

ABOUT THIS SERIES:

The intention of Voices of the People is to create a platform for members of the community to interact with the city's administration and for management to directly hear the views of residents on a variety of issues.

"UNIFORMS RESTORE OUR DIGNITY" - WASTE PICKERS

The Mangaung Metro Solid Waste Management directorate continues to work with the national Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries to bring relief to registered waste pickers across the City. On 14 September 2021, 60 waste pickers from Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu were given personal protective equipment. The Communication Unit had a conversation with the waste pickers to hear what the relief means for them and the work they do.



Eliza Makapoko, a waste picker from Botshabelo said she started recycling in 2009 and after she registered to be on the city's waste pickers database, she received a message that they will be receiving PPEs. "I am glad that we are receiving these because it will make a difference in the way that we do our job and change people's mindset of us. Mostly, when we go pick the waste, we wear torn clothes and these overalls are not only going to help us identify each other; but they will also restore our dignity," said Makapoko.

Tshediso Tlatlai, also from Botshabelo, said he is very happy that the local and national government are starting to recognise waste pickers and the role they play in diverting waste from landfill sites. "I am very happy with the way things have been done; we are receiving our uniforms today and I have also been receiving my COVID-19 relief fund. We are grateful for the support; it really means a lot to us. The support we receive makes me more motivated than before to go out there and do my work with pride" said Tlatlai.



Jan Mooi said he is fairly new in the waste picking industry, but he is impressed with the way that Daniel Mosia, who is the Manager for Disposal Sites, has been of great assistance and helped him with the registration process. Mooi said he believes that the uniform will also contribute to their security as residents will be able to identify them and not think they are criminals who rob people at the landfill sites.

