



MYDISTRICTTODAY



A **NATION** THAT **WORKS** FOR ALL

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PRIORITY 3: BUILD A CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.

Youth dialogue raises awareness on South Africa's SADC Chairship

By Karabo Diale; GCIS, North West

The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), in partnership with Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality and the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC), hosted a Southern African Development Community (SADC) youth dialogue at the Ramotshere Moiloa Municipal Chambers.

The dialogue aimed to raise awareness about SADC and South Africa's upcoming chairship of the regional organisation. Young people learnt about SADC's history, its membership and role in promoting regional integration, economic growth, poverty reduction, peace and political stability. Discussions also focused on the benefits of regional cooperation, including duty-free market access for more than 95% of regional goods, easier cross-border trade and cooperation on infrastructure and security.

South Africa will host the 46th Ordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, from 16 to 17 August 2026. The summit will mark the start of South Africa's one-year tenure as rotating

Chair of SADC under the theme: "Resilient, Sustainable and Inclusive Industrialisation through Infrastructure Development, Agricultural and Critical Minerals Transformation in Pursuit of a Just World".

South Africa was elected incoming Chair of SADC at the 45th Ordinary SADC Summit held in Madagascar in August 2025. It took on the role of Interim Chair after the Extraordinary Virtual SADC Summit on 7 November 2025. The interim chairship has enabled South Africa to prepare for its full term as Chair from August 2026.

The IEC also encouraged young people to register and vote in the upcoming 2026 Local Government Elections (LGEs), highlighting the importance of active citizen participation in strengthening democracy.

The dialogue strengthened young people's understanding of regional integration and democratic participation, while encouraging them to play an active role in shaping the future of South Africa and the SADC region.



Ms Omphemetse Sebogodi from the IEC presents an update on Ramotshere Moiloa Local Municipality's preparations for the upcoming 2026 LGEs during the SADC Youth Dialogue.



Young people engage in discussions during the SADC Youth Dialogue at the Ramotshere Moiloa Municipal Chambers.



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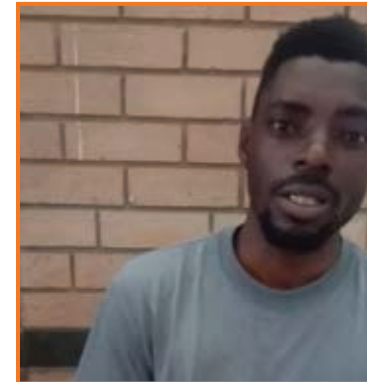
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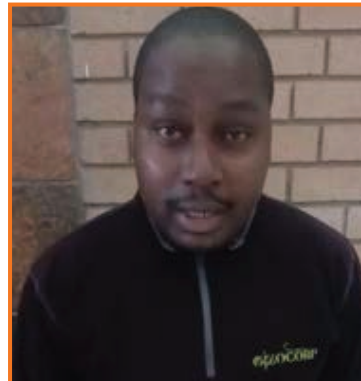
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Ms Tshegofatso Malwale:
"I am happy that GCIS informed us about SADC, because I did not know about it."



Mr Joseph Merendas:
"These dialogues are important because they help us understand what is happening in our country and communities."



Mr Tshepo Mongai:
"I will share the information I received today with my peers."

PRIORITY 3: BUILD A CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.

Worcester celebrates third anniversary of SASL as an official language

By Geraldine Thopps; GCIS, Western Cape

DeafSA Western Cape celebrated the third anniversary of South African Sign Language (SASL) as South Africa's 12th official language on 19 July 2026 in Worcester. The event brought together members of the Deaf and hearing communities, government representatives, educators, advocates and community partners to recognise the progress made since SASL became an official language in 2023.

Speakers reflected on the journey of the Deaf community in South Africa and the role of SASL in education, communication and equal participation. They encouraged continued collaboration to remove barriers and ensure that deaf people have equal access to information and public services.

The Provincial Chairperson of DeafSA Western Cape, Mr Jean-Claude Smit, emphasised the importance of protecting language rights. Cllr Vernon Bedworth of the Breede Valley Municipality reaffirmed the municipality's commitment to promoting accessibility and inclusion.

The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) Provincial Director, Ms Geraldine Thopps, reiterated government's commitment to ensuring that all South Africans, including people with hearing impairments, have access to government information.

A highlight of the programme was a presentation by the Provincial Director of DeafSA Western Cape, Mr Jabaar Mohamed, who outlined the history and development of SASL. He explained its importance as an official language, discussed the remaining challenges and shared a vision for the future of SASL in South Africa.

DeafSA Western Cape also acknowledged the support of its partners, including the Deaf community of Cape Town, Boland College, the Western Cape Language Committee, Western Cape departments of Health and Cultural Affairs and Sport, Delabat School for the Deaf, Worcester Provincial Hospital, GCIS and the Breede Valley Municipality.

The celebration reinforced the need for cooperation to promote SASL and ensure that deaf people had equal access to information, services and opportunities. It also served as a reminder that language rights were essential to building an inclusive society where everyone can participate fully.



Representatives from DeafSA, the National Institute for the Deaf, GCIS, Breede Valley Municipality and the Department of Education.



Provincial Director of DeafSA, Mr Mohamed, presents on the history, achievements and future of SASL during the anniversary celebration.



Representatives from partner organisations listen to presentations by DeafSA and other institutions during the SASL anniversary celebration in Worcester, Western Cape.

PRIORITY 1: DRIVE INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND JOB CREATION.

Youth empowerment dialogue promotes opportunities in agriculture

By Mokgoma Nkopodi; GCIS, Limpopo

On 19 June 2026, the Sekhukhune District Municipality hosted a Youth Empowerment Dialogue in Agriculture at the Groblersdal Agricultural Hall in the Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality.

The dialogue brought together young people and key stakeholders to promote agriculture as a viable career and business opportunity and to share information on programmes that support youth participation in the agricultural sector.

The event was held in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, National Youth Development Agency, Tompi Selek Agricultural College and the Sekhukhune Local Economic Development unit.

In his welcoming address, Cllr Mogabi Kanana Leokana, said that the dialogue aimed to empower young people through agriculture; a sector that supports economic growth, job creation, rural development and food security.

Delivering the keynote address, the Acting Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality, Cllr Kukie Sefala-Makgolane, said that Youth Month provided an opportunity for South Africa to reflect on the bravery and sacrifice of the youth of 1976. She also highlighted the municipality's partnership with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in implementing rural development initiatives, including the Agri-Park Programme.

The dialogue emphasised the important role young people can play in shaping the future of agriculture. By connecting them with information, opportunities and support programmes, the initiative encouraged greater participation in a sector that is vital to the country's economic growth, job creation and food security.



Young people attend the Youth Empowerment Dialogue in Agriculture at the Groblersdal Agricultural Hall in the Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality.



A young participant contributes to the discussion during the dialogue.



Cllr Leokana delivers opening remarks during the Youth Empowerment Dialogue in Agriculture.



Acting Executive Mayor, Cllr Sefala-Makgolane, delivers the keynote address during dialogue.



Ms Maureen Mmekwa:

"I am grateful for this project because it will make life easier for us as mothers and for children at school. Without water, life is unbearable and we are not always at home when the water tankers deliver water."



Mr Jan Marakalla:

"I hope and pray that this is not a vote-catching gimmick that will end after the elections. We have suffered because of unreliable water supply in the area and many promises have been made. The fact that this promise was made in a church gives us hope."

PRIORITY 3: BUILD A CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.

President Ramaphosa launches National Water Access Acceleration Programme

By Siyabonga Mdhuli and Robbie Senoelo; GCIS, Gauteng

President Cyril Ramaphosa visited Kekana Gardens and the Klipdrift Water Treatment Plant in Hammanskraal on 18 July 2026, to launch the National Water Access Acceleration Programme (NWAAP) and engage with the community on local water challenges.

The launch marked the handover of 67 decentralised groundwater supply schemes across Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape through the Department of Water and Sanitation. The initiative formed part of Nelson Mandela Day and Mandela Month activities.

The programme was created to improve access to safe and reliable drinking water for communities. In Hammanskraal, it is expected to improve water supply to households, schools, clinics and local businesses. President Ramaphosa said the launch was about delivering results rather than making new promises. He described the programme as an important step towards improving water security for communities.

He unveiled one of the new boreholes at the Maranatha Reformed Church of Christ in Kekana Gardens. The 67 groundwater schemes honour Nelson Mandela's 67 years of public service and reflect the spirit of service associated with Nelson Mandela Day.

The President was joined by the Minister of Water and Sanitation, Ms Pemmy Majodina; Gauteng Premier, Mr Panyaza Lesufi; Deputy Minister of Police, Ms Polly Boshie; Deputy Executive Mayor of the City of Tshwane, Mr Eugene Modise; and representatives from Rand Water and Magalies Water.

The programme demonstrated cooperation between national, provincial and local government, as well as the two water entities. While the initiative will improve water supply, it also forms part of ongoing efforts to address broader water challenges facing Tshwane.

Premier Lesufi said that the initiative formed part of the broader Mandela Month programme to improve the lives of vulnerable communities. "We are excited that the commitment our President made is being fulfilled today. Where there was no water, water is flowing now," he said.

President Ramaphosa also called for the next phase of the project, which includes connecting the water supply to homes to be completed without delay. "We do not want the people of Hammanskraal to wait for years before water flows into the taps of their homes," he said.



President Ramaphosa launches the Magalies Water Klipdrift Package Plant in Hammanskraal as part of Mandela Day special projects.



President Ramaphosa delivers the keynote address during a community engagement.



One of the 67 boreholes launched as part of the NWAAP to mark Mandela Day.