties of scaling up successful pilots to create a nationwide programme. The article demonstrates real achievements but also the difficulties of engagement with the state by non-profit organisations, and the difficulties of forging sustainable partnerships between communities and government around shared