



# the PULSE

THE DSBD NEWSLETTER  
AUGUST 2025



small business  
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Department:  
Small Business Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>4IR</b>	Fourth Industrial Revolution
<b>ADR</b>	Alternative Dispute Resolution
<b>AFS</b>	Annual Financial Survey
<b>APP</b>	Annual Performance Plan
<b>ASGISA</b>	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
<b>B-BBEE</b>	Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment
<b>BRICS</b>	Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
<b>CIPC</b>	Companies and Intellectual Property Commission
<b>CDS</b>	Co-operatives Development Strategy
<b>CSIR</b>	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
<b>CDSP</b>	Co-operatives Development Support Programme
<b>CBDA</b>	Co-operatives Bank Development Agency
<b>DFIs</b>	Development Funding Institutions
<b>DDM</b>	District Development Model
<b>DPME</b>	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>DSBD</b>	Department of Small Business Development
<b>DPSA</b>	Department of Public Service and Administration
<b>DIRCO</b>	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
<b>dtic</b>	The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition
<b>DBE</b>	Department of Basic Education
<b>EDD</b>	Economic Development Department
<b>ESIEID</b>	Economic Sectors, Investment, Employment, and Infrastructure Development
<b>E-governance</b>	Electronic Governance
<b>ERRP</b>	Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan
<b>ESG</b>	Environmental, Social and Governance
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GEAR</b>	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
<b>HSSP</b>	Hospitality Sector Support Plan
<b>IBDS</b>	Incubation and Business Development Services
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>IFC</b>	International Finance Corporation

# Abbreviations and Acronyms

ISPESE	Integrated Strategy for the Promotion of Entrepreneurship and Small Enterprises
MSE	Micro and Small Enterprises
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
NIBUS	National Informal Business Upliftment Strategy
NEDLAC	National Economic Development and Labour Council
NDP	National Development Plan
NISED	National Integrated Small Enterprise Development
NSEA	National Small Enterprise Act
NT	National Treasury
OCSLA	Office of the Chief State Law Adviser
PSC	Public Service Commission
PAYE	Pay As You Earn
PoA	Programme of Action
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
SAMAF	South African Micro Finance Apex Fund
SARS	South African Revenue Service
SBC	Small Business Corporation
SBD	Small Business Development
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SEFA	Small Enterprise Finance Agency
SEIF	Shared Economic Infrastructure Facility
SEIAS	Socio-Economic Impact Assessment System
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
SOE	State Owned Enterprises
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
TREP	Township and Rural Enterprise Programme
VAT	Value Added Tax
WOE	Women-Owned Enterprises.
WECONA	Women Economic National Assembly



**The Department of Small Business Development and its agency, Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA) exists to champion the growth of small-scale businesses in South Africa.**

To access DSBD economic success initiatives, stories and voila welcome to the world of successful entrepreneurship.



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**Editor-in-Chief:** Siphe Macanda

**Editors:** Noko Manyelo, Silondiwe Mavundla and Luba Sigonyela

**Contributors:** Mvelo Mathe, Clement Moaga, Jane Moshala Kolanyane and Tamry Esiri

**Layout and design:** Goitseone Wesi

**Contributions may be sent to:** [LSigonyela@dsbd.gov.za](mailto:LSigonyela@dsbd.gov.za)



# Minister Ndabeni takes the lead at the Global SME Ministerial Meeting

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

Minister Stella Tembisa Ndabeni led Global SME Ministerial Meeting, proudly hosted by the department in partnership with the International Trade Centre in Gauteng province.

The meeting highlighted the vast potential of South Africa, positioning it as a key driver of economic growth, innovation, and sustainable development. The SME Ministerial Meeting convened at a defining moment as South Africa assumes the Presidency of the G20 during a time of profound global turbulence. Fragmented supply chains, shifting geopolitics, and rising protectionism are narrowing opportunities, especially for small businesses in developing and least-developed countries as President, His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa, has expressed South Africa's commitment to using the G20 Presidency to reinvigorate multilateralism, and the reform of global governance institutions, trade and financial architecture to make them more representative and focused on the needs of the world's most vulnerable.

Through various engagements, stakeholders explored opportunities in green transition and

digital transformation. These have the potential to attract investment, create jobs, and foster a globally competitive South Africa.

In her address, Minister Ndabeni, stated that government had developed a new business licensing policy, which would protect South African small business operators while making it easier and cheaper for them to start a business.

The department's focus is on innovation and entrepreneurship as the hallmarks of economic development and growth.

“We are in the process of repealing the Business Act and introducing the Business Licensing Amendment Bill, which is in line with the business licensing regime to make it easier and less costly to start a business because the price of starting a business is too costly,”

**Minister Ndabeni said.**

Addressing the meeting, she further said: "Ours is support MSMEs to compete and thrive in green, digital, and circular economies. This includes enabling their participation in regional value chains, particularly through mechanisms like AfCFTA, SADC, and SACU. Hence, I am pleased to see so many African Ministers participating in this Ministerial meeting. Colleagues, there are important lessons that demonstrate the benefits of regional trade integration and alignment of MSMEs with broader industrialisation efforts, as is the case in East Asia. This Global SME Ministerial must propose solutions to this question of market access."

During her address, Minister Ndabeni stated that "MSMEs are not just participants in our economies, they are engines of inclusive growth, anchors of community resilience, and incubators of innovation. They generate livelihoods in the places where people live, particularly in marginalised spatial areas such as townships and rural areas. They are agile and adaptable in a world that is volatile and fast-changing. But they are also vulnerable, especially if we do not enable them to adapt to new global standards, digital technologies, and climate-smart markets. It is up to us as policymakers to ensure that they are effectively enabled through policy and targeted eco-system support."

The Ministerial Meeting aimed at enabling the sharing of best practices, as well as the forging of strategic partnerships at both bilateral and

multilateral levels, to strengthen our country-level MSME support eco-systems.

Minister Ndabeni perfected that MSMEs need to compete and thrive in green, digital, and circular economies. This includes enabling their participation in regional value chains, particularly through mechanisms like AfCFTA, SADC, and SACU. And there are important lessons that demonstrate the benefits of regional trade integration and alignment of MSMEs with broader industrialisation efforts, as is the case in East Asia. This Global SME Ministerial must propose solutions to this question of market access.

Minister Ndabeni underscored the importance of private partnerships and interdepartmental collaboration in equipping locals with marine skills and unlocking opportunities for sustainable development.

Digital platforms are unlocking opportunities for MSMEs to access global markets, a range of business development support services, training, and capital; but the digital divide remains real. Without more targeted support for skills, infrastructure, and innovation systems, countries and MSMEs will be left behind. Therefore, digital transformation is underpinned by inclusive policies that close the digital divide and promote digital literacy, connectivity, and infrastructure.





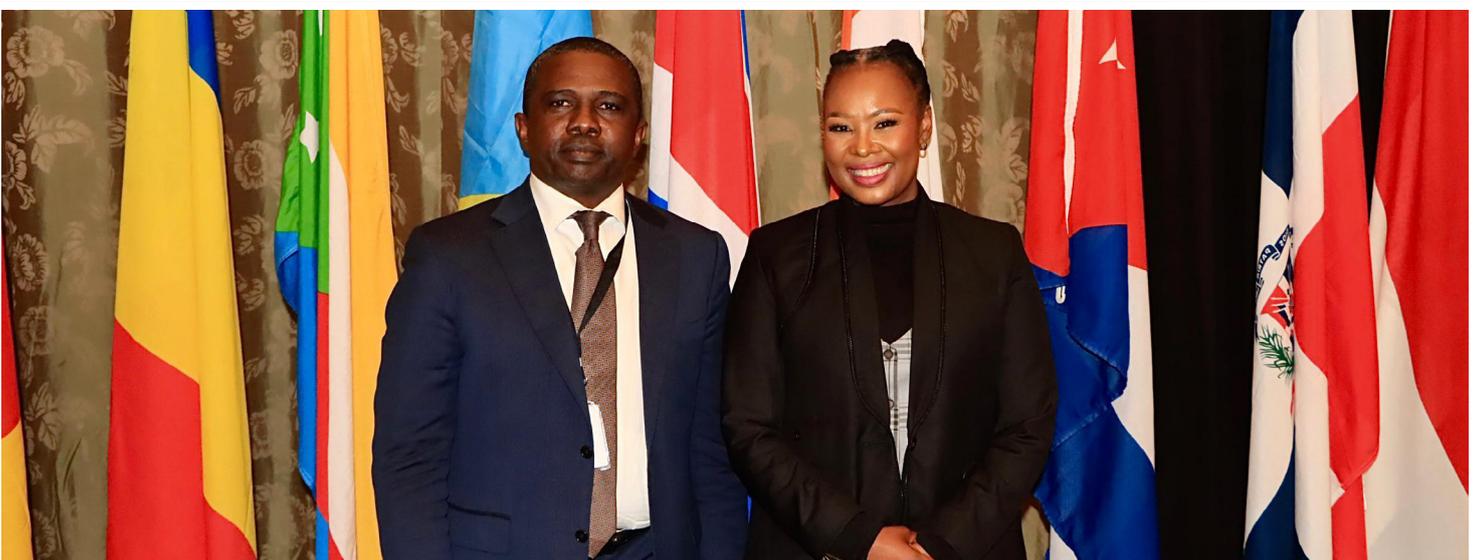
More than 350 delegates attended the meeting and engaged on policies and partnerships relating to access to finance, trade, and the green and digital economies. This is not only for G20 countries but will also bring in voices from the Global South and the rest of the continent to help shape our policy propositions to the G20.

The gathering marked the beginning of a bold new global compact for MSME development; one that expands access to markets, unlocks affordable finance, accelerates digital inclusion, and ensures that women, youth and underserved communities are not spectators, but architects of economic transformation, commit to practical, measurable actions that position MSMEs as central pillars of resilience, innovation and sustainability.

Deputy President Paul Mashatile officially closed the meeting stating that the Global SME Ministerial Meeting has provided a critical platform for MSME leaders across more than 50 countries to engage and share policy thoughts and best practice.

“It has provided space to forge new strategic partnerships, both at a bilateral level and with the multilateral organisations. The Ministerial Meeting has provided us with a clear roadmap for effecting structural reforms and actionable investments to empower entrepreneurs, improve market access, and drive inclusive economic growth, especially across Africa and the Global South. It has given us well-considered policy content on SMEs and start-ups to take into the G20 Leader’s Summit, which we are hosting in November.” said Deputy President Mashatile.

“As we focus on new markets and trade agreements, we must prioritise local value creation and expand local supply chain opportunities for our MSMEs. This can be achieved by ensuring that the Green Economy Transition, also known as the Just Transition, is supported by clear green industrialisation policies,”  
**the Deputy President said.**





## **Minister Ndabeni** unveils State-of-the-Art rapid Incubator in Limpopo

BY: LUBABALO SIGNOYELA

On 08 July 2025, the Minister for Small Business Development, Stella Tembisa Ndabeni launched the Sekhukhune TVET College Incubator in Limpopo Province.

In an attempt to empower Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), Minister for Small Business Development, Stella Tembisa Ndabeni was in Limpopo to unlock the potential of up-and-coming businesses in the Limpopo province by officially launching the Sekhukhune TVET College Incubator.

Sekhukhune TVET College Incubator encapsules a long-term developmental impact on imparting business connectivity ecosystem's knowledge to the uninformed as techno savvy youth will blossom into technology experts who will be equipped with new 4IR-inspired digital skills. The purpose of the launch was to empower entrepreneurs, youth, and women

with all the necessary entrepreneurial and digital skills. The launch was a cutting-edge marketing and digital hub that will use its innovative ways to equip MSMEs, youth and women with up-to-date digital skills.

The initiative of the Sekhukhune TVET College Incubator was born after a close co-operation between the Department of Small Business Development, Small Enterprise Development Agency and Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency and various industrial players and local technology heavyweight players. The primary objective of this development was to provide township based digital entrepreneurs with business development support, which includes 4IR and up to date technologies. A vast number of students, entrepreneurs, community activists and the local community attended the event.

The Department of Small Business Development (DSBD), Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (Sedfa) provided much needed assistance in making the centre to be a success and provided technological support leading to the birth of this modern centre which will go a long way in assisting the community at large.

Minah Bahula, Executive Mayor, Sekhukhune District Municipality welcomed the guests and stakeholders. She spoke highly of DSDB initiatives in empowering Small Micro and Medium Enterprises and promised to provide her support to the centre as it will help in equipping and develop the rural population of Sekhukhune District Municipality. Bahula further stated that the residents must make use of this facility to enhance your lives and improve your business skills also guard this facility from any form

of vandalism as well as criminality, as it is meant to empower more generations to come.

Martha Mamoepa, Managing Director of the centre Incubator elaborated more on the background and information about the centre, "This advanced techno-centre will empower youth and women with relevant entrepreneurial and digital skills. Students will benefit from the centre by getting information and learn up to date technologies," she mentioned. The centre aimed at helping and supporting those with business ideas and mould them to be better entrepreneurs in the future. The centre will not only provide working space for entrepreneurs but provide equipment as well. We will offer technical, and business training where will zoom into technical aspects of the business," she added.





Minister Ndabeni emphasised that the department's mandate is to develop and support Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) and Cooperatives. She emphasized the importance of social compact in such a manner that entrepreneurs must be given all the support they need and be included in the value chain.

"We said 30% towards township and rural-owned businesses and we are restructuring this to 67% which must be spent on equipment, infrastructure, and other requirements for the businesses." said Minister Ndabeni.

Minister Ndabeni reiterated that the present administration had set to build 100 incubators by

the end of next year, but it had already exceeded the number by 10 incubators to a total of 110 incubators.

“We have approved 11 for this financial year, this shows that by March we will have about 121 incubators. The department is taking a different direction to bring back innovation,” she added.

Minister Ndabeni emphasized the need to invest in skills development of young people to achieve economic growth and create job opportunities.





## Celebrating the Strength and Resilience of South African Women

**BY: MOSHALA JANE KOLANYANE**

As we commemorate Women's Day in South Africa, we take a moment to acknowledge the remarkable contributions and sacrifices of women in our country. From the early days of our struggle for independence to the present, women have played a vital role in shaping our nation's history.

South African women have consistently demonstrated remarkable strength and resilience in the face of adversity. From the courageous women who fought against apartheid to those who continue to push for equality and justice today, women have been at the forefront of our country's progress. Women like Albertina Sisulu, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, and Lillian Ngoyi, who risked their lives and freedom to fight against apartheid, are an inspiration to us all. Their bravery and determination paved the way for future generations of women to fight for their rights and challenge the status quo.

Today, women in South Africa continue to break down barriers and push boundaries in various fields. From politics and business to science and the arts, women are making their mark and leaving a lasting impact.

Despite the progress that has been made, women in South Africa still face many challenges.

Gender-based violence, inequality, and lack of access to education and economic opportunities are just a few of the issues that women continue to deal with. However, these challenges also present opportunities for growth and change. By working together to address these issues, we can build a more just and equitable society where women can thrive.

As we celebrate Women's Day in South Africa, we take a moment to acknowledge many contributions that women have made to our country. We celebrate their strength, resilience, and determination, and we recognize the important role that they play in shaping our nation's future. We also use this opportunity to reflect on the challenges that women still face and to recommit ourselves to working towards a more just and equitable society. By supporting women's empowerment and promoting gender equality, we can build a brighter future for all South Africans.

As we commemorate Women's Day in South Africa, we honour the women who have come before us and paved the way for future generations. We celebrate the strength and resilience of South African women and recognize the important role that they play in shaping our nation's future.

Let us continue to work together to build a more just and equitable society where women can thrive. Let us celebrate the many contributions that women have made to our country and recognize the important role that they play in shaping our nation's future.

Happy Women's Day and Month to all the amazing women out there! Your strength, resilience, and determination are an inspiration to us all.





# Building Bridges, Not Walls: The Power of Team Building Activities in the Workplace

BY: MOSHALA JANE KOLANYANE

In today's fast-paced and competitive work environment, building a strong and cohesive team is crucial for any organisation's success. Team building activities are an effective way to foster collaboration, improve communication, and boost morale among employees.

Team building activities are designed to help employees bond and work together more effectively. By participating in fun and engaging activities, employees can develop trust, improve communication, and build stronger relationships with their colleagues. This, in turn, can lead to increased productivity, better problem-solving, and improved job satisfaction.

## Benefits of Team Building Activities:

- 1. Improved Communication:** Team building activities encourage employees to communicate effectively and work together towards a common goal. When employees feel comfortable communicating with each other, they're more likely to share ideas, provide feedback, and collaborate on projects.
- 2. Increased Trust:** By participating in team building activities, employees can build trust and develop stronger relationships with their colleagues. Trust is essential in any workplace, as it allows employees to feel secure in sharing their ideas and opinions.
- 3. Boosted Morale:** Team building activities can help to boost employee morale and motivation, leading to increased productivity and job satisfaction. When employees feel valued and appreciated, they're more likely to be engaged and motivated in their work.
- 4. Enhanced Collaboration:** Team building activities encourage employees to work together and share ideas, leading to better problem-solving and decision-making. Collaboration is essential in today's workplace, where complex problems often require input from multiple departments and teams.
- 5. Reduced Stress:** Team building activities can help to reduce stress and improve work-life balance, leading to a healthier and happier workforce. When employees feel supported and connected to their colleagues, they're more likely to manage stress and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

### Types of Team Building Activities:

- 1. Outdoor Activities:** Outdoor activities such as hiking, sports, or scavenger hunts can be a fun way to build teamwork and encourage collaboration. These activities allow employees to step outside their comfort zones and work together in a new and challenging environment.
- 2. Problem-Solving Exercises:** Problem-solving exercises such as escape rooms or puzzles can help to improve critical thinking and teamwork. These activities challenge employees to think creatively and work together to solve complex problems.
- 3. Social Events:** Social events such as team lunches or happy hours can help to build relationships and encourage socialisation among employees. These events provide a relaxed and informal setting for employees to connect and build relationships.

### Implementing Team Building Activities in Your Organisation:

- 1. Identify Your Goals:** Before planning team building activities, identify your goals and objectives. What do you want to achieve through these activities? Do you want to improve communication, boost morale, or enhance collaboration?
- 2. Choose Activities That Fit Your Team:** Choose team building activities that fit your team's interests and preferences. Consider the age and demographics of your team when selecting activities.
- 3. Make It Fun:** Team building activities should be fun and engaging. Avoid activities that are too competitive or stressful and focus on building relationships and encouraging collaboration.
- 4. Follow Up:** After team building activities, follow up with employees to see how they felt about the experience. Use this feedback to improve future team building activities and make them more effective.

Team building activities are an essential part of building a strong and cohesive team. By participating in fun and engaging activities, employees can develop trust, improve communication, and build stronger relationships with their colleagues. Whether it's through outdoor activities, problem-solving exercises, social events, team building activities can have a positive impact on your organisation's success. So why not start planning your next team building activity today and see the benefits for yourself?



# Remembering World Lung Cancer Day

BY: TAMRY ESIRI

Every year on 1 August, World Lung Cancer Day highlights a critical global health challenge and in South Africa, it hits close to home. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in the country, accounting for approximately 13.4% of all cancer-related deaths in 2022 (cansa.org.za). Among men, it ranks as the second most diagnosed cancer, with nearly 6,053 new cases in 2022. Among women, it was the fourth most common, with 3,393 new cases (Global Cancer Observatory).

Tobacco use remains South Africa's greatest preventable risk factor. Roughly 26.5% of men and 11.5% of women smoke, matching global patterns where 90% of lung cancers are tied to smoking (Frontiers).

## LATE DETECTION = LOW SURVIVAL

One of the most pressing issues is late diagnosis. Two-thirds of lung cancer patients in South Africa are diagnosed at advanced stages, when it's much harder to treat (cansa.org.za). Globally, early detection through low-dose CT screening can boost five-year survival from around 27% to 64%.

CANSA and the University of KwaZulu-Natal are leading community awareness and screening programmes in KZN, with over 7,400 people reached and 33 individuals referred for further investigation. Strategic efforts such as public education campaigns, targeted screening for high-risk groups and stronger anti-tobacco policies could dramatically shift survival outcomes.

## How You Can Take Action?

- **Get screened:** Especially if you're over 50 with a history of smoking, speak to your doctor about lung screening (LCFA).
- **Spread awareness:** Share local warning signs like persistent coughs or chest pain and encourage timely check-ups.
- **Support CANSA efforts:** Relay the messages on World Lung Cancer Day and support community outreach.



### How You Can Take Action?

- **Get screened:** Especially if you're over 50 with a history of smoking, speak to your doctor about lung screening (LCFA).
- **Spread awareness:** Share local warning signs like persistent coughs or chest pain and encourage timely check-ups.
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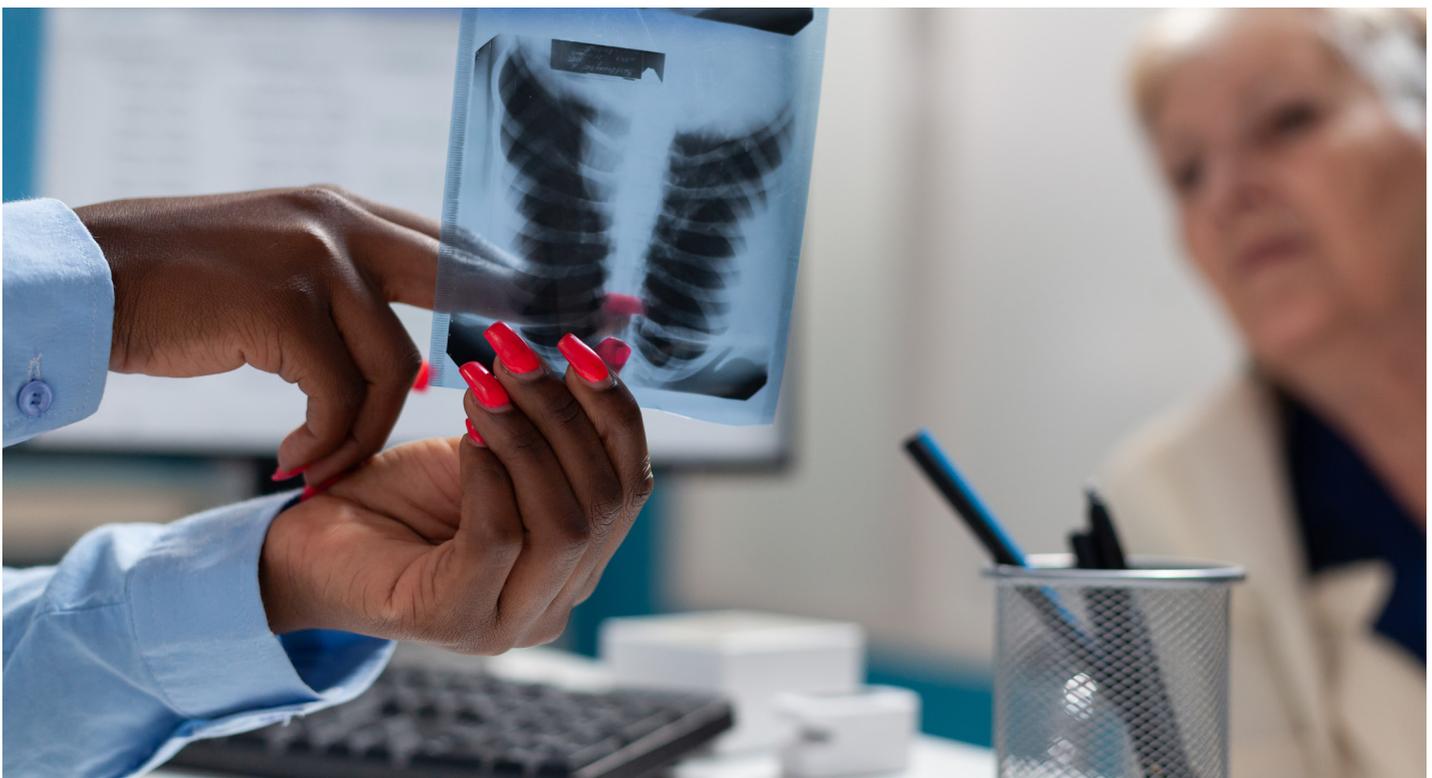
### INFO BOX:

#### Top 5 Common Symptoms of Lung Cancer

- A persistent cough that doesn't go away or worsens over time
- Shortness of breath, even during normal activities
- Coughing up blood or rust-colored mucus
- Chest pain, especially when breathing deeply, coughing, or laughing
- Unexplained weight loss and ongoing fatigue

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# Did You Know? Surprising Stats on Women & Business

BY: TAMRY ESIRI



Women in South Africa aren't just starting businesses, they are launching innovative ventures, creating jobs, sustaining communities, driving profits, and defying norms. In honour of women's month, we are spotlighting some compelling, research-backed facts that prove how powerful, and profitable, women in business really are.

## 1. 38% of MSMEs in South Africa are women-owned

According to a study by the Sustainable Supply Chains initiative, women own about 38% of small and medium-sized enterprises in South Africa. With MSMEs making up around 98.5% of all businesses in the country and contributing nearly 40% to GDP, women are playing a critical role in national economic development.

## 2. Early-stage entrepreneurial activity among women is rising

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2023 report shows that 9.7% of working-age women in South Africa were involved in early-stage business activity, up from 8.2% the previous year. Although still trailing men at 12.7%, the growth is encouraging and points to improving inclusivity in the entrepreneurial landscape

## 3. Women-led micro-enterprises account for 46% of all MSMEs

According to an article by MicroSave Consulting, of the estimated 2.6 million micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in South Africa, nearly half are owned or led by women. These enterprises are particularly active in retail, hospitality, and service-based sectors.

### 4. Africa leads the world in female entrepreneurship

Women are the backbone of Africa's economy. The continent leads the world in female entrepreneurship. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2016/17 Women's Report, a remarkable 25.9% of adult women in sub-Saharan Africa are actively starting or running a business meaning one in four women is an entrepreneur by necessity or choice. This rate is the highest of any region globally.

### 5. Women reinvest up to 90% of their income into their families and communities

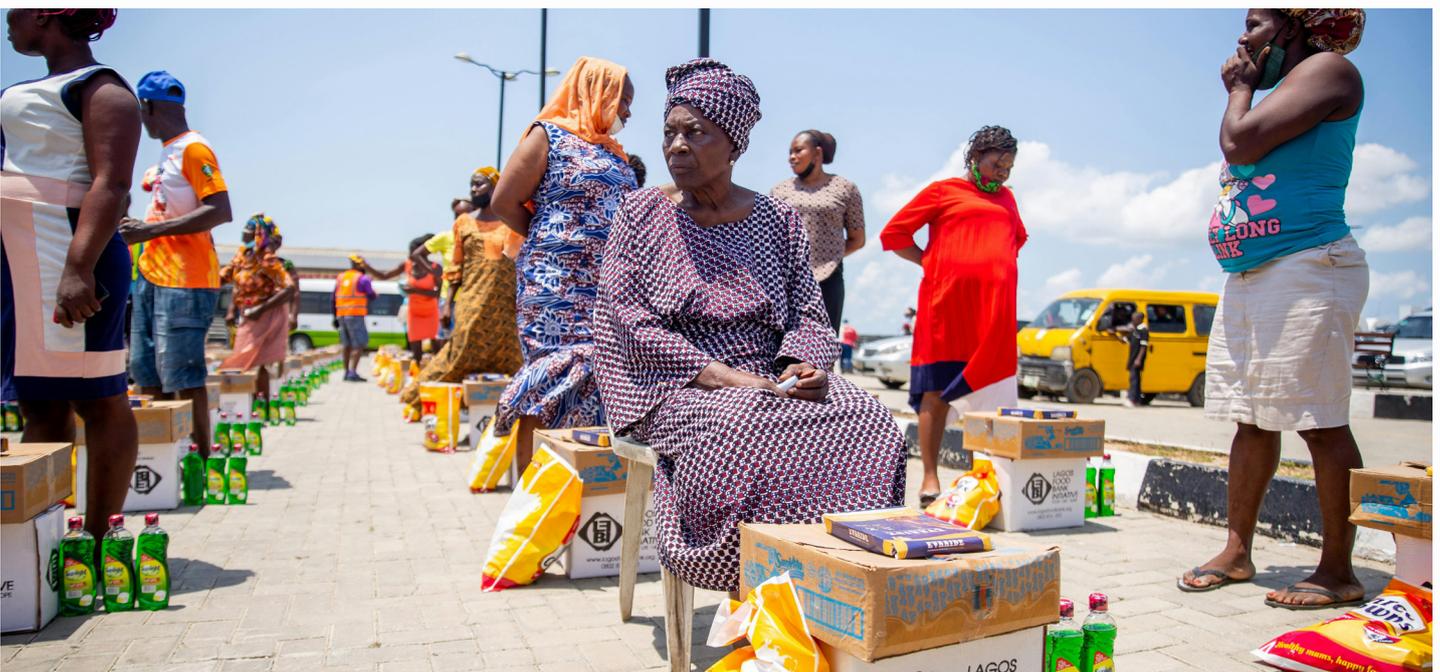
Research by UN Women, the African Development Bank, and Mastercard shows that women in South Africa typically reinvest up to 90% of their earnings into household wellbeing compared to an average of 40% among men. This includes spending on education,

healthcare, and basic needs, meaning the social return on supporting women-owned businesses is exceptionally high.

#### Why These Numbers Matter

- Women aren't just participating, they are making up nearly half of South Africa's MSME base and contributing directly to economic resilience.
- With most women-owned micro-businesses still informal, the opportunity to unlock scale, funding, and formal support is massive.
- Supporting a woman-owned enterprise means investing in families, children, and communities, not just profits.

While women make up a growing share of business owners in South Africa and globally, they still face significant hurdles. As we celebrate women's month, let's support equity that drives real progress for everyone.



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# Alone Together: Understanding and Easing Loneliness in the Workplace

BY: TAMRY ESIRI

In today's world of back-to-back meetings, endless emails, and hybrid work arrangements, it's easy to assume that people feel more connected than ever. But behind the screens and shared office spaces, many employees are quietly experiencing a different reality. Whether someone is working remotely, surrounded by colleagues, or in a role with limited social interaction, the sense of being emotionally or socially disconnected can deeply affect their experience at work.

Workplace loneliness is not always about being physically alone, it's about feeling unseen, unheard, or unsupported. According to Gallup's new State of the Global Workplace: 2024 Report, around 1 in 5 employees have reported feeling lonely at work. Workplace loneliness has been associated with decreased motivation, lower job satisfaction, and even long-term health issues. When left unaddressed, it can contribute to burnout and reduced performance, affecting both individuals and the organisations they serve.

## What causes this sense of disconnecting? According to Emily Peck from Axios Markets, it's a mix of things:

- Remote and hybrid work setups that reduce casual conversations,
- Being left out of key decisions or group dynamics,
- A lack of recognition,
- Generational and cultural differences make it harder to bond.

High workloads can also leave little room for team members to connect outside of task lists and deadlines.

Even in a seemingly close-knit environment, employees may feel excluded if there's no intentional effort to make everyone feel included and valued. While the problem is complex, the solutions don't have to be. Combating loneliness starts with small, human acts. A regular check-in that goes beyond deadlines to ask how someone is really doing can make a big difference. Leaders and team members alike can help by ensuring no one feels overlooked, whether that's inviting quieter voices into conversations or acknowledging wins.

Loneliness may not always be visible, but it matters and it's more common than we think. As our workplaces become more digital, fast-paced, and flexible, we have to make sure they also remain kind, inclusive, and human. Because at the end of the day, people don't come to work only for a salary, they come for connection, purpose, and a sense of belonging. Let's make sure they find it.



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# HAPPY Birthday TO YOU



## AUGUST 2025

02

Mathabatha Tembi Thabang

16

Qoma Noxolo

04

Ramaifo Khomotso

18

Koopman Leroy  
Raganya Samuel

06

Mamfengwana Fezile

19

Tantsi Yanga

07

Maruping Lesego

22

Kabi Nthateng

08

Babie Thabiso  
Masinge Thembani

23

Sithole Jane  
Tyali Melezwa

10

Maluleke Nsovo

25

Oosterwyk Semphete  
Shangase Pertunia

12

Mukona Maanda  
Maudu Rejoyce

28

Thembela Noxolo

14

Laselo-Nyembezi Avela  
Meso Lethabo

30

Katjeni Tshegofatso

15

Mogoboya Clifford  
Ngcobo Thabani

"HERE'S TO ANOTHER YEAR OF HARD WORK, DEDICATION AND SUCCESS".



small business  
development

Department:  
Small Business Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**Address:** 77 Meintjies Street, Sunnyside, Pretoria, 0001

**Tel:** +27 861 843 384 **Email:** [info@dsbd.gov.za](mailto:info@dsbd.gov.za) **Website:** [www.dsbd.gov.za](http://www.dsbd.gov.za)

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