



# the PULSE

THE DSDB NEWSLETTER  
APRIL 2026



small business  
development

Department:  
Small Business Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



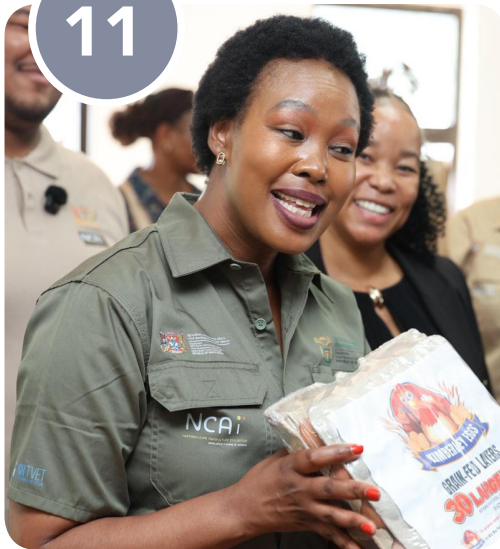
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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

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

# April

"This month of April we advise entrepreneurs to focus on overcoming economic challenges while prioritizing sustainability and driving innovation."



# DSBD took part in the 14th Annual Proudly South African Symposium and Expo

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

The Annual Proudly South African Summit and Expo attracts over 200 local exhibitors spanning several industries, over 1,500 delegates, 450 trade buyers, and 160 stakeholders from both the public and private sectors.

The Buy Local Summit and Expo seeks to reiterate the call to support local enterprises and consists of multiple activations, business matchmaking sessions, and interactive panel discussions, that provide exhibitors and the delegates in attendance with practical and tangible outcomes.

The entrepreneurs held a march outside the venue called "Take a stand", a new addition to this year's Buy Local Summit & Expo, which was led by the Retail, Clothing, Textile, Footwear, and Leather (R-CTFL) sector. Participants of the march were from both the Buy Local campaign and the public and held a peaceful demonstration around the Sandton Convention Centre. This march was aimed at highlighting the devastating impact of illicit goods on the local economy while rallying support for industries and sectors that rely on consumer backing. By choosing local, this can help small businesses scale, safeguard existing jobs, and create new employment opportunities through the circulation of the rand within our borders.

Government is committed to creating an environment where small businesses can thrive. Over the course of this 7th Administration, DSBD and SEDFA provided financial and non-financial support to 1 million MSMEs. The new Business Licensing Bill makes it easier, not more difficult, to start and operate a small business in South Africa. The department aims to implement our Red Tape Reduction Framework and continue to support municipalities adopt the E-Registration System.

Delivering her keynote address, Minister Ndabeni stated that "we must change consumer behaviour. This is where Proudly SA plays such an important role, and I encourage you to pick up your promotional and advocacy work to profile our local brands. We must also support e-commerce platforms that promote locally produced goods, as is currently being done by proudly SA.

The global online platforms that offer our consumers cheap mass-produced goods at a fraction of our production costs are a real threat, and we have engaged with relevant countries through our bilateral trade negotiations. We have also intensified our war on the illicit goods which leak through our ports of entry and are produced in backyard factories here at home."

## Continuing...

DSBD will be taking a special interest in monitoring procurement compliance. The department will also directly work with departments, SOCs and corporates to support the development of MSME's in prioritised supply chains, including compliance with industry standards which serve as barriers to entry in many sectors.

Minister Ndabeni perfected that working together is the way to go. "We talk about the need for an eco-system approach, the more we retreat into silos and to strengthen leadership and co-ordination role in the eco-system, the department is developing the MSME One-Plan, which will strengthen eco-system partnerships and accountability around measurable commitments aligned to the NISED and the National Entrepreneurship Strategy."

Among the exhibitors who were showcasing their products is Lungisa Nonkwelo. A 64-year-old Mpondoland woman who has more than 30 years of experience with chronic illnesses. She is the founder of Defender products and knows these products from personal experience. They are made of traditional remedies such as herbs and plants that naturally grow in Mpondoland, Eastern Cape i.e Cannabis, and others. There are more than 20 properties that are included in these products. Nonkwelo is a focussed goal-oriented award winner of note that is driven by her passion for team building.

Her experience with chronic illnesses influenced her attitude which led to the decision of seeking a solution and an alternate safe treatment for Cancer that was destroying the family. This is how the Defender Herbal Supplement was born.

The company is in the business of growing organic herbs and plants including cannabis, manufacturing, processing and distributing alternative safe medicine for chronic ailments. The company envisions consolidating its vision into Mpondoland Organic Herbal Natural Medicinal Hub, becoming an Organic Herbal Health Centre in the Mpondoland region producing various products that could have a global footprint.

Her vision is to be the world's centre for excellence in the development of accurate data and the highest quality growing and production of indigenous Mpondoland Natural Organic Herbal products with a touch of handed down traditional remedies in the Eastern Cape and beyond by 2026.

"The use of Herbs is a holistic approach to health that emphasises the connection of the body, mind and environment. It embraces the notion that plants possess inherent healing properties that support the body's innate ability to heal itself through gentle and natural remedies," said Nonkwelo.

Defender is processed with indigenous herbs including Umya (cannabis). Research for Innovation Assessment was conducted by the Walter Sisulu University under supervision of Technology Transfer Officer and Registered Patent Officer who specializes in IP management in life science inventions. The Small Enterprise Development also came in handy in assisting her with packaging and labelling of the products, marketing material, food handling certificates and occupational health and safety certificates.



## Continuing...

Kgolo GC Trading and Enterprise (PTY) LTD, trading as Kgolo GC Doors, is a doors manufacturing company that specializes in wooden doors, wooden frames and other wooden based products was also in attendance. The company has been in business for close to a decade while management and staff have cumulative experience of more than two decades in the carpentry and manufacturing business.

The main manufacturing factory is in the North West province and the company supplies Nationwide. A number of credible hardware's including Cashbuild, Build-It and Builders are Kgolo's clients. The main industrial centre is located in-house in Potchefstroom, with additional distribution centres in Gauteng and Mpumalanga.

They are a leading black-owned brand in the wooden doors, window frames and door frames in South Africa. They aim to maintain this by continuing to use good quality craftsmanship and continuously improving customer service to their clients. Kgolo GC Trading and Enterprise provides their products to the public especially the construction, hardware, home renovators as well as retail outlets in South Africa. It remains a key focus of the business. They were assisted by Small Enterprise Development Agency under the Asset Assist Programme through a bakkie and quality control management system.

Mokatani (Pty) Ltd was exhibiting at the 2026 Proudly South African Summit and Expo. The company was established in 2024 and formally entrenched as a Private Company by a dedicated individual. It is 100% black owned and is the brainchild of Malebo Matlala who realized the compelling need to establish a formidable entity which will provide sought-after service in the services sector. This service orientated entity is firmly anchored in Tjatane Newstand, Sekhukhune in the Vast of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, Limpopo Province.

This dynamic business enterprise was established with a common purpose of providing sewing services and general supply to the business community members whilst creating sustainable employment opportunity to the inhabitants of the country. Mokatani (Pty) Ltd is a business headed by energetic, focused leaders, prepared to learn.

They aim to grow from partnering with well experienced businesses in their field of interest



and competing in the economic stream building social structures in the whole country and the world. The company was granted a loan of R100,000 by the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency for machinery.

Ubuntu premium extra virgin oil is also one of the businesses that were exhibiting, led by a serial entrepreneur Loyiso Manga. The premium extra virgin oil is produced in the scenic western foothills of the Winterhoek mountains in the Western Cape. It has shot up in demands as people recognise its health benefits.

"Growing up in a farming community in Makhanda in the Eastern Cape made me to have interest in farming and that's where I thought of starting Ubuntu premium extra -virgin oil to a growing market of South Africa," Manga said.

"Ubuntu oil reduces heart problems and high blood pressure and protects against diabetes and insulin resistance. It boosts hair and skin health, assists in weight loss and boost metabolism. It helps ageing process, protecting against osteoporosis and works as an inflammatory too," he added.

The department has officially partnered with Proudly SA utilising localisation as a lever to facilitate market access. One of the key objectives of the collaboration is to utilize the Buy Local Summit & Expo as a platform to provide small enterprises with the opportunity to showcase their locally made products.

# Minister Ndabeni launches the Northern Cape Agricultural incubator in Kimberly.

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

The Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) in collaboration with its entity, Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA), officially launched the Northern Cape Agricultural Incubator in Kimberly. Minister Stella Tembisa Ndabeni led the launch to unlock the potential of emerging businesses in the Free State province.

The Northern Cape Agricultural Incubator aims to provide a long-term developmental impact by imparting knowledge on business connectivity ecosystems to entrepreneurs, particularly youth, this directly addresses one of the mostly critical constraints for smallholder farmers market access.

The facility will be instrumental in facilitating market access for MSMEs supported incubator, allowing them to aggregate produce and connect with value chains. The incubator also aims to drive agricultural sustainability and boost the provinces fledgling economy. Emerging farmers, smallholders, commercial farmers and youth cooperatives are expected to derive significant benefits from this initiative.

The development is a notable vote of confidence, leveraging government assets for a national priority, youth development, and service while creating a pipeline for young integration into the agricultural sector.

The incubator backed by a R9,5 million investment from DSBD and SEDFA is already yielding tangible results having supported 89 MSMEs comprising 86,8% youth owned enterprises and 60,5% women owned enterprises. The programme has generated 89 jobs, trained over 700 farmers, and is poised to graduate more than 500 farmers in the 2026/27 financial year.

Minister Ndabeni launched the incubator and unveiled the plaque during the launch. The incubator will enable the community to access information and fresh produce. The launch was designed to empower entrepreneurs, youth, and women with necessary entrepreneurial and cutting-edge marketing skills.



Continuing...





# DSDB Spent Human Rights Day by reaching out to informal traders

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

The Department of Small Business Development spent Human Rights Day in Style by hosting the Lejweleputswa District Economic Transformation Strategic Interface and handed over tools and equipment to 165 MSMEs and Informal traders on 21 March 2026 in Lejweleputswa District Municipality, Free State province.

This significant handover is part of the Informal and Micro Enterprise Development Programme (IMEDP), a strategic initiative designed to empower Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises by enhancing their productivity, competitiveness and long-term sustainability.

DSBD handed over equipment to the value of R3 085 653,00 spread each of the 165 MSMEs. These include industrial machines, overlockers, gazebos, fridges, grass-cutting machines, hair salon equipment, generators, and office equipment such as laptops. In her keynote address, Minister Stella Tembisa Ndabeni indicated that the establishment of the Department of Small Business Development has demonstrated government's commitment to supporting MSMEs and cooperatives.

"The Ministry of Small Business Development was established in 2014 marking a turning point in the history of MSMEs and Cooperatives development in South Africa, demonstrating the government's

commitment to place MSMEs and Cooperatives at the center of economic growth and job creation."

"The Department of Small Business Development remains committed to creating an enabling environment to support the growth of informal traders, MSMEs and Cooperatives, "

"The National Development Plan Stipulates that South Africa must create 11 million jobs by 2030, 9 Million of these jobs must come from MSMEs, hence the deliberate attention given by the government to small businesses through the establishment of the Department of Small Business Development. As the Department, ours is to eradicate Red Tape that hinders the growth and development of MSMEs, to create a conducive environment for their operation which will ensure transformation in economic development," the Minister said.

Free State Economic Development MEC Ketso Makume emphasized the importance of supporting informal traders, MSMEs, and Cooperatives. "MSMEs are the most important sector as they play an important role in contributing to economic growth, creating jobs, and making a difference in the lives of ordinary people. The municipality is determined to assist MSMEs with market access," he said

## Continuing...



“We are here as three spheres of government out of our agreement that during this month, we must bring services to MSMEs and Cooperatives in order to contribute to their development, understanding that developing the economy of our communities starts with supporting sufficient support to MSMEs. Indeed, skills development of MSMEs and Cooperatives is critical to their growth and development. We will come back to monitor that today’s intervention has

indeed improved businesses and hope that we will find the equipment given today in good condition, not destroyed, stolen or vandalized.”We appreciate the support and equipment given to our MSMEs by our government, to us this is massive,” MEC Makume emphasized..





# DSBD Strategic Planning Session

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

The Department of Small Business Development hosted its final Strategic Planning session and the 2026/27 Annual Performance Plan in Pretoria. The session was jointly led by Minister Stella Tembisa Ndabeni and the Director-General, Ms Thulisile Manzini.

The department's Strategic Planning Meeting was held on Thursday, 26 February 2026. The session was aimed at providing an update to the strategies and priorities of the department and monitor progress regarding the enactment process. Moreover, Small businesses play a vital role in South Africa's economy, acting as catalysts for growth, job creation, and community development.

The discussion on the strategies and priorities focused on the coordination between government wards and strengthened private sector partnerships for small enterprise development towards growth and economic development.

In her opening remarks, the Director-General, Ms Thulisile Manzini said "This engagement builds directly on that session, which provided clear direction aligned to the Medium-Term Development Plan 2024-2029 and the priorities of the 7th Administration. Our task today is to ensure full alignment between the

draft APPs of the Department and SEDFA, the MTDP priorities, the Minister's Performance Agreement, Deputy Minister's delegations, DG's Performance Agreement as an Accounting Officer, and broader Portfolio policy directives."



**"A further objective is to confirm that our outputs, indicators and performance targets are appropriately costed and adequately funded, and that they meaningfully contribute to the outcomes set out in the 2025-2030 Strategic Plans of both the Department and SEDFA. This requires a careful balancing of policy ambition with fiscal realities, institutional capacity and identified delivery risks, supported by credible mitigation measures."**



## Continuing...

Ms Thulisile Manzini, Director-General of the Department of Small Business Development, facilitated the programme. She extended most sincere and warm greetings to government officials for attending the meeting. "As we are gathered here today ours is to coordinate and drive small enterprise development growth", said Director-General, Ms Manzini.

"The new merged entity should be seen as groundbreaking in small enterprise development and financing in South Africa and must give expression to the active role of the state in overcoming market inefficiencies that have hindered the participation of, especially, black-owned small enterprises in the economy," she added.

She further stated that "It can also leverage more funds and capabilities from other development finance institutions (DFIs), multilateral development partners, institutional investors, impact funders, and the private sector broadly, to maximise funding for small enterprises."

She mentioned that the Small Business Portfolio must increase support to manufacturing enterprises because they contribute to the GDP and must drive import replacement through locally manufactured goods increase exports in manufactured goods. The rationale for the new entity is to create a single integrated institution that can facilitate access to the full spectrum of services previously provided individually by the three entities, thus enhancing access to non-financial and financial support needed by small enterprises in the different stages of the business lifecycle, accessible in all parts of the country.

Ms Manzini further said "The SEDFA strategy is targeting to support and address a greater number of small enterprises across the country and to enhance development impact and ensure that small enterprise support interventions are directed at maximum impact and are accessible in all districts (regional presence) and lastly the establishment of this entity will be agile enough to identify and take advantage of opportunities to grow its resources to reinvest in further supporting small enterprises in a sustainable manner.

Minister Stella Tembisa Ndabeni delivered the keynote address during the final Small Business Development Portfolio (DSBD & SEDFA) Strategic Planning Session.

Minister emphasised that the department and its entity need to be awake to the fact that key to becoming the one-stop-shop is digitalisation. The one stop shop will hugely expand the reach and scale of the SBD Portfolio work; radically improve the interface with the MSMEs.

This will allow to scale where necessary and cut back where impact is sub-optimal.

"Digital platforms will also enable us to better coordinate the eco-system. We have resources - more than R3 billion for 2026/27 financial year. We have filled most of our executive posts. We have put many enabling policies and frameworks in place - on red-tape, business licensing, township economy, funding policy, incubation and business development services etc."

Minister Ndabeni stated that

**There is affirmation that we are on the right track. During the 6th Administration we developed the country's 3rd iteration MSME strategy – the NISED – and made key changes to our principal Act, the National Small Enterprise Act. These changes are now law. We can now move ahead with urgency by establishing the Office of the Small Enterprise Ombud, which provides a critical justice mechanism for small business. And as you know the amended Act also gives me the power as Minister to declare certain trading practices unlawful on the recommendation of the Ombud. We are moving steadily in levelling the playing fields for small businesses and co-ops. We also know the classifications have changed, and we will now all use the acronym MSMEs – micro, small and medium enterprises."**



## Continuing...



**“The DSBD has the mandate to develop MSMEs and Co-operatives in support of economic growth, job creation, and economic transformation. It is the department which must account to Parliament and the people of the country on how we have performed in this regard. To do this, the department develops policies and puts partnerships in place to ensure their execution. We are currently busy with the MSME and Co-operatives Funding Policy, which among other things will establish the Fund of Funds. The department must drive the overall MSME strategy of the country (NISED), and co-ordinate all players in the eco-system. Not just co-ordinate but mobilize and activate so that we leverage more resources for MSMEs and co-ops,”**

**said Minister Ndabeni.**



Minister Ndabeni further stated that ‘Our job is to enable SEDFA to do these things, and we need to clearly understand what it is we need to do as DSBD and what the new entity itself will do.’

Minister Ndabeni perfected that departmental programmes must always be promoted in each and every event that takes place to make sure people know about the offerings of the SBD Portfolio which comprises of the Township and Rural Entrepreneurship Programme (TREP) which aims to improve the quality and competitiveness of small enterprises in townships and rural areas and the Cooperatives Development Support Programme (CDSP) which aims to support Cooperative enterprises financially and non-financially in partnership with other key strategic stakeholders.



# CreativeBiz Nexus delivers essential support to creatives

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

The Department of Small Business Development (DSBD), in collaboration with the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA), hosted The Creative Biz Nexus 2026 at the Durban ICC, KwaZulu Natal. Central to the theme, "Fuelled through Creativity. Powered by Hustle." The event served as a platform for creative thinkers, industry experts, funders, and policymakers to converge and share ideas on growing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise into viable businesses.

The event encouraged participation from artists, content creators, fashion designers, and aspiring actors, and featured discussions focused on understanding the dynamic nature of the creative sector within the South African economy and global geo-economic dynamics.

Key areas of focus included identifying systemic obstacles to growth and exploring ways to scale up support for the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) ecosystem. The primary objective is to foster collaboration between government, development finance institutions, ecosystem partners, and creative practitioners, with priorities emerging from the engagement including access to finance, market access, skills development, infrastructure support, and the potential establishment of a Creative Sector Fund tailored to the unique needs of the MSMEs.

This initiative, launched by the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) and the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA) in September 2025, seeks to establish a more resilient

and inclusive creative economy by converging talent, business support, policy, and investment.

Minister Ndabeni noted that the CreativeBiz Nexus was developed in response to the sector's call for more coordinated support. The consultation brought together creative practitioners, entrepreneurs, and ecosystem partners to deliberate on opportunities, challenges, and solutions across the creative value chain. Participants from diverse sectors, including music, arts and crafts, film, television, digital content, fashion, and design, were able to raise concerns directly with policymakers and enterprise development organisations.

Minister Ndabeni emphasised that the work of creative professionals extends beyond art, encompassing entrepreneurship, intellectual property, and economic participation, which is protected under Section 22 of the Constitution.

"This constitutional provision guarantees every citizen the right to freely choose their trade, occupation, or profession. As South Africa embraces the digital age, Section 22 also supports emerging careers, enabling individuals to build businesses leveraging new technologies."

**"When we invest in creativity, we invest in industries that can generate global value for decades."**



Continuing...



# DSBD Reinforces Commitment to MSME Growth at the Buy Local Summit & Expo Media Launch

BY: TAMRY ESIRI



The Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) reaffirmed its commitment to advancing localisation and expanding market access for small enterprises at the Proudly South African Buy Local Summit and Expo Media Launch which was held on 12 March 2026 at 1 Fox Precinct in Johannesburg.

The media launch formed part of activities leading up to the 14th Annual Proudly South African Buy Local Summit & Expo, a flagship platform dedicated to promoting locally produced goods and strengthening domestic value chains. As a partner and supporter of the initiative, DSBD continues to play a key role in enabling micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to access markets and participate meaningfully in the economy.

Delivering the keynote address, Director-General Ms. Thulisile Manzini highlighted the importance of localisation as both an economic and industrial imperative. She emphasised that supporting locally produced goods is central to building domestic manufacturing capacity, reclaiming market share, and

creating sustainable employment opportunities.

Reflecting on the power of buying local, Ms. Manzini underscored the tangible impact of supporting South African businesses. She noted that even her attire for the day was sourced from a local designer, reinforcing the message that localisation begins with everyday consumer choices.

She further highlighted that DSBD's work is guided by the National Small Enterprise Development Act and implemented through the National Integrated Small Enterprise Development Policy Framework, which serves as a strategic mechanism to coordinate support across government and the private sector.

"The greatest barrier to growth for any MSME is access to markets," she said. "For this reason, the Department has prioritised market linkages programmes to connect high-potential enterprises directly to retailers, wholesalers and corporate supply chains."

## Continuing...

Through these initiatives, DSBD, in collaboration with the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDA), facilitates access to procurement opportunities in both the public and private sectors. These efforts have enabled MSMEs to enter formal supply chains and supply products to major retailers, while also improving product standards, packaging, compliance, and overall competitiveness.

Ms. Manzini also emphasised the importance of partnerships in driving meaningful impact, noting that collaboration across government, industry, and development agencies is essential to creating a supportive ecosystem for small businesses.

“Government cannot achieve these objectives alone. Partnerships remain critical in expanding opportunities for small enterprises,” she said.

The event also provided a platform for MSMEs to showcase their businesses through short

presentations, demonstrating the diversity, innovation, and resilience within South Africa’s small business sector. These engagements highlighted the importance of visibility and market access in unlocking growth for emerging enterprises.

DSBD’s partnership with Proudly South African continues to strengthen efforts to drive localisation and support MSMEs in accessing new markets. The media launch set the tone for the Buy Local Summit and reinforced a shared commitment among stakeholders to champion local businesses.

As South Africa continues to pursue inclusive economic growth, initiatives such as the Buy Local campaign play a vital role in empowering small enterprises and building a more resilient, self-sustaining economy.





## BPSC Carpenters and Welders (Pty) Ltd

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

BPSC Carpenters and Welders (Pty) Ltd, established in 2015, specializes in providing customized furniture at affordable prices, catering to individual client needs in KZN and surrounding areas.

As a committed manufacturing business led by Silindile Msomi and Bonginkosi Khumalo, the duo has 15 years experience in manufacturing of furniture.

The company supports and upskills youth seeking to enter the customized furniture industry, collaborating with local interior professionals to explore opportunities for mutual growth.

The directors' diverse industry experience and passion drive the company's growth and success.

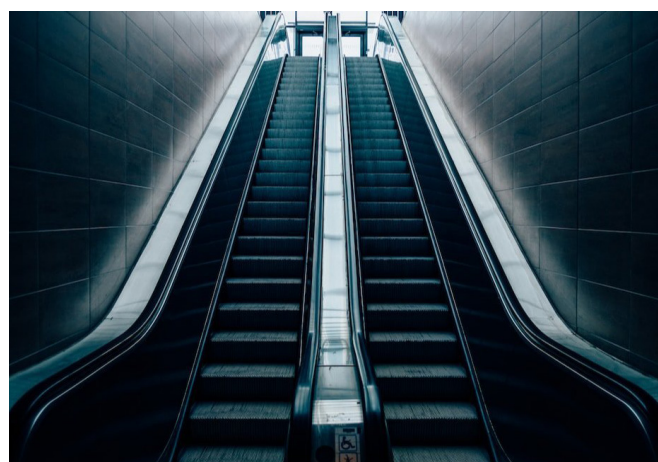
With a vision to dominate the customized and interior work sector in KZN, the company offers durable,

comforting, and stylish furniture pieces, boasting a wide range of designs from country to modern trends.

Their skilled craftsmen create architectural statements, prioritizing quality and service excellence while maintaining transparency, accountability, and professionalism in all business dealings.

The company's mission is to become a leading customized furniture manufacturer with an online shop, valuing client opinions to improve production, craftsmanship, and creativity.

"We promise to be accountable and responsible for our actions, transparent in all our business dealings, build and maintain trust and confidentiality, and display honesty with all stakeholders," Msomi said.



## Scaling Heights: Innovations in Escalator and Elevator Tech

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

Ozel Group specializes in SMART lift and escalators Integrated Control Technology (ICT), offering advanced elevator integration solutions that combine hardware and software to enhance security, efficiency, and IoT solutions that detect faults and breakdowns.

This enables real-time monitoring, predictive maintenance, and automated fault detection to ensure seamless vertical transportation in modern buildings, with their office located in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal province.

Ozel Lift is a 100% women-owned enterprise: driven by Nokwanda Dlamini. The company boasts in innovative systems, powered by IoT solutions. These systems

enable real-time monitoring, predictive maintenance, and automated fault detection to ensure seamless vertical transportation in modern buildings.

Supported by a R250 000 grant through the Asset Assist Programme, along with Access to Markets assistance, the company expanded its footprint internationally, building valuable networks in China and beyond.

Ozel is committed to localization and economic empowerment, with locally manufactured components supporting the South African industrial sector and job creation.

# BUSINESS PROFILE



"The company operates across the entire lift and escalator lifecycle, servicing locations such as shopping malls, airports, train stations, and other commercial or public spaces with a team of 8 employees, excluding the director. The team comprises highly experienced technicians, including mechanics with over 35 years of industry experience and certified lift specialists who are trade-tested and versatile across multiple brands," Dlamini said.

Its clientele includes notable organizations such as Moses Mabhida Stadium, Transnet, eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipality, KZN Sharks Board, Department of Public Works, and the private sector. The company's mission is to be South Africa's most trusted and innovative provider of lift and escalator solutions, empowering communities through excellence, inclusivity, and sustainable service.

Dlamini added that "We aim to deliver smart elevator and escalator solutions that enhance safety, reliability, and user experience, driving innovation through IoT technology for real-time fault detection and predictive maintenance. Our intention is to invest in local manufacturing and skills development, contributing to South Africa's industrial growth and expanding their footprint by becoming an export-ready brand offering African-built technology to the global market."

Ozel Group ensures people move safely and efficiently in various locations, handling the entire lifecycle of elevators and escalators. Their experienced team ensures a smooth installation process, provides guidance for safe operations, and offers comprehensive maintenance plans to prevent problems before they occur.

The company prioritizes customer satisfaction, exceeding expectations, and delivering peace of mind. By implementing the latest technologies and taking environmental responsibility seriously, Ozel Group is at the forefront of the industry. As a one-stop shop for new elevator and escalator installations, they help keep people moving in high-traffic areas.

Their modernization projects focus on aesthetics, functionality, and user experience, transforming elevators and escalators into modern, user-friendly experiences. With a highly motivated team empowered by current technology, Ozel Group believes in success through empowerment and strives to achieve it. The company understands the importance of reliable elevators and escalators, offering comprehensive maintenance and repair services.

Nokwanda Dlamini's philosophy of 'if you can dream it, you can do it' inspires the company's vision of becoming a successful black-owned South African business with an international footprint, setting an inspirational trend for black South African women.





# From Freedom to Opportunity: Strengthening Economic Participation Through Small Businesses

BY: MOSHALA JANE KOLANYANE

Every year on Freedom Day (27 April), South Africans pause to remember a moment that changed the course of our history. It marks the day in 1994 when citizens of all backgrounds stood together in long queues to vote in the country's first democratic elections. That moment was not just about political change, but it was about dignity, equality and the promise of a better future for all.

More than three decades later, Freedom Day remains a time for reflection. It asks us to look back at how far we have come, while also encouraging us to think honestly about the work that still lies ahead. Freedom is not only about the right to vote or speak freely but it is also about having access to opportunities, being able to earn a living and participating meaningfully in the economy.

For many South Africans, especially those in townships and rural areas, economic participation is still a challenge. Small businesses continue to face barriers such as limited access to funding, markets and business development support. This is where the work of our department becomes important. By focusing on the growth and support of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), we are contributing to a broader vision of economic inclusion.

Our programmes are designed to open doors. Through initiatives such as the Township and Rural Entrepreneurship Programme (TREP), we aim to support businesses where they are needed most. This includes helping entrepreneurs start, grow, and sustain their enterprises, while also ensuring they can access opportunities that were previously out of reach. These efforts are not just about business but they are about restoring dignity and creating pathways for people to support themselves and their families. The Department of Small Business Development has continued to engage directly with entrepreneurs through workshops, outreach programmes, and

exhibitions. These platforms create space for meaningful interaction, where business owners can learn more about available support, ask questions and connect with potential partners. Exhibitions, in particular, play an important role in helping small businesses showcase their products and services, reach new customers, and expand their market presence. These engagements also allow us to better understand the realities faced by entrepreneurs on the ground. Each conversation provides insight into the challenges and opportunities within different communities. This helps ensure that our support remains relevant, practical and responsive to real needs.

Freedom Day reminds us that transformation is a journey. While progress has been made, true economic freedom requires continued effort, collaboration and commitment. It calls on all of us in the government, private sector, and communities, to work together to create an environment where small businesses can thrive.

As public servants, we each have a role to play. Whether through policy development, programme implementation or direct engagement with stakeholders, our work contributes to building an inclusive economy. The impact of what we do may not always be visible immediately, but over time, it helps create opportunities that change lives. This Freedom Day, let us take a moment to reflect not only on our country's history, but also on the purpose behind our work. Supporting small businesses is more than a mandate, it is a contribution to a larger vision of empowerment and shared prosperity.

By continuing to support entrepreneurs, especially those in underserved communities, we move closer to a South Africa where freedom is not just remembered, but experienced in everyday life.

# Celebrating Earth Day – Small Actions, Big Impact

BY: TAMRY ESIRI



Every year, Earth Day (22 April) serves as a global reminder of the importance of protecting our environment and promoting sustainable practices. While environmental responsibility is often associated with large-scale initiatives, meaningful change can also begin with small, everyday actions, including within the workplace.

Observing Earth Day presents an opportunity for employees to reflect on how daily habits can contribute to a more sustainable future. From reducing waste to conserving resources, simple adjustments can collectively make a significant difference.

In the workplace, employees can take practical steps such as minimising paper usage by opting for digital documents, switching off lights and equipment when not in use, and reducing single-use plastics by bringing reusable bottles and containers. These small changes not only support environmental conservation but also

promote a culture of responsibility and awareness.

Earth Day also encourages mindful thinking about how we engage with the environment beyond the office. Supporting local and sustainable businesses, reducing food waste, and being conscious of energy and water usage at home are all ways individuals can contribute to broader environmental goals.

Importantly, sustainability is closely linked to economic development. By promoting environmentally responsible practices, we contribute to building resilient communities and supporting businesses that prioritise long-term sustainability.

As we observe Earth Day this April, let us be reminded that collective impact starts with individual action. Through small, consistent efforts, we can all play a role in protecting our environment for future generations.

## SOURCES:

<https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/18/04/2024/earth-day-what-it-when-it-and-why-it-important?>

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APRIL  
2026

# Happy Birthday



02

- Mtombeni Percival
- Malatji Portia

04

- Maluleke Khazamula
- Ramodumo Aaron

06

- Mtshali Thabi

09

- Moleko Elizabeth
- Monyepao Mmapula

10

- Manzini Thulisile
- Fisha Tebogo

11

- Machaba Fhatuwani

12

- Mangolela Selina

14

- Setshedi Kagiso

16

- Dano Nwabisa
- Ndamse Ziyanda

17

- Mavundla Zandile

18

- Tau Alfred

20

- Nsimbini Zodwa

24

- Ramabulana Ratshibvumo

25

- Van Dyk Janette

26

- Legodi Nthabiseng

28

- Mojapelo Tidima



small business  
development

Department:  
Small Business Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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