



the PULSE

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JUNE 2026



**small business
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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 DSBDB economic success initiatives, stories and voila welcome to the world of successful entrepreneurship.



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THE MONTH OF *June*

June marks an important mid-year milestone. It is a time to review performance, adjust strategy, and take advantage of rising summer consumer spending.

The month also includes MSME Day on 27 June, a United Nations observance that recognizes the global contribution of small and medium-sized enterprises.



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To date 1316 have been approved for funding through the Fund to the value of R79.6 million. This year we will exhaust the R70.4 million balance of the R150 million we contributed to the Fund.

Minister Ndabeni tabled her 2026 budget vote in Parliament

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA



Minister for Small Business Development, Stella Tembisa Ndabeni said the Small Business Development Portfolio is South Africa’s economic vehicle prioritizing structural reforms, private sector partnerships, and infrastructure investment to reduce severe unemployment and inequality, as she released her R3bn budget vote on 19 May 2026.

The SBD portfolio, has a target of supporting 1 million MSMEs and co-operatives over this 7th Administration. During the past financial year, the department supported 288,123 MSMEs, with 117,134 enterprises receiving financial backing and 170,989 enterprises benefitting from non-financial intervention and development.

To support township and rural enterprises, the department has developed the Township and Rural Economic Development and Revitalisation Policy. The DSBD portfolio for township and rural enterprises, building on the successes of 2025/26 where it disbursed more than R829 million to over 111 000 MSMEs through the Township and Rural Entrepreneurship Programme. The funding limit of TREP has now been increased from R1 million to R3 million to broaden access and deepen impact. This year the allocation is R710 million.

Continuing...

Cutting red tape and improving ease of doing business remained a priority, she said, highlighting the raising of the VAT threshold from R1m to R2.3m. This year, the Business Infrastructure Support Programme (BISP) has R314.3m to support about 10 hubs and 50 MSMEs and co-ops.

Another significant intervention making in the township and rural economy is through Asset Assist Programme. This is a grant-based intervention to support small and micro enterprises which cannot afford to take on debt with productive assets, equipment, machinery, and operational capability. Last year the department supported 938 MSMEs to the value of R190 million. This year we have allocated R215 million to provide a minimum of 860 MSMEs with productive assets that enhance their capacity, productivity, and competitiveness.

“Our Spaza Shop Support Fund, which we implement together with the DTIC, supports spaza shops with stock acquisition, formalisation, compliance, and operational sustainability. To date 1316 have been approved for funding through the Fund to the value of R79.6 million. This year we will exhaust the R70.4 million balance of the R150 million we contributed to the Fund,” the Minister said.

The Small Business Development Portfolio will introduce a digital platform for business licensing and pushing for more law reforms removing red tape for small businesses.

“We funded the pipeline of black-owned contractors for SA’s infrastructure programme, small MSME service providers and connectivity enablers in their own communities, extending digital access to rural and township areas that commercial providers have not reached.

The National Development Plan is clear that growth and jobs will come from small enterprises - around 90% of new jobs and 60% of new economic value. Building the township and rural economy was a priority, and the new budget triples the funding limit at the Township and Rural Entrepreneurship Programme (TREP) from R1m to R3m.”

“We will continue to provide both financial and non-financial support to co-operatives, with a target of supporting 50 co-operatives in the 2026/27 financial year. An amount of R63.5 million has been allocated.”

“The other key instrument we have deployed to build the township and rural economy is the Business Infrastructure Support Programme (BISP), which

builds MSME Hubs, supports industrial parks revitalisation, and provides equipment, energy solutions and shared production infrastructure for MSMEs and co-operatives. This year we will allocate R314.3 million to BISP to support 10 Hubs and Shared Infrastructure Facilities and support a minimum of 50 MSME’s and co-operatives with essential equipment, machinery, technology, and energy solutions,” the Minister said.

Ndabeni committed the new budget to supporting one million small businesses, or MSMEs, up from 288,123 in 2025.

During the past financial year, SEDFA prioritized previously disadvantaged groups and underdeveloped areas:

- Black-owned enterprises received R2.3 billion.
- Rural enterprises were injected with R1.2 billion to stimulate regional economies.
- Women-led businesses were empowered with R1.2 billion.
- Youth-owned enterprises received R501 million.
- Township economies were revitalised with R383 million.”

Ndabeni said “Resilience was key as the ripples of global tensions. supply chain disruptions and price increases hurt small businesses and farmers most, especially in townships and rural areas.”

“This year, we are going bigger and tailoring our financial products for niche sectors and constituencies.” she said.

The recently launched Imbali for Her programme will expand affordable finance and business support for women-owned enterprises, backed by R300 million this year. As announced last year, a revitalised Youth Entrepreneurship Fund, valued at R300 million, to be launched during Youth Month to support young entrepreneurs through finance, incubation, mentorship, and innovation support.

A R150 million Creative Sector Fund will be launched in the second half of the year, providing essential funding for our creative entrepreneurs. The redesigned R100 million Inyamazane Fund for Military Veterans, is scheduled for launch in July 2026.



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Imbali For Her is a programme of the Department of Small Business Development and the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency dedicated to advancing women’s economic participation.

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA

Imbali For Her sets to empower women-owned enterprises



The Minister for Small Business Development, Stella Tembisa Ndabeni, led the launch of Imbali For Her Women Entrepreneurship programme at Mittah Seperepere Convention Centre in Kimberly.

This programme is a gamechanger in the fight to empower women entrepreneurs (MSMEs), by providing the much sought-after financial assistance and business support. Imbali For Her launch will be the first of its kind in the Northern Cape and will assist the largely marginalised women in peri-urban and rural communities to venture into the business world.

This initiative aligns with national priorities to foster economic transformation and gender equity by

creating an enabling environment where women-owned businesses can thrive. By integrating financial and non-financial support, SEDFA aims to increase the survival rate and growth potential of women entrepreneurs, ultimately contributing to job creation and broader socio-economic development within the Frances Baard District and beyond.

While notable progress has been made in enterprise development, women entrepreneurs still face systemic barriers such as limited access to finance, restricted market opportunities, and insufficient business support systems. These challenges continue to hamper their ability to scale and sustain successful ventures.

Continuing...



SEDFA Chairperson, Patrick Makape Ralehoko gave opening remarks and stressed the urgency of fostering stronger partnerships among provincial government, municipalities, and private stakeholders to accelerate the development of MSMEs, with particular attention to empowering youth and women entrepreneurs. He noted that coordinated efforts are essential to unlocking the sector's full economic potential and ensuring inclusive growth.

In response to these persistent obstacles, the Small Enterprise Development Finance Agency (SEDFA) introduced Imbali For Her as its first fully integrated support initiative. This programme uniquely combines financial assistance with structured non-financial interventions, including comprehensive business development training, mentorship, and market access facilitation. This approach marks a significant shift toward a more holistic and inclusive model of enterprise development, acknowledging that sustainable business growth requires more than just access to capital.

The programme aims to empower women entrepreneurs by providing them with the critical tools and networks necessary to overcome traditional barriers and compete effectively in diverse markets. Through tailored training modules and one-on-one mentorship, participants gain enhanced skills in business management, financial literacy, and strategic planning. Additionally, Imbali For Her facilitates connections between women-led enterprises and potential customers, suppliers, and industry partners to expand their market reach.

At the launch event, stakeholders from government, private sector, and civil society reaffirmed their support for Imbali For Her, highlighting the programme's role in addressing gender disparities in entrepreneurship. The collaborative effort is expected to create a sustainable pipeline of empowered women business

owners who can actively participate in and contribute to South Africa's inclusive economic future.

The Minister of Small Business Development, Stella Tembisa Ndabeni, delivered keynote remarks emphasising government's commitment to advancing women's economic empowerment in South Africa.

"Imbali For Her is a programme of the Department of Small Business Development and the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency dedicated to advancing women's economic participation and enterprise growth across the entrepreneurial value chain.

This initiative emanates from the commitment I announced during our 2025 Budget Vote, where we committed to establishing a dedicated women's empowerment fund," the Minister said.

The programme will promote inclusive growth by giving women the tools, support and opportunities they need to succeed, including blended finance through loans and grants, business training and skills development, mentorship, networking opportunities, and safe, supportive spaces for women in business.

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"This initiative is about advancing the unfinished work of economic inclusion and ensuring that women entrepreneurs are recognised not as peripheral participants in the economy, but as central drivers of growth, innovation and employment creation. It is about strengthening our collective commitment to ensuring that women-owned enterprises have access to the support, opportunities and resources required not only to survive, but to thrive," the Minister said.

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Continuing...

The Minister noted that women are central to the country's economic growth, highlighting their role as drivers of innovation, job creation, and community development. She acknowledged that despite their contributions, women entrepreneurs continue to face systemic barriers, including limited access to finance, markets, and business development support. She stressed that addressing these challenges remains a priority for government.

She explained that the Imbali For Her Programme, implemented by the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency, was developed in direct response to the needs expressed by women entrepreneurs across the country. Drawing from consultations with over 4,500 women, the Minister indicated that the programme was designed to provide a holistic support ecosystem that goes beyond financial assistance to include mentorship, skills development, and market access opportunities.

The Minister further highlighted the symbolic meaning of the programme name, stating that "Imbali," meaning flower, represents growth, resilience, and potential, while "For Her" reflects the programme's dedicated focus on empowering women. She indicated that the name captures government's intention to nurture and grow women-owned enterprises so that they can thrive within the broader economy.

In her remarks, the Minister also took the opportunity to promote other programmes offered by the Department of Small Business Development. She outlined that the Department continues to implement a range of initiatives aimed at supporting small businesses, including financial support programmes, enterprise and supplier development initiatives, township and rural entrepreneurship support, and capacity-building interventions focused on improving business skills and digital transformation.

She emphasised that these programmes form part of a broader ecosystem designed to ensure inclusive participation in the economy, particularly for women, youth, and entrepreneurs in underserved communities. The Minister further underscored the

importance of partnerships, calling on the private sector and other stakeholders to collaborate with government in creating an enabling environment for small businesses to grow.

Minister reaffirmed government's commitment to supporting women entrepreneurs, noting that their participation in the economy is essential for building a more inclusive and prosperous South Africa. She encouraged women entrepreneurs to take full advantage of the opportunities presented through Imbali For Her and other government support programmes.

Over the last three years, SEDFA reached 495,804 women beneficiaries across various programmes. Importantly, 60% of these beneficiaries were women from rural areas and township communities. Township women-owned enterprises benefited from R845.3 million in support, while R66.7 million was directed towards women with disabilities. Through these interventions, more than 536,530 jobs were sustained and created. These figures demonstrate not only the scale of government support, but also the critical role women continue to play in driving economic activity, sustaining livelihoods and strengthening communities across our country.

This intervention reflects government's commitment to women's economic participation and inclusive growth. Over the next three years, government will invest R897 million in the women's entrepreneurship programme, benefiting about 975 women-owned enterprises. Of these beneficiaries, 50% will come from rural areas and townships, while 8% will be women-owned enterprises for persons with disabilities, keeping inclusion at the centre of the programme.

Imbali For Her represents a pioneering model of women's enterprise support, combining capital access with capacity-building and market integration to foster a vibrant, equitable, and resilient women-led business ecosystem.



DSBD in collaboration with cidb launches the cutting-edge Construction Fund

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA



On 12 May 2026, the Minister for Small Business Development, Stella Tembisa Ndabeni launched the groundbreaking Construction Fund at Modderfontein in Johannesburg. This event marked a significant step toward supporting Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in South Africa's construction sector.

The construction sector is a key driver of economic growth and infrastructure development, supporting employment, industrial expansion, and essential public infrastructure such as housing and transport. It plays a central role in the government's economic development and inclusive growth agenda.

Despite its importance, MSMEs in the construction sector face major challenges in accessing affordable

financing due to limited collateral, weak credit histories, and perceived high risk by traditional lenders. These issues are compounded by cash flow problems caused by delayed payments, rising input costs, and restricted access to bulk procurement opportunities.

Since 2014, the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) has introduced various incentive programs aligned with the Business Architecture Model (BAM). These programs aim to foster sustainable and competitive MSMEs by providing effective and accessible incentives that support national priorities. Additionally, the National Informal Business Upliftment Strategy (NIBUS) targets entrepreneurs in the informal economy, focusing on designated groups such as women, youth, and people with disabilities in townships and rural areas.



MSMEs also face complex regulatory compliance and administrative hurdles. Fragmented support from financial and regulatory bodies has limited the effectiveness of existing programs, disproportionately affecting historically disadvantaged businesses and slowing sector transformation.

To address these challenges, SEDFA and cidb have partnered to establish the Construction Fund, a blended finance initiative that integrates financial support with regulatory compliance and sector development interventions. The Fund aims to bridge financing gaps while ensuring MSMEs comply with regulatory standards.

By providing integrated financial and compliance support, the Construction Fund seeks to unlock the potential of MSMEs, enhance their competitiveness, and contribute to economic growth, job creation, and transformation within South Africa's construction industry.

Several key speakers addressed the critical role of the construction sector in South Africa's economic growth and infrastructure development, emphasizing the need to support MSMEs within this sector. Programme Director, SEDFA Acting CEO, Mr. Nkosikhona Mbatha highlighted the importance of promoting enterprise-led growth and improving MSMEs' access to affordable and sustainable financing. He emphasized the necessity of collaboration between government

bodies and the private sector to create an enabling environment for construction enterprises to thrive.

SEDFA Chairperson, Mr Patrick Makape Ralehoko stressed the urgency of fostering stronger partnerships among provincial government, municipalities, and private stakeholders to accelerate the development of MSMEs, with particular attention to empowering youth and women entrepreneurs in the construction industry. She noted that coordinated efforts are essential to unlocking the sector's full economic potential and ensuring inclusive growth.

cidb CEO, Mr. Bongani Dladla drew attention to the significant challenges MSMEs face, such as limited collateral, weak credit histories, and high-risk perceptions by lenders. He affirmed the government's commitment to addressing these barriers through the Construction Fund, which aims to provide targeted financial support alongside regulatory compliance measures to stimulate growth and job creation within the sector.

SEDFA CIO, Mr Richard Manzini underscored the role of capable municipalities in supporting MSMEs by addressing governance weaknesses and infrastructure deficiencies that hinder local economic development. He noted that effective municipal support is vital to the success of initiatives like the Construction Fund.

Continuing...

Minister Ndabeni emphasized that the Construction Fund represents a blended finance mechanism designed not only to close financing gaps but also to integrate regulatory compliance and sector development interventions. She explained that this dual approach ensures MSMEs receive comprehensive support, improving their competitiveness and contributing to economic transformation within the construction industry.

The Minister highlighted government efforts to simplify licensing and reduce regulatory hurdles through digital platforms and one-stop service centres, facilitating easier business operations for MSMEs. She also drew attention to complementary government programs, such as the Small Enterprise Manufacturing Support Programme (SEMSP) and the Township and Rural Entrepreneurship Programme (TREP), which aim to empower historically disadvantaged entrepreneurs and foster inclusive growth.

The cidb Board Member, Dr Julia Petla explained that the Construction Fund is a strategic, blended finance initiative designed to overcome these barriers by combining financial support with regulatory compliance and sector development. He stressed that the Fund aims to provide MSMEs with not only the necessary credit facilities but also guidance to meet industry standards, thereby enhancing their competitiveness and sustainability.

He further noted the importance of collaboration between SEDFA, cidb, municipalities, and the private sector to ensure the Fund's success. The cidb Board Member underscored the commitment to targeting historically disadvantaged entrepreneurs, including youth and women, to foster inclusive growth and transformation within the construction industry.

Speakers collectively recognized that fragmented support and complex regulatory requirements have historically limited the effectiveness of assistance to MSMEs. They viewed the Construction Fund as a vital step towards a more coordinated and holistic approach, combining financial resources with capacity-building and compliance support.

Overall, the launch conveyed a strong message that the Construction Fund is poised to unlock the potential of MSMEs in the construction sector by addressing both financial and regulatory challenges. This initiative is expected to boost enterprise competitiveness, drive job creation, and foster transformation, thereby contributing substantially to South Africa's broader economic development and inclusive growth objectives.





Kwantu Guesthouse, where reliability meets perfection

BY: LUBABALO SIGONYELA



This is a boutique hotel nestled in a quiet, leafy suburb of Milnerton Ridge, offering a perfect blend of comfort and convenience. Established in 2004, starting with only 5 rooms and now has up to 33 stunning suites across spacious properties. Owned and managed by Nocwaka Mazaleni, it has grown in leaps and bounds from its previous rundown state to a luxury hotel.

Kwantu Guesthouse is a haven of tranquillity and elegance. Situated close to Cape Town's vibrant city centre, the guesthouse combines contemporary design with a warm, welcoming atmosphere. Indulge in our luxurious rooms and experience the best of Cape Town's culture and nightlife just a short drive away. Their three-bedroom self-catering units are a perfect choice for families, groups, or guests planning

longer stays as it is based in a serene neighbourhood, they offer spacious units with all the comfort one needs to relax, unwind, and enjoy a truly memorable stay. Kwantu guesthouse provides a peaceful escape with easy access to the city's top attractions.

"At Kwantu Guesthouse, you experience unparalleled experience, where sophistication meets relaxation. Located near the picturesque Table View Nature Reserve, this guesthouse offers breathtaking views and top-notch amenities. Our attentive staff is dedicated to making your stay unforgettable. Whether you're exploring Cape Town's natural beauty or attending a business meeting, this is your ideal home away from home."

Mazaleni said.

Continuing...

Kwantu Cape Town is equipped to host various functions, events, workshops, conferences, and training sessions. Their dedicated team goes an extra mile, assisting in creating a tailor-made itinerary for their guests to the Mother City. It is surrounded by a wealth of local amenities and activities. It is surrounded by shopping centres, restaurants, cafes, cultural landmarks, museums, and entertainment venues.

Mazaleni added that "Our three guesthouses, located in close proximity to one another, are designed to cater to the diverse needs of our clients, whether for day stays or extended visits. They are positioned perfectly for both local and international guests, our establishments provide easy access to the Central Business District for business travellers and various attractions for leisure visitors. Enjoy nearby beaches, wine farms, Table Mountain, the V&A Waterfront, and more."

At Kwantu Guesthouse, they strive to make one's stay as comfortable and enjoyable as possible. And their rooms are equipped with: Free high-speed Wi-Fi, Air conditioning, Flat-screen TVs with satellite channels, Plush, comfortable bedding, En-suite bathrooms with complimentary toiletries, Mini-fridges and coffee/tea making facilities, Work desks, seating areas, and daily housekeeping services.

The 33 fully furnished hotel rooms, with an unending supply of borehole water, dining hall, small conference venue, solar energy, electric fence and a 24-hour security now standing as a beacon of hope in Cape Town.

With the assistance of SEDFA, the Guesthouse has turned into a jewel.





Youth Empowerment Through Entrepreneurship: Honouring the Legacy of June 16

BY: MOSHALA JANE KOLANYANE

Every year on June 16, South Africans commemorate Youth Day, a day that honours the courage, resilience, and sacrifice of young people who stood up against the injustices of apartheid during the 1976 Soweto Uprising. What began as a peaceful protest against the use of Afrikaans as a compulsory language of instruction in schools became one of the most defining moments in South Africa's history. Thousands of students marched through the streets of Soweto demanding equal and quality education, only to be met with brutality from the apartheid regime.

The events of June 16, 1976, demonstrated the power of young people to challenge injustice and influence the future of a nation. Today, nearly five decades later the youth of South Africa continue to face significant challenges, including unemployment, poverty, inequality, and limited access to economic opportunities. However, just as the youth of 1976 fought for political freedom and equality, today's generation has the opportunity to drive economic transformation through entrepreneurship and innovation.

Youth empowerment through entrepreneurship has become one of the most important tools for building a sustainable and inclusive economy. By equipping young people with the skills, resources, and opportunities to start and grow businesses, South

Africa can unlock the full potential of its youth while creating jobs and strengthening communities.

South Africa has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in the world, making it increasingly important to encourage alternative pathways to economic participation. Entrepreneurship offers young people an opportunity not only to earn an income, but also to become creators of employment and drivers of economic growth. Young entrepreneurs bring fresh ideas, creativity, energy, and innovation into the economy. With the rise of technology and digital platforms, many young South Africans are finding new ways to solve problems, provide services, and build businesses in industries such as agriculture, technology, tourism, fashion, media, and manufacturing. Through entrepreneurship, young people are able to transform their talents and passions into sustainable livelihoods.

Entrepreneurship also promotes independence and self-reliance. Rather than waiting for opportunities to come to them, young people can take initiative and create opportunities for themselves and others. This spirit of innovation and determination reflects the same courage demonstrated by the youth of 1976, a generation that refused to accept limitations placed upon them.

Continuing...

Youth Day is not only about remembering the past, but also about building the future. The bravery of the students who participated in the Soweto Uprising reminds us that young people have always played a critical role in shaping South Africa's future. Today's youth have the responsibility and potential to contribute towards economic development, social progress, and nation building.

One of the greatest ways to honour the legacy of June 16 is by investing in education, skills development, and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people. Access to business support programmes, mentorship, funding, and training can help empower young entrepreneurs to overcome challenges and build successful enterprises.

Government departments, private sector organisations, educational institutions and development agencies all have an important role to play in creating an enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship. By working together, stakeholders can help reduce barriers that prevent young people from participating fully in the economy.

Many young entrepreneurs continue to face obstacles such as limited access to finance, lack of business experience, inadequate market access, and insufficient digital resources. Addressing these challenges requires targeted interventions that support innovation, enterprise development, and economic inclusion.

Small businesses and start-ups are essential contributors to economic growth and job creation in South Africa. When young entrepreneurs succeed, they create employment opportunities not only for themselves, but also for others within their communities. This contributes directly to poverty reduction and community development.

Entrepreneurship also encourages problem solving and innovation. Young people are often best positioned to identify the challenges affecting their communities and develop practical solutions to address them. From creating digital platforms that connect local businesses to customers, to introducing sustainable agricultural practices and community-based services, youth led enterprises continue to make a meaningful impact across the country. Digital transformation has further opened new opportunities for youth entrepreneurship. Social media, e-commerce platforms, and digital marketing tools have enabled young business owners to reach wider audiences and compete in both local and global markets. As technology continues to evolve, digital skills and innovation will remain key drivers of future economic growth.

As South Africa commemorates Youth Day, it is important to recognise that the future of the country lies in the hands of its young people. The determination and courage shown by the youth of 1976 continue to inspire generations today. While the struggles faced by young people may look different in modern times, the need for empowerment, opportunity, and transformation remains just as important. Empowering young people through entrepreneurship is not simply about business development, it is about restoring dignity, creating hope, and building a more inclusive economy. It is about giving young people the confidence and support they need to pursue their dreams and contribute meaningfully to society.

This Youth Month, let us continue to honour the legacy of June 16 by investing in the growth, development, and empowerment of South Africa's youth. Through entrepreneurship, innovation, and collaboration, young people can continue to drive positive change and shape a brighter future for generations to come.





The Digital Generation: How Youth Are Using Technology to Build Businesses

BY: TAMRY ESIRI

As South Africa commemorates Youth Month, attention is being drawn to the innovative ways in which young people are using technology to build businesses and create economic opportunities.

South Africa's youth continue to face significant economic challenges, particularly high unemployment levels. According to Statistics South Africa, the youth unemployment rate remained above 46% in the first quarter of 2025, highlighting the ongoing need for innovative pathways to economic participation.

Despite these challenges, many young people are increasingly turning to technology to create their own opportunities. From online clothing stores and digital marketing agencies to photography businesses, tutoring services, content creation, and e-commerce ventures, young entrepreneurs are using smartphones, social media platforms, and digital tools to reach customers and grow their brands.

The rise of platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, Facebook Marketplace, and WhatsApp Business has made it easier for young entrepreneurs to market products and services without the high costs traditionally associated with starting a business. Social media has evolved beyond entertainment into a powerful business tool that enables youth to connect directly with audiences, build brand identities, and generate income.

According to an article by Reuters, the growth of South Africa's e-commerce sector further demonstrates the increasing role of technology in entrepreneurship. Industry research projects that South Africa's online retail market will continue expanding rapidly, driven largely by digital platforms and changing consumer behaviour.

Government and development agencies have also recognised the growing importance of digital innovation and youth entrepreneurship in strengthening the small business sector. Through initiatives such as the Youth Challenge Fund (YCF), implemented by the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA), young entrepreneurs are being supported through funding, mentorship, and business development opportunities, particularly in technology and innovation-driven sectors. According to SEDFA, the programme aims to foster job creation and economic participation among youth-owned enterprises.

Youth entrepreneurship is increasingly viewed as an important contributor to South Africa's long-term economic growth. During a 2025 engagement on youth entrepreneurship, Deputy President Paul Mashatile highlighted the importance of empowering young entrepreneurs as part of building a more inclusive and sustainable economy (SAnews).

Continuing...

Technology is also helping to level the playing field for young people in township and rural communities. With access to a smartphone and internet connection, entrepreneurs are now able to advertise products, provide services, communicate with customers, and receive payments digitally, often without the need for a physical storefront.

While challenges such as limited funding, data costs, and access to resources remain, young South Africans continue to demonstrate resilience, creativity, and innovation. Across the country, youth are proving that

technology can be more than a communication tool. It can be a gateway to entrepreneurship, empowerment, and economic participation.

As South Africa commemorates Youth Month, the growing presence of youth-led digital businesses serves as a reminder of the potential, innovation, and determination that young people continue to bring to the country's economy and future.

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The Power of Teamwork

BY: TAMRY ESIRI

Behind every successful initiative, event, and programme at the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) is a team working together towards a shared goal. Collaboration remains an important driver of the Department's ability to deliver effectively and consistently across its various areas of work.

Research continues to highlight the importance of teamwork in organisational success. According to the Harvard Business Review, strong collaboration within organisations can improve communication, innovation, and overall performance. Effective teamwork allows employees to combine different skills, perspectives, and expertise to achieve common objectives.

Within the workplace, teamwork enables the integration of diverse strengths across planning, coordination, implementation, and reporting processes. Each team member contributes to ensuring that projects and programmes are delivered successfully and efficiently.

In fast-paced working environments, collaboration also creates an important support system. Open communication and mutual respect assist teams in solving challenges collectively, sharing responsibilities, and maintaining productivity during demanding periods. A report by McKinsey & Company notes that collaborative workplaces are often better positioned to adapt to challenges and maintain operational effectiveness.

Importantly, teamwork extends beyond individual units. Collaboration across branches, entities, and external stakeholders strengthens the Department's overall impact and supports more coordinated service delivery. By working together, organisations are better able to align efforts, maximise resources, and improve outcomes.

As DSBD continues to implement programmes and initiatives in support of small businesses and cooperatives, fostering a culture of teamwork remains essential. Strong collaboration not only improves performance but also helps build a more cohesive and effective organisation.

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DSBD and SEDFA Host A Successful Post-Budget Vote Stakeholder Engagement in Johannesburg

BY: TANZA CHABALALA

The Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) and the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA) successfully hosted a Post-Budget Vote media and stakeholder engagement which was held at The Venue, Melrose Arch in Johannesburg on 21 May 2026.

The engagement followed the presentation of the Small Business Development Portfolio Budget Vote to Members of Parliament on 19 May 2026, where the Minister of Small Business Development, Hon Stella Tembisa Ndabeni, outlined the department's proposed budget, strategic priorities, and key programmes aimed at supporting small enterprises and advancing inclusive economic growth in South Africa.

The event brought together key stakeholders from government, the MSME sector, cooperatives, traditional leadership, public entities, and the media to engage on the department's priorities, funding interventions, and collaborative initiatives aimed at strengthening entrepreneurship and small business development.

The programme opened with the singing of the South African National Anthem, setting a formal and patriotic tone for the engagement. This was followed by the screening of two newly launched promotional videos showcasing flagship initiatives: the Construction Fund, which supports businesses in the construction sector, and the "Imbali for Her" initiative, a funding programme dedicated to empowering women entrepreneurs.

Programme Director, Ms Nthabeleng Mokitini-Dlamini, welcomed attendees and outlined the objectives and structure of the day's programme. She emphasised the importance of collaboration between government, business, and communities in building an inclusive and thriving economy, noting that the platform was designed to promote dialogue, transparency, and shared solutions for MSME growth.

Delivering the opening keynote address, Minister Ndabeni expressed appreciation to stakeholders, partners, and members of the media for their continued support towards MSME and cooperative development.

Continuing...

She highlighted the critical role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in driving economic growth, job creation, and inclusive participation, in line with the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030.

"The growth of MSMEs is central to building an inclusive economy and creating sustainable employment opportunities for our people. As a government, we remain committed to ensuring that entrepreneurs receive the support they need to grow and succeed," the Minister said.

The Minister acknowledged key challenges raised by entrepreneurs, including delays in feedback on funding applications and late payments to service providers by government departments. She noted that these issues continue to negatively affect the sustainability of small businesses.

Minister Ndabeni introduced the "OneSEDFA" digital platform, designed to improve efficiency, accessibility, and turnaround times in funding applications. She indicated that applicants are expected to receive feedback within 40 days once the system is fully operational.

"We have listened to the concerns of entrepreneurs regarding delayed responses and limited access to services. The OneSEDFA digital platform is designed to improve turnaround times and ensure that support reaches businesses more efficiently and transparently," she said.

The Minister also addressed accessibility barriers faced by entrepreneurs in rural and township areas, where service points are often far from communities. She announced plans to introduce mobile service units to bring SEDFA services closer to underserved areas, reducing travel costs and improving access to government support.

The keynote address was followed by an open stakeholder engagement and panel discussion with participation from the Minister; the Director-General of DSBD, Ms Thulisile Manzini; Mr Makhahlele Richard Manzini, Chief Information Officer (CIO) at SEDFA; and Mr Molatlhegi Kgauwe, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at SITA.

The discussion provided a platform for direct engagement on key issues affecting MSMEs and cooperatives. Stakeholders raised concerns around administrative red tape, access to funding, market entry barriers, and increasing competition within local business sectors.

A significant focus was placed on delayed payments within government procurement systems, particularly affecting MSMEs that supply goods and services to the public sector. Panel members acknowledged the impact of these delays on cash flow and business sustainability and emphasised the need for improved accountability and faster payment processes.



Continuing...



The engagement also explored the role of digital transformation and institutional collaboration in improving service delivery, transparency, and access to opportunities for entrepreneurs.

In her closing remarks, Minister Ndabeni thanked all stakeholders, partners, entrepreneurs, and members of the media for their active participation and constructive contributions.

She reaffirmed the department's commitment to building a supportive and inclusive ecosystem for MSMEs and cooperatives, and to ensuring that government programmes are accessible, efficient, and responsive to the needs of small businesses.

“Through collaboration, innovation, and accountability, we can build a stronger and more resilient economy that benefits all South Africans,” she said.

The engagement was successfully convened and achieved its objectives of strengthening communication between DSB, stakeholders, and the media, while promoting awareness of strategic priorities and funding interventions aimed at supporting MSMEs and cooperatives across the country.



HAPPY
Birthday
to you



01

- Sithole Nozipho
- Nevhufumba Ndivhuwo
- Moeti Zingiswa

03

- Khosa Eulenda
- Ndou Maanda

04

- Mbhele Ntombodumo

05

- Sikomela Onke

06

- Nemaembeni Rudzani
- Thokwane Zinhle

10

- Ntuli Zodwa

11

- Langa Patricia

12

- Kekana Madimetja
- Nekwe Bhekamadoda

13

- Mohapelo Kefuoe

15

- Kaseke Letta Lebogang
- Mbalana Luyanda

17

- Netshiswinzhe Mashudu
- Mhambi Azola

18

- Boemo Tidimalo
- Mothobekhi Mighty

19

- Nkosi Bekizwe Simon

22

- Radebe Nompumelelo

23

- Ncha Matome

25

- Visser Zodwa
- Mashishi Ramasela Johanna

26

- Papale Lebogang

28

- Manyelo Noko

30

- Ndabeni Stella Tembisa



small business
development

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