



# the PULSE

THE DSBD NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2025



small business  
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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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# December

The conclusion of the year presents an opportunity for introspection, reflecting on accomplishments, setbacks, client feedback, and marketing strategies from the preceding year.

The relaxed ambiance of December renders it an advantageous time for authentic networking, reaching out to prospective clients, and planning collaborations for the upcoming year.

Wishing MSMEs a joyful holiday season.

To all the visionaries, innovators, and entrepreneurs in the small business ecosystem, thank you for your resilience and creativity. May your December be merry, your year-end be fruitful, and your new year be filled with growth and opportunities!

## Happy Holidays.





BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

## **Minister Ndabeni inspires, motivates at the StartUp 20 Summit, celebrating the ingenuity, passion, and determination of entrepreneurs**

Minister Ndabeni presented a keynote address at the StartUp 20 Summit in the vibrant city of Johannesburg from 13-14 November 2025 central to theme: "Empowering Startups and MSME: championing Resilience, Innovation, and Sustainable Growth." The gathering, being held in Gauteng, drawn a diverse range of government representatives, policymakers, as well as high-ranking officials from various member states.

The StartUp 20 Summit was a two-day, flagship event that attracted over 200 local exhibitors spanning several industries, over 880 delegates from 32 countries and stakeholders from both the public and private sectors.

The Summit and Expo aimed to reiterate the call to support local to global 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. It offered a global platform for member states representing

MSMEs to address pressing challenges hindering businesses from reaching their full potential.

The Summit was hosted by StartUp 20, the official G20 representative body, which aims to develop policies and strategies to tackle global economic challenges through dialogue, cooperation and collaborate on a wide range of topics, including financial stability, climate change, and sustainable development.

Startups have over the years become integral in driving innovation and growth across various industries. With their innovative solutions for untapped opportunities and unaddressed challenges, startups play a crucial role in advancing technology in various sectors such as education, agriculture, healthcare, energy, and climate resilience. The aim of the startup20 engagement group is to promote debate and to articulate recommendations on the agendas of technology, innovation, development of startups and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME).



## Continuing...

Startup20 priorities are to discuss the sector's challenges, such as technological transformations, public digital infrastructure, technologies as allies for preserving the environment, governance and multilateral reforms, as well as other essential themes for building a fairer and more sustainable future.

Startup20 focused on creating an ecosystem that supports innovation, entrepreneurship, and the growth of startups across the world. It seeks to promote dialogue between governments, entrepreneurs, investors, and other stakeholders to help remove barriers to startup growth, such as access to capital, mentorship, and regulatory challenges, amongst others.

Chairperson of the Startup 20, Vuyani Jarana said "In the current year, G20 Presidency remains a central point which underpins the Awards Programme. The 2025 Awards programme is underpinned by broader G20 thematic areas with specific reference to the STARTUP 20 (SU20), a G20 engagement group focusing on Startup, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Medium and Small Enterprises

and Collaboration. The focus of the engagement group is further underpinned by five (5) Task Forces Finance and Investment, Foundation and Alliance, Inclusion and Sustainability, Trade and Market Access, Township and Rural Entrepreneurship. The Awards programme emphasises the importance for championing Resilience, Innovation, and Sustainable Growth within the MSME sector."





## Continuing...

"The 2025 G20 Presidency in South Africa presents a significant opportunity to elevate the role of small enterprises on a global stage. The G20 has long recognised MSMEs as critical to economic recovery, financial inclusion, and sustainable development, emphasising access to finance, digital transformation, and global market integration. As the host nation, South Africa has a unique platform to advocate for policies that enhance the resilience and competitiveness of MSMEs, particularly in emerging markets," he added.

Following the summit, the unique annual awards programme commenced to acknowledge, encourage, and celebrate excellence among medium, small, and micro enterprises (MSMEs) and cooperatives by providing them with valuable exposure and well-deserved recognition.

The awards highlighted MSMEs, cooperatives, and ecosystem enablers that contribute significantly to building sustainable businesses and creating value in the economy. Additionally, the awards promoted entrepreneurship and the growth of enterprises from the local to the global level.

The awards were held under the various subsectors Green Tech StartUp of the Year-This category included renewable energy, Agri-Tech StartUp of the Year- StartUps that use technologies and applications in order to solve challenges faced in

Agriculture. -Edtech StartUp of the Year- The use of software and hardware to enhance teaching and learning. Health Tech StartUp- advanced technology on healthcare changing the landscape of medical practices and promising a future in the medical fraternity. Fintech StartUp of the Year- Financial technology awarding StartUps that use new technology.

“

Minister Ndabeni perfected that "The Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) is committed to driving transformation, economic inclusion, and strengthening the entrepreneurship ecosystem through strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders to foster a thriving and sustainable small business sector."

"As a dedicated engagement group under the G20, StartUp 20 elevates the importance MSMEs as drivers of inclusive, innovative, and sustainable economic growth. It provides practical support to help them start, scale, and sustain their impact. It further serves as a formal mechanism to integrate startup ecosystems into the core of global policy dialogue, ensuring that entrepreneurship is not marginal, but central to how future economies are imagined," the Minister said.



## Continuing...



“ As government, we recognise that innovation is not only about technology, but also about empowerment. This is why we are advancing initiatives such as SEDFA Pay, a digital payments and financial-inclusion platform designed to integrate micro and informal enterprises, spaza shops, street traders, and township MSMEs into the formal economy. SEDFA Pay will enable a secure, low-cost, and interoperable digital ecosystem, facilitating access to finance, record-keeping, and market participation. In doing so, it will position South Africa’s small-enterprise ecosystem for a cash-light, inclusive, and data-driven economy, while advancing our national objectives of localisation, transformation, and job creation,” **the Minister added.**

replete with promise, but its success is contingent upon the establishment of inclusive ecosystems that empower women, youth, rural enterprises, and persons with disabilities.

Director-General, Thulisile Manzini further perfected, “Under South Africa’s G20 Presidency theme of “Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability” let us continue to collaborate and co-create ecosystem enablement that will accelerate cross-border market integration, digital innovation in trade and equitable access for developing economies by 2030. One of the critical messages that came during the discussions yesterday, is that the SU20 has been perfectly engrained in the G20 as one of the important engagement groups and should start a process of institutionalisation to sustain momentum. This will ensure that the startup remains part of global policy discourse for years to come.”

Director-General, Thulisile Manzini underscored the fact that South Africa’s startup landscape is



# Minister Ndabeni leads **Business Licensing Bill Consultations nationwide**



BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

Minister Stella Tembisa Ndabeni recently led a public consultation workshop on the Business Licensing Bill in Cape Town. The bill aims to introduce a national registry for all businesses operating in South Africa, requiring them to register and obtain licenses from local municipalities. This move is expected to simplify business registration, promote economic inclusion, and enhance regulatory compliance.

This event was part of a nationwide consultation to gather feedback on proposed legislation

to modernize South Africa's business licensing system.

Yet now a proposed new Business Licensing Bill, 2025 has been framed that will replace the 1991 Act with something far more extensive. The Bill seeks to substitute the 1991 Act with a "comprehensive" system of business licensing that "Promotes social and economic inclusion".



The draft Bill stipulates that provincial governments "must" enact legislation on business licensing in the listed functional areas. It also states that local authorities "must" enact business-licensing by-laws on the listed local-government matters in Schedules 4 and 5. In addition, the Minister may make regulations on business licensing regarding the local-government matters in Schedule 5.

Furthermore, provincial economic-development MECs may make business-licensing regulations regarding the provincial-government matters in Schedules 4 and 5.

However, Schedule 5 lists areas of exclusive provincial legislative competence.

The Bill stipulates that a business must possess a business licence if it carries on a business undertaking which has been designated by the Minister as a business undertaking that requires a business licence.



# Minister Ndabeni hosted an Entrepreneurship Market Day Outreach programme in Mamelodi, Pretoria

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

The Department of Small Business Development led by Minister Stella Tembisa Ndabeni hosted an Entrepreneurship Market Day Outreach Programme at eMthunzini Primary School in Mamelodi township on the east of Pretoria, under the theme: "Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship in Learners for Economic Prosperity." This initiative aimed to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset among learners by providing them with practical, hands-on business experiences.

The Minister for Small Business Development, Stella Tembisa Ndabeni convened Entrepreneurship Market Day, which seek to cultivate the entrepreneurial spirit and emphasize the significance of entrepreneurs in local, national, regional, and global economies, given their crucial role in providing millions of jobs, driving industrialization, sustaining economies, and introducing innovative solutions.

The Entrepreneurship Market Day is designed to assist learners in enhancing their inherent business skills while gaining insight into the challenges and

rewards of establishing a business. Learners will embark on a journey of self-discovery, exploring their decisions, goals, and entrepreneurial aspirations, and how these can play a vital role in their lives.

The Market Day was about to inspire children in the long term. The school grounds were abuzz with excitement as learners showcased and sell their self-developed products and services, from concept to customer.

Ms Thindisa, Principal, eMthunzini Primary School gave the purpose of the day message "Today we are here as part of our vision to establish a transformed and inclusive economy driven by sustainable and innovative entrepreneurs. In line with the department's strategic intervention which is to lobby and advocate for the integration of the school curriculum and entrepreneurship. Ours is to teach our kids from young age entrepreneurship skills to develop innovative business ideas, so they become economically active citizens when they grow older."



## Continuing...

The intention of the DSBD was to commemorate Mandela day by exposing the learners to various facets of entrepreneurship and to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship through practical entrepreneurial activities. The aim is also to demonstrate that entrepreneurship could be a viable and rewarding career path for the learners. Mostly, this event aims to highlight the various career opportunities available within the business and entrepreneurship sectors, inspiring learners to consider starting their own businesses or joining the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The day also intended to expose the learners to the experiences and community outreach activities that reflect the values and legacy of Nelson Mandela, while promoting innovation, economic participation, and social cohesion. It is anticipated that this day will inspire learners to explore entrepreneurship as a viable career path and a solution to unemployment and poverty.

The initiative strongly aligns with the Department of Small Business Development's strategic priorities,

particularly in promoting youth entrepreneurship and embedding entrepreneurial thinking in the education system.

By hosting the "Market Day" through an immersive entrepreneurship programme, the Department of Small Business Development reinforces its commitment to sow the seed of business ownership, empowerment, economic transformation and build a sustainable foundation for future business leaders.

The event reflected on DSBD's commitment to inclusive, community-based enterprise development as envisioned in the National Integrated Small Enterprise Development Masterplan (NISED) and the District Development Model (DDM).

Moreover, the initiative contributes to DSBD's long-term objective of doubling the number of MSMEs we have in the country, particularly in under-resourced areas, by making entrepreneurship relevant, exciting, and attainable for learners.



## Continuing...



The Department of Small Business Development has developed a National Entrepreneurship strategy (NES) aimed to address the challenges of youth unemployment, low levels of entrepreneurship and high failure rates among South Africa's Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

The NES is underpinned by different strategic pillars - the focus area on entrepreneurship and skills building intends to build strong relationships with the Department of Basic Education to incorporate entrepreneurship into the basic education system; train educators in entrepreneurial thinking and skills; and support education campaigns and competitions to develop an entrepreneurial mindset.

The interface with schools is part of broader efforts for government to promote integrated learning from early childhood through to post school levels. Learning about entrepreneurship is becoming more critical given the inability of the economy to absorb school-leavers. Entrepreneurship is a viable and rewarding career path for the learners.

Minister Ndabeni added that:  
**"Today we will expose the learners to various facets of entrepreneurship and to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship through practical entrepreneurial activities. Mostly, this event aims to highlight the various career opportunities available within the business and entrepreneurship sectors, inspiring learners to consider starting their own businesses."**

She further stated that: "The department we is committed to sowing the seed of entrepreneurship and economic empowerment and is building the next generation of innovators, entrepreneurs and business leaders. As part of inspiring the learners to consider the entrepreneurial path."

The event was graced by a very special guest, Ms Eunice Motlhoding, who is one of the beneficiaries of the Department's programmes.

Ms Eunice Motlhoding is from Mmamphiri a Magagola Cooperative, situated in Mamelodi. Mmamphiri a Magagola Cooperative is a beacon of hope for many young entrepreneurs. It is a family cooperative, consisting of 5 members, specialized in sustainable agriculture, producing fresh produce for the local market.

The Cooperative received funding from the Department of Small Business Development. Importantly, the cooperative was able to secure local markets such as SPAR. Without a market you have no business. The Cooperative is also teaching learners about agriculture. Ms Motlhoding teaches learners from grades R to 12 about climate change, environmental conservation, and agricultural eco-friendly methods partnering with the Department of Education. She works with 152 schools in Tshwane South to promote sustainable practices and environmental awareness.





## DSBD Shines at the **2025 Township Economy Summit and Awards in Tembisa**

The Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) proudly participated in the 7th Annual Township Economy Summit and Awards, hosted by the Township Entrepreneurship Alliance (TEA). The two-day event, held on 20–22 November 2025 in Tembisa, Gauteng, celebrated innovation, resilience, and sustainable growth across South Africa's dynamic township economy.

Under the theme "Inclusive Economic Future," this year's summit brought together township entrepreneurs, government leaders, development agencies, financial institutions, and corporate partners committed to building thriving local economies.

Aimed at economic growth, job creation, and community upliftment, the summit reaffirmed the township economy as a critical driver of South Africa's economic future.

Founder of TEA, Bulelani Balabala, opened Day 1 with a powerful call for intentional collaboration. "Meet at least five new people. Engage with our exhibitors. Be present. Be bold. Be open to opportunity," he urged the audience. Balabala set the tone for a day rooted in connection, learning, and growth.

The first keynote speaker, Lindokuhle Tau, Head of SBS Customer Value Proposition Design at Nedbank, emphasized the pioneering role of township entrepreneurs. "Township businesses are not just participating—they are rewriting the story of an inclusive economy. From innovation to impact, this is where real transformation begins," she said. Her message celebrated township innovators as

central to South Africa's future economic landscape. In a vibrant Mbawula Chat session, Balabala engaged Zibusiso Mkhwanazi, Co-founder of Avatar.

Mkhwanazi highlighted the power of partnerships. "I surround myself with people smarter than me... in the hardest moments of the entrepreneurship journey, you need the best team by your side," he said. His insights centred on strategic collaboration as a foundation for entrepreneurial success.

The summit reached its peak with the attendance of Deputy Minister of Small Business Development, Jane Sithole, who delivered an inspirational keynote address.

"The entrepreneurs in this room are the future of our economy. You are building a legacy that will outlast you, creating jobs, driving innovation, and uplifting communities." She emphasized collaboration, sustainability, and long-term impact as essential pillars for township entrepreneurship.



## Continuing...

The summit concluded with the prestigious Township Economy Awards, honouring entrepreneurs who have demonstrated exceptional innovation, resilience, and community impact. Executive Mayor of the City of Ekurhuleni, Cllr Nkosindiphile Xhakaza, opened the ceremony: "This evening is more than just an awards ceremony—it is a tribute to the thriving township economy and the individuals who drive its growth."

### **The awards featured 14 categories and five special accolades, including:**

- Female Entrepreneur of the Year
- Male Entrepreneur of the Year
- Youth Entrepreneur of the Year
- Township Economy Champion Award
- Lifetime Achievement Award

Ms Jane Sithole, Deputy Minister of the Department of Small Business Development delivered a keynote address. In her address, Deputy Minister Sithole emphasized the critical role township entrepreneurs

play in driving economic growth, innovation, and opportunity, stating, "The entrepreneurs in this room are the future of our economy, driving growth, innovation, and opportunity through their passion and resilience."

"Let us continue to celebrate and support our township entrepreneurs, who are the backbone of our economy, driving growth, innovation, and opportunity in our communities," Deputy Minister said

The 2025 Township Economy Summit and Awards reaffirmed the power and potential of township entrepreneurs. With insights from industry leaders, support from government and private sector partners, and recognition through national awards, the event strengthened the foundation for an inclusive, sustainable, and innovative township economy.

The DSBD's active participation underscored government's unwavering commitment to empowering entrepreneurs and ensuring that township businesses continue to thrive as engines of economic transformation.



# DSBD Portfolio Committee Conducts Oversight Visit to Small Business Projects in Free State

BY: CLEMENT MOAGA

The Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) Portfolio Committee recently embarked on a four-day oversight visit to various projects funded by the DSBD and its agency, the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA), across the Free State province. This visit aimed to assess the progress and impact of the department's small business development initiatives and explore potential solutions to support the growth of small businesses in the region.

## Collaboration with Local Leadership

The visit, which took place in Mangaung, saw the Portfolio Committee joined by key local leaders including Hon. Ketso Makume, MEC for Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism, and Environmental Affairs in the Free State; Cllr. Theodorah Mosala, the MMC responsible for Local Economic Development and Tourism in Mangaung; as well as officials from DSBD and SEDFA.

The committee's role is to oversee the Department's activities, ensuring that it effectively meets its

objectives, implements policies, and fosters small business growth in line with national economic priorities.

The visit aimed to assess the implementation of small business development initiatives and evaluating the effectiveness of small business development programs and services provided by DSBD and SEDFA. Furthermore, the visit was aimed at discussing challenges faced by small businesses and potential solutions to support their growth and exploring opportunities for economic development and job creation in the region.

The oversight tour also aligns with the National District Development Model (DDM), an initiative aimed at improving integrated service delivery across all levels of government. Through better coordination and resource pooling, the DDM seeks to enhance project implementation and ensure collective responsibility for the region's development.



## Continuing...

### Highlights from the Oversight Visit

The Portfolio Committee's first stop was at Kim Travel Consultants in Bloemfontein, a business that received support through the Tourism Equity Fund. This investment allowed the company to enhance its operations and accommodation capabilities, resulting in the maintenance of 16 jobs and improved booking processes for travellers.

The committee also visited Bokamoso Funeral and Tombstones, which received support through the Youth Challenge Fund (YCF). This support helped the business upgrade its infrastructure, purchase necessary machinery, and acquire company vehicles. With these improvements, the company is positioned to create more opportunities for young entrepreneurs and expand its services, including burial and funeral planning.

Ms. Masefako Clarah Dikgale, Chairperson of the Small Business Development said the oversight visit allowed the committee to assess the impact of the Department's initiatives on small businesses in the Free State. "This oversight visit has been invaluable in helping us assess the impact of the Department's initiatives on small businesses in the Free State. Our visits to these innovative projects have reaffirmed our belief that small businesses are the backbone of our economy, driving both job creation and local economic development. As a committee, we are committed to ensuring that these businesses

continue to receive the support they need to thrive. Our findings will guide our recommendations for improving service delivery and fostering a more enabling environment for entrepreneurs across the country," Dikgale said.

### Exploring Opportunities in Maluti-a-Phofung and Lejweleputswa Districts

The committee's next destination was the Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipality in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District. Here, the committee visited Phoka Coffee, a coffee shop inspired by Basotho culture and heritage. Owned by Kananelo Mofokeng, the coffee shop, located inside the Kgudumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre, was funded through the Tourism Equity Fund. The shop has created 16 jobs and serves as an important part of the local tourism industry in Golden Gate Highlands National Park.

In the Lejweleputswa District Municipality, the committee visited Honey Badger Primary Cooperative Limited, an agro-processing cooperative based in Hertzogville. The cooperative, which focuses on processing vegetables into ready-to-eat products, received support from the Cooperatives Development Support Programme. Led by Mr. Ntatenyana Taje, the cooperative exemplifies the growing agro-processing sector in the Free State.



## Continuing...



### Final Visits in Fezile Dabi District

The committee concluded its tour in the Fezile Dabi District Municipality, specifically in the Moqhaka Local Municipality in Kroonstad. Here, they visited JennyMos Primary Cooperative, a business supported through the Asset Assistance Programme. This cooperative, owned by Ntshuia Mokalobe, represents the growing entrepreneurial spirit in the region.

In Metsimaholo Local Municipality, the delegation visited two local agricultural projects: Buhlebenkosi Agri-Production (Pty) Ltd and Dihwai di Kopane Primary Cooperative. Buhlebenkosi, which specializes in broiler chicken farming and hydroponic vegetable cultivation. The cooperative also received support through asset assist programme. The business, founded by Mlondolozi Mokoena and now owned by Patricia Beleng, has shown impressive growth since its inception in 2019.

Cllr. Jack Malindi, the Executive Mayor of Metsimaholo Local Municipality, expressed gratitude for the oversight visit, highlighting how it served as an informative and inspiring experience for young people in the area who are interested in building sustainable local economies.

### Commitment to Job Creation and Economic Development

Throughout the visit, the Portfolio Committee commended the innovative projects for their contribution to job creation and local economic development. The committee reaffirmed Parliament's commitment to supporting small businesses as key drivers of inclusive economic growth.

### Looking Forward: Key Recommendations

The key findings and observations from this oversight visit will inform the committee's recommendations to improve support for small businesses. These recommendations will focus on enhancing service delivery, addressing challenges faced by small businesses, and ensuring more effective implementation of government policies and programs. By exercising its oversight role, Parliament aims to hold the government accountable for promoting economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction in the Free State and beyond.





# WORLD AIDS DAY: SOUTH AFRICA'S CONTINUING STORY OF HOPE, UNITY & RESILIENCE

BY: MOSHALA JANE KOLANYANE

Each year on 1 December, South Africa joins the world in commemorating World AIDS Day, a day that carries deep meaning for the nation. It is a moment to pause, honour lives lost, celebrate those who continue to thrive, and recognise the progress made over decades. But more than anything, it is a reminder of South Africa's remarkable journey: a journey shaped by community strength, compassion, innovation, and resilience.

The early days of HIV in South Africa were marked by uncertainty, fear, and silence. Communities struggled to understand a virus that felt overwhelming and unfamiliar. Many carried the burden alone, afraid to speak out or seek help but slowly, and powerfully, things began to change. Advocacy groups, community organisations, and brave individuals pushed for awareness and access to information. Conversations that once felt too heavy or too taboo began to open up. Schools, workplaces, and families became places where people could learn, ask questions, and support one another. This shift from silence to conversation became one of South Africa's greatest victories. Knowledge empowered people, and awareness created safer, more compassionate spaces.

Throughout the journey, communities have always been at the heart of South Africa's response to HIV. Whether in rural villages or busy urban

centres, ordinary people have stepped forward in extraordinary ways. Community caregivers check in on households, youth groups lead awareness campaigns, faith leaders provide comfort and guidance, and NGOs walk alongside individuals and families through their health journeys. These efforts are not always seen or celebrated, but they are the backbone of the country's progress.

This leadership reinforces a powerful truth: HIV is not just a medical issue, it is a human one. And South Africans have responded with empathy, courage, and unity.

One of the most transformative chapters in this journey has been the expansion of treatment. Access to antiretroviral therapy has changed what HIV looks like in South Africa. It has allowed people to live long, healthy, meaningful lives to raise families, pursue careers, travel, dream, and grow. Workplaces, government departments, and institutions have also stepped up by offering support, wellness programmes, and environments that value health and dignity. The healthcare workers who support this system, nurses, counsellors, pharmacists, outreach teams remain some of the unsung heroes of South Africa's progress. Their dedication has turned countless stories of fear into stories of hope.





# If You Are Sexually Active. Protect Yourself and Your Partner By Using A Condom.

While challenges remain, one of the most encouraging shifts has been the softening of stigma. More people now speak openly about their status. Families are more accepting. Communities are more informed. Conversations are more compassionate. This cultural change matters deeply. Stigma is often more damaging than the virus itself, and every act of acceptance chips away at the barriers that once isolated so many. Today, South Africans increasingly recognise that HIV does not define a person it is simply one part of their health journey.

## Recognising the Heroes Among Us

World AIDS Day is also a day to honour the individuals who carried the nation forward:

- Healthcare workers who show unwavering compassion
- Activists who fought for treatment access
- Researchers and scientists who drive innovation
- Volunteers who give their time and energy
- Families who stand firm in love and support
- People living with HIV who lead with strength and honesty

Their contributions form the foundation of South Africa's progress.

South Africa's journey with HIV is far from over, but the path forward is filled with possibility. Communities continue to lead. Awareness continues to deepen.

Treatment continues to advance. And hope continues to grow. World AIDS Day reminds us that progress is not accidental, it is created through collective effort, shared responsibility, and the belief that every life matters.

As we reflect this year, we honour the stories that shaped our nation, celebrate the resilience that defines us, and recommit to building a future where HIV is no longer a source of fear but a story of survival, strength, and solidarity.

**South Africa has come far and together, we will go even further.**





## **Silokotho Holdings Primary Cooperative thriving for excellence**

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

The Minister for Small Business, Stella Tembisa Ndabeni, conducted a site visit to Silokotho as part of her monitoring and oversight responsibilities.

Silokotho Holdings Primary Cooperative is a dynamic and innovative enterprise specializing in the manufacture of high-quality Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), corporate workwear, and technical textile products, with operations based in Pinetown.

As part of its expansion and brand identity initiatives, the company has launched an exciting new project under the name Silo-k. The company focuses on the design and production of unisex sneakers, fashionable sandals for women, and durable school shoes. Silo-k embodies the spirit of the company by blending functionality, style, and quality to create products that resonate with its diverse clientele.

"This organization's extraordinary craftsmanship, superior quality, and unwavering commitment to excellent service make it an ideal partner. It has established a strong reputation as a trusted collaborator with prominent international PPE and technical textiles manufacturers, including BEIER Envirotec (Pty) Ltd, Arena Trim, and Wak Pty Ltd, its influence extends across the entire KwaZulu-Natal region, said Managing Director Gqwarhu.

Silokotho was founded as a Primary Cooperative in Umlazi in 2011 by five cooperative members seeking to address unemployment challenges in the township. The name Silokotho comes from the phrase IZILOKOTHO EZINHLE, which translates to best wishes, reflecting a hopeful and positive vision for the community. The company was funded by Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA) a sum of 2.5 million which assisted on office equipment, working material and a bakkie to transport their supplies.





## Continuing...

"Our unwavering and relentless commitment to achieving our vision caught the attention of the Beier Group, a prominent player in the textile industry. They generously provided us with a shipping container, which we converted into a workspace to produce clothing. Impressed by our work ethic, the Beier Group went a step further by offering us a factory and connecting us with other PPE manufacturers. Since then, we have been on a remarkable growth trajectory, added Gqwarhu.

They are producing top-quality Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), corporate workwear, technical textile products, women's fashionable sandals, unisex stylish sneakers and school shoes. They have achieved this milestone by investing in knowledge, technology, and to talented people.

"Through strategic partnerships and networks, we aim to drive sustainable growth. Guided by our values, social responsibility, and customer-first mindset, we are committed to excellence and innovation, Gawarhu said.

Silokotho CooperTative is dedicated to maintaining high-quality standards aligned with industry requirements. Their goal is to achieve zero complaints by the end of 2025, ensuring complete satisfaction for all stakeholders.





## Promoting sustainability, one pallet at a time, **BAP is a trusted partner in eco-friendly wood pallet solutions**

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

BAP South Africa specialises in the design, manufacture, and supply of industrial ISPM15 wood packaging solutions, including bespoke pallets, boxes, and crates, catering to local and export distribution of goods. Established in 2004, the company is solely owned by Cedric Hlongwa, who holds a B-Tech Degree in Food Technology. With a strong background in quality assurance, production management, and business development, Cedric has refined his expertise across various roles in the manufacturing sector.

As Director, he spearheads the company with a focus on strategy development, client engagement, and operational excellence, ensuring high standards of quality and customer satisfaction, and consistently delivering exceptional products and services. Initially, the company pursued diverse scopes before transitioning in 2016 to focus on industrial ISPM15 wood packaging, which has since become its core offering.

"We take pride in serving manufacturing companies across various sectors, including industrial, mining, construction, chemical manufacturing, food production, and the petroleum industry," said Hlongwa.

The company is committed to delivering high-quality products while upholding ethical leadership and governance. Its membership in the Institute of Directors of Southern Africa and the Institute of Business Management of Southern Africa underscores this commitment.

Furthermore, the company actively participates in both the Durban Chemical Cluster and Durban Automotive Cluster, fostering collaboration and innovation within the industry. In early 2023, the company benefited from the SES German Expert Mentorship, which provided valuable insights and guidance from industry experts, enhancing its operational capabilities and strategic approach.

The company's mission is to maintain its reputation as the most trusted and reliable supplier of high-quality pallets, boxes, and crates, consistently enhancing customer satisfaction and employee engagement by delivering exceptional products and services, and upholding honesty, integrity, and teamwork in all its business interactions. Its products are manufactured to meet specific client requirements, offering wooden products in untreated, fumigated, or heat-treated forms, all rigorously tested for quality and load-bearing capabilities.



## Continuing...

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The company is committed to providing a consistent supply of quality industrial ISPM15 wood packaging, ensuring that clients can rely on it for all

their packaging needs, regardless of order size. It focuses on perfecting client specifications through a creative solutions process and an efficient sample approval system, ensuring that the final product aligns perfectly with client needs. The company is dedicated to sustainable practices, repurposing 80% of its timber waste and utilizing natural resources for its products. Its wooden packaging solutions are designed to decompose at the end of their life cycle.



# How to Help Small Businesses Survive January

BY: TAMRY ESIRI



The festive season brings celebration, but for many small businesses in South Africa, December is a race to close sales, and January can be a harsh wake-up call. Recent research published in the Journal of Contemporary Management indicates that approximately 75% of small businesses in South Africa fail within their first five years.

Another study published in the Southern African Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management warns that in some communities, up to 70-80% of MSMEs collapse within five years.

This means that your decision to shop thoughtfully this festive season could be the difference between survival and closure for a township entrepreneur, a rural creator or a local vendor. December is their lifeline. January separates those who make it through from those who don't. Your support changes lives in real and lasting ways.

## GAUTENG

- **Angel Gifts (Roodepoort)** – gift sets for all occasions
- **Sweets by Zamo (Tembisa)** – small home bakery making cupcakes, mini cakes, and biscuits via WhatsApp orders.
- **Kgosi Pots & Décor (Soshanguve)** – handmade clay flowerpots, plant stands, spray-painted décor pieces.

## WESTERN CAPE

- **The Soap Cartel (Mitchells Plain)** – handmade soaps, bath salts, and natural body butters.
- **Kea's Homemade Sauces (Khayelitsha)** – small-batch chilli sauces sold at local markets.
- **Nomvula's Beads (Nyanga)** – beadwork jewellery sold at community flea markets.

## KWAZULU-NATAL

- **Sibongile's Traditional Wear (Ulundi)** – custom-made isiZulu attire for weddings & events.
- **Thuli Candles (Empangeni)** – soy candles poured from home and sold via Facebook.
- **Sweet Life Treats (PMB)** – small home confectionery making fudge, marshmallow cups & treats.





## Continuing...

## EASTERN CAPE

- **Sweet Roots Skin (Mthatha)** – small herbal skincare brand using African botanicals.
- **Litha Art Prints (King Williams Town)** – young illustrator selling A5 & A4 prints online.
- **Faith's Fresh Bakes (Gqeberha)** – muffins and scones delivered to offices each morning.

## LIMPOPO

- **Karabo's Handmade Bags (Polokwane)** – handwoven bags and macramé accessories.
- **Pinky's Cosmetics (Thohoyandou)** – lip gloss, body oils, and scrubs made from home.
- **Tshego Candies (Tzaneen)** – traditional sweets & lollipops produced in small batches.

## MPUMALANGA

- **Amanda's Crochet Studio (Mbombela)** – crochet blankets & tops.
- **Sethu Scents (Secunda)** – room sprays, linen sprays and tiny 50ml fragrances.
- **Kamo's Hair Accessories (Bushbuckridge)** – handmade scrunchies and beaded headbands.

## NORTH WEST

- **Kgadi Crafts (Rustenburg)** – handmade doormats and crocheted décor.
- **Royal Roots Naturals (Potchefstroom)** – small natural oils brand for hair & skin.
- **Mpho's Home-Cook Meals (Klerksdorp)** – cooked plates for workers & students.

## FREE STATE

- **Basesana Hair (Bloem)** – local hairstylist specialising in braids & twists.
- **Karabo's Organic Herbs (QwaQwa)** – fresh herbs grown in a small tunnel.
- **Mama Rose's Ikota (Botshabelo)** – vetkoek & kota business.

## NORTHERN CAPE

- **Karoo Candle Cottage (De Aar)** – micro candle-making business.
- **Nama Kids Wear (Springbok)** – small children's clothing line designed at home.
- **Ruth's Beadwork (Kimberley)** – traditional jewellery sold locally.

## SOURCES

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BY: MOSHALA JANE KOLANYANE

## BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE WORK-PLACE: CHAMPIONING THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

In every organisation, true progress isn't measured only by projects completed or targets reached, it is measured by how people are treated, supported, and empowered. As South Africa continues strengthening its commitment to equality and human rights, the inclusion of persons with disabilities has become a central part of building workplaces that are fair, accessible, and truly people centred.

Creating an inclusive environment is not a once-off initiative. It is a continuous journey that relies on awareness, understanding, and the willingness to evolve. When organisations make room for every employee to participate meaningfully, they unlock not only individual potential but the collective strength of the entire workforce.

While policies and regulations lay the foundation, disability inclusion goes far beyond compliance. It is a reflection of respect, a recognition that people should not be defined or limited by their disabilities. Instead, they should be valued for their skills, perspectives, and lived experiences. An inclusive workplace prioritises accessibility in its broadest sense: accessible buildings, accessible communication, accessible systems, and accessible attitudes. It ensures that employees have what they need to perform, participate, and grow. This might include adaptive equipment, flexible work arrangements, assistive technology, or simply patience and understanding. The most powerful part of inclusion is that it benefits everyone. A workplace that accommodates different needs becomes a workplace that functions better for all.

### Recognising the Importance of Invisible Disabilities

One of the most transformative shifts in the world of work has been the growing awareness of invisible disabilities. These include chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, neurodivergence, sensory processing difficulties, and learning differences. They may not be visible, but they impact how colleagues navigate their workday. By acknowledging invisible disabilities, organisations send a clear message: every employee's wellbeing matters. When colleagues feel safe to communicate their needs without fear of stigma, they are more confident, productive, and engaged. This is where empathy becomes a critical skill. Leaders and teams who practice empathy help build work cultures where people feel understood instead of misunderstood. Inclusion can't succeed through policy alone, it is built through people.

### The daily interactions between colleagues shape whether a workplace feels supportive or isolating. Small gestures go a long way:

- Using respectful language and avoiding labels
- Asking "How can I support you?" instead of making assumptions
- Being mindful of different communication styles
- Allowing colleagues the space and time they need
- Listening without judgment





## **Continuing...**

These simple actions help build a culture where everyone feels recognised, not overlooked. When employees treat each other with dignity, the workplace becomes a safe, welcoming environment for all.

Leaders play an essential role in modelling inclusive behaviour. When managers champion accessibility, speak openly about the importance of inclusion, and encourage the use of support services, they set a strong example for the entire organisation. Effective leadership means creating platforms where employees with disabilities are heard, represented, and supported. It means ensuring that every team member has equal access to training, opportunities, and advancement. Most importantly, it means fostering a culture where employees feel they can bring their full selves to work without fear of judgment or exclusion.

**The goal of disability inclusion is simple yet powerful:** to create a workplace where every person belongs. When people feel supported, the whole organisation benefits. Morale improves. Creativity increases. Collaboration strengthens. And colleagues become more connected and compassionate.

South Africa's journey toward disability rights and inclusion continues to advance each year. Workplaces have the privilege and responsibility to be part of that progress. By embracing accessibility, nurturing diversity, and valuing each individual's contributions, organisations help build a future where no one is left behind. Inclusion is not just an initiative, it is a commitment and when that commitment becomes part of the culture, we create workplaces where dignity is upheld, potential is unlocked, and every person has the opportunity to thrive.





# DAY OF RECONCILIATION

BY: TAMRY ESIRI

Each year on 16 December, South Africa observes the Day of Reconciliation. A significant moment in our national calendar that invites collective reflection, unity, and renewed commitment to social cohesion. The day is a reminder of the progress the country has made, as well as the ongoing work required to strengthen relationships within communities and across society.

While the origins of this day are rooted in South Africa's complex history, its contemporary meaning is forward-looking. It calls citizens, institutions, and communities to reflect on how we contribute to building a more inclusive, understanding, and resilient nation. Reconciliation is not a single event, but a continuous process that unfolds through dialogue, empathy, and intentional action.

For many South Africans, this period is a time of return to families, hometowns, and familiar spaces. It becomes an opportunity to reconnect, acknowledge

the year's challenges and achievements, and re-establish the bonds that hold communities together. In this sense, reconciliation is not only national; it is also personal. It takes place within homes, workplaces, and daily interactions where respect, understanding, and dignity are expressed.

As the year draws to a close, the Day of Reconciliation invites each of us to reflect on the role we play in strengthening unity. It is a reminder that reconciliation is advanced through the choices we make, how we treat one another, how we respond to difference, and how we work together to build a society where everyone feels seen and valued.

May this day offer a moment for thoughtful reflection and renewed purpose.



HAPPY  
*Birthday*  
TO YOU



## DECEMBER 2025

01	Mahlangu Nthabiseng	16	Vincent Dominique Muligidi Ampfarisaho Kuduntwane Goitsemodimo Mabala Petunia
02	Rantsho Kelebone	17	Nkanyani Basambilu Ntshulana Ozayo
03	Kekana Portia Tseleli Phindile	18	Van Rooyen Jan Adriaan
06	Mkize Dumisiwe	24	Nxumalo Langelihle Malakoane Lebohang
08	Fenyane Emerancia	27	Nkabinde Vukile Cele Sinamile
09	Makana Muriel Mabina Lilian	28	Monama Donald
12	Gilimani Zukiswa Mudzanani Mahlohonolo Naiker Lloyd Skhosana Shiela	29	Mlambo Bathandwa
13	Mashishi Evans	31	Nongauza Ongeziwe Thinane Tsietsi
14	Kolanyane Moshala		





**small business  
development**

Department:  
Small Business Development  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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