MYDISTRICTTODAY



A NATION THAT WORKS FOR ALL

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PRIORITY 1: DRIVE INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND JOB CREATION.

Mpumalanga launches skills development zone to drive local skills development and employment opportunities

By Zwanga Matsila; GCIS, Mpumalanga

On 29 October 2026, Mpumalanga took an important step towards addressing unemployment and strengthening skills development by launching the country's first Skills Development Zone (SDZ). The initiative aimed to bridge the gap between education and training and the skills required by local industries, while creating pathways to employment and entrepreneurship. The launch was led by the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Buti Manamela, at the Nkangala District Council Chamber in Middelburg.

The event brought together key stakeholders, including the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Mr Thulasizwe Thomo; the Executive Mayor of Nkangala District Municipality, Cllr Thomas Ngwenya; the Director-General in the Office of the Premier, Ms Maggie Skosana; academics; and representatives of the embassies of Germany, France, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

Minister Manamela emphasised the importance of strengthening collaboration between government, education and training institutions, and the private sector to ensure that skills development responds to the changing needs of the economy. "The SDZ is about ensuring that the skills we develop are aligned with the needs of our local economy. By bringing government, education and training institutions, and industry together, we can create meaningful opportunities for young people, equip workers with relevant skills and establish clear pathways from training to employment," he said.

He further highlighted the importance of Mpumalanga's established economic sectors, particularly mining, electricity generation and petrochemicals, which require a skilled workforce. He noted that the SDZ would provide a coordinated approach to identifying skills gaps and ensuring that training programmes respond to both current industry demands and emerging economic opportunities.

Ms Skosana stressed the urgency of aligning skills development initiatives with the needs of existing and emerging industries, particularly as unemployment poses a substantial challenge. She highlighted the importance of coordinated efforts to ensure that education and training translate into practical economic opportunities for communities.

The SDZ will focus on identifying the occupations and competencies required by industry, strengthening training programmes and facilities, and expanding access to apprenticeships, learnerships and internships. It will also promote reskilling and upskilling opportunities to help workers adapt to changing industries, while creating opportunities for local entrepreneurs and small, medium and micro enterprises to participate in emerging economic activities.

The initiative also supports an inclusive Just Energy Transition by prioritising access to skills development opportunities for vulnerable and under-represented groups, including women, young people and people with disabilities. Through partnerships between education and training institutions, businesses, government and community stakeholders, the SDZ aims to expand access to green and digital skills, bursaries, centres of specialisation and other programmes that improve employability.

The launch of the Mpumalanga SDZ signals a commitment to building a skilled and adaptable workforce that can respond to the province's economic priorities. Through stronger partnerships and targeted skills development, the initiative seeks to support inclusive economic growth, strengthen local industries and create sustainable pathways to employment and entrepreneurship.

government communications
Department:
Government Communication and Information System
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

2030 NDP





Minister Manamela delivering the keynote address at the Mpumalanga SDZ.



Cllr Ngwenya, Minister Manamela and Mr Thomo display the Joint Declaration of Commitment and Introduction of Local Anchors for Municipalities and Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges agreement.



Mr Thomo:
"We view the launch of the Mpumalanga SDZ as an opportunity to establish training facilities and foster a collaborative skills development ecosystem that connects education and training institutions with the productive economy."



Cllr Ngwenya:
"We want to prioritise skills development for our people, particularly the youth of the Nkangala District. We want them to actively participate in the Just Energy Transition programme by equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to become manufacturers and contribute meaningfully to the local economy."

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

Matjhabeng Local Municipality celebrates Transport Month

By Ntombi Mhlambi; GCIS, Free State

Matjhabeng Local Municipality celebrated Transport Month on 22 October 2026 at the Welkom Fire Station under the theme "Building a Safe, Sustainable, Reliable and Affordable Transport System".

The event featured the launch of the Matjhabeng Transport Forum, Phase 2 of the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences system and the Safer Festive Season Campaign. K78 roadblock trailers and marked traffic vehicles were also unveiled.

Delivering the keynote address, the Executive Mayor of Matjhabeng Local Municipality, Cllr Thanduxolo Khalipha, expressed concern over the inadequate enforcement of traffic regulations, particularly the operation of taxis without permits in the area. He emphasised that law enforcement officers should not compromise when dealing with criminal elements. He called for stricter enforcement of traffic laws, including the removal of unroadworthy vehicles and those operating without the necessary permits.

Finally, in recognition of their valuable contributions to the transport sector, certificates were presented to various transport stakeholders, including Siyadlala Taxi Games, the South African National Taxi Council, the National Taxi Alliance and other role players.



Cllr Khalipha addressing stakeholders.



Newly recruited student fire fighters.



Stakeholders attending the event.

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

Defence Minister Angie Motshekga visits Sedibeng District as part of DDM working visit

By Perfect Molefe; GCIS, Gauteng

The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Ms Angie Motshekga, led a high-level District Development Model (DDM) oversight visit to the Sedibeng District Municipality in Vereeniging on 22 October 2026. The visit aimed to evaluate key regional projects, reinforce intergovernmental service delivery and directly address the welfare of local military veterans.

The DDM framework is a critical blueprint to synchronise national, provincial and local government efforts. By streamlining collaboration between the different levels of government, the framework ensures that community-driven priorities are met with swift, unified state action to uplift vulnerable groups and modernise public service infrastructure.

Accompanied by the Executive Mayor of Sedibeng District Municipality, Cllr Lerato Maloka, and Sedibeng municipal leadership, Minister Motshekga conducted an on-site inspection of the Vereeniging Fresh Produce Market. As a key initiative of the DDM, the market is central to driving regional economic growth and securing sustainable food supply chains.

During the walkabout, the delegation engaged directly with local traders and service providers. These consultations focused on identifying the strategic interventions needed to streamline operations, improve infrastructure and guarantee the market's long-term commercial viability for the broader Sedibeng community.

"This visit was intentionally designed to monitor the pulse of our DDM projects," Minister Motshekga noted, emphasising that national government is committed to providing practical support to ensure that these initiatives are both successful and sustainable.

As an important part of the day's agenda, the Minister hosted an interactive session with local military veterans and their leaders. This session was highly praised by the attendees, who saw it as a vital step towards resolving long-standing issues.

The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to hold a dedicated, deep-dive session in the near future to address outstanding veteran grievances.

Expressing his gratitude for the outreach, Mr Mohau Mphale, a military veteran, highlighted the impact of the initiative: "We are deeply encouraged that the Minister created this platform to engage with us directly and check on our overall well-being."



Cllr Maloka and Minister Motshekga during the DDM briefing.



Mr Someleze Jali, Manager of the Vereeniging Fresh Produce Market, briefing Minister Motshekga and delegates.



Ms Naledi Molaolwa:
"We are grateful that as beneficiaries of military veterans, we are given this opportunity to engage with high-ranking officials from the Defence department about our concerns."



Mr Amos Ndoro:
"It is reassuring to see the government engaging directly with service providers at the Fresh Produce Market. This willingness to support the Sedibeng Farmers Market is exactly the kind of collaboration we need."

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

Vhembe District and UNIVEN expand agro-processing to grow economy

By Netshikweta Doctrine; GCIS, Limpopo

On 15 October 2026, the Vhembe District Municipality, in partnership with the University of Venda (UNIVEN), held an agro-processing information seminar at George Phadagi Hall in Thohoyandou, under the Thulamela Local Municipality. The seminar aimed to share information that would enable the district municipality to create stable and sustainable economic development through agro-processing. As organisers, the district municipality and UNIVEN sought to promote agro-processing, taking advantage of the fact that the district is the heartland of Limpopo province and is ideally suited to the processing of agricultural products.

During his address, the Acting Executive Mayor of the Vhembe District, Cllr Anderson Mudununugu, urged farmers to embrace agro-processing using the wealth of the Vhembe District to build a strong economy for the community. “Vhembe has fertile soil that makes it the heartland of Southern Africa when it comes to the production of agricultural products. We can’t grow poorer and poorer while our agriculture is rated the best in the Southern African Development Community region. Today we call on everyone present here to join hands and ensure that agro-processing becomes a key feature of our economy. Let’s do away with the tendency to produce solely for export purposes. Exportation alone should never make us stand alone.

“Today we are gathered with the University of Venda to share how academic skills enable the district to create sustainable economic development. The Vhembe District forms an important component of the country’s agricultural landscape, producing several subtropical crops such as litchis, bananas, mangos, avocados, citrus, macadamia nuts and pecan nuts, which contribute to the country’s agricultural economy. The time is now; let’s be creative and innovative in building our economy. Our university and other key stakeholders are ready to offer critical support to our economic development programme. Let’s move to processing our products, which will enable us to create jobs," said Mudununugu.

The seminar was attended by the acting executive mayor along with representatives of the Vhembe District Municipality, UNIVEN directors, Vhembe District agro-processing farmers’ co-operatives, De Beers Group, the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency, financial institutions and the Limpopo Department of Agriculture.



Cllr Mudununugu encouraging attendees to embrace agro-processing.





Agro-processors displaying their products.



Dr Phumudzo Gift Munyai-Matshotshi:
"Institutions of higher learning are the resource centre of economic development. As the University of Venda, we champion the primary drivers of economic development by building human capital, driving technological innovation and fostering regional industry collaboration. In 2019, we were assigned the task of the South African Governmental Agencies after introducing the Innovations Champions for Local Economic Development (IC4LED) programme to jumpstart LED. We became a pilot in this region, as the programme covers only two district municipalities countrywide: Vhembe (Limpopo province) and OR Tambo (Eastern Cape province). Our primary focus is rural development, specifically promoting farming, cooperatives and emerging agro-processors. We connect agro-processors with relevant knowledge, business-development support, funding information and market opportunities."



Mr Raymond Nephawe:
"We highly appreciate such a wonderful government initiative aimed at empowering emerging agro-processors. My company produces powder form, essential oil, juice and animal feed. Today, I was so happy to have the opportunity to interact with another local processor. I was struggling to raise capital; today I learnt a lot about business, especially pitching, which I believe will enable my business to grow."