

# Unemployed men connected to work

By STUART DICKINSON

*West Rand* — Each day come rain or shine, hundreds of unemployed men gather at street corners and traffic lights, desperately hoping to find work in tough financial times.

But hope for many of these men arrives in the form of a non-profit organisation known as Men on the Side of the Road (MSR).

The organisation was started in 2003, and seeks to link men who stand on the roadside everyday looking for jobs with prospective businesses which require their services.

"We unlock doors of hope for the hopeless by matching reliable and skilled people with available jobs, free of charge," says MSR spokesman, Felicitas Maphutha.

"These men register with us and we provide them with identity cards as proof that they are in our database. Being in our database means that their skills have been verified, and that the men are now ready for employment."

She believes that the work they will be doing throughout the West Rand in coming months will help curb crime in a crime-infested area — creating employment for men who otherwise might turn to crime.

"We expect to register, train and place more skilled people from this location into job opportunities."

Maphutha adds that due to the recession, their registration sites have had massive turn-outs, suggesting that the unemployment figure has reached an "all time high".



A Witpoortjie corner where men wait for work.

By visiting their website at [www.employemen.co.za](http://www.employemen.co.za), people can find and rate registered workers, as well as find out how they themselves can help this cause.

A man wishing to remain anonymous who waits for work at the side of the road believes this is a great initiative. He says he did not know about MSR, but agrees it would be worthwhile to register.

"I struggle everyday. People would rather hire a professional than hire one of us," he says.

"I'm not a criminal," he adds, "that's why I would rather stand here to find work. But sometimes you think about it, you think it would make life easier."

•Details: [www.employemen.co.za](http://www.employemen.co.za), or call Felicitas at 011 786 6261.