



MYDISTRICTTODAY



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

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

GCIS and IEC empower youth through civic education and voter registration blitz

By Tlotlisang Koena; GCIS, Eastern Cape

On 10 June 2026, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in the Joe Gqabi District, in partnership with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), hosted a civic education and voter registration blitz at Ikhala Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College Engineering Campus in Sterkspruit.

The activation educated students about their civic responsibilities and encouraged them to register to vote in the 2026 Local Government Elections (LGEs).

The initiative revealed that many students were unaware that 2026 is an election year, highlighting the importance of continued voter education and awareness campaigns.

First-time voter and student Lunga, said, "I am now looking forward to voting for the first time in my life. I was not aware that 2026 is an election year."

During the activation, students learnt how to register online and received information about the voter registration weekend, which took place from 20 to 21 June 2026.

The GCIS and IEC are committed to empowering young people with information that enables them to participate in and strengthen South Africa's democracy.



An IEC official registers students during the civic education and voter registration activation held at the Ikhala TVET College Engineering Campus in Sterkspruit.



Students register to vote and receive voter education and information materials during the civic education and voter registration activation.



government
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Students display the voter information booklets they received during the LGE civic education and campus voter registration blitz.



Students register to vote for the upcoming 2026 elections.

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

Klawer learners celebrate literacy and democracy

By Esmarelda Mckay; GCIS, Western Cape

On 15 July 2026, learners in Klawer participated in a holiday programme that aimed to promote literacy, democracy and local heritage as part of activities leading up to Nelson Mandela Day.

The programme educated young people about South Africa's democratic journey and the Milestones of Freedom campaign, while encouraging them to appreciate the rights and responsibilities that come with democracy. Learners also gained a deeper understanding of Klawer's rich history and the important role they can play in preserving their community's heritage and contributing to its future.

Through interactive educational activities, participants explored the values of democracy, equality, human rights and active citizenship. The programme encouraged learners to become informed and responsible citizens who contribute positively to their communities.

A highlight of the day was the reading competition, which promoted reading and lifelong learning among the learners. They demonstrated their reading and comprehension skills, while building confidence and developing a greater appreciation for books and literacy.

The holiday programme, reminding learners that education, reading and community service were powerful ways to honour Madiba's legacy. By investing in literacy and knowledge, young people are better equipped to participate in South Africa's democracy.

The initiative was made possible through a partnership between the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), Beyond Libraries and local stakeholders; to promote partnership continues to promote literacy, education and active citizenship among young people in the West Coast District.

The programme highlighted the importance of reading as a tool for empowerment and demonstrated the government's commitment, together with that of its partners, to building a developmental state. citizenship.



Stakeholders pose for a group photograph with learners who participated in the reading competition during the holiday programme in Klawer.



Mr Betrim Peters, a Beyond Libraries official, attends the Literacy and Civic Education Holiday Programme in Klawer.



Winners of the different competition categories pose for a group photograph with a GCIS official.

PRIORITY 1: DRIVE INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND JOB CREATION.

Youth empowerment seminar connects Chatsworth youth to employment and skills development opportunities

By Vasanthi Naidoo; GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

Young people from Chatsworth filled the Nelson Mandela Community Youth Centre on 24 June 2026, in response to an invitation to attend a Youth Empowerment Seminar hosted by the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) and the Nelson Mandela Community Youth Centre.

Chatsworth is home to a racially, culturally and ethnically diverse community. The strong turnout at the seminar highlighted the need for employment, skills development and economic empowerment opportunities for young people.

The seminar brought together representatives from Dube TradePort, the Institute for Quality (IQ), Department of Employment and Labour (DEL), AFRI Grow Development Institute and the eThekweni Municipality's Business Support and Environmental Health directorates. They engaged directly with young people about available opportunities and government support programmes.

While entrepreneurship was promoted as an alternative career path, most participants expressed a greater interest in skills development and employment opportunities than in starting their own

businesses. Attendees received information on how to access learnerships, internships, bursaries and other funding and development programmes.

The DEL provided information on its employment services and registered many attendees on its employment database. The interaction between young people and officials during and after the seminar, demonstrated a high demand for information, employment opportunities and career development support.

The seminar also resulted in measurable outcomes when the IQ enrolled two participants in its Wholesale and Retail Learnership Programme. In addition, IQ, through its partnership with the DEL, collected 100 curricula vitae (CVs) from attendees. These CVs will be shared with the department for consideration for learnerships and other employment programmes.

The seminar demonstrated the importance of partnerships between government and stakeholders in addressing youth unemployment and promoting inclusive economic participation.



Dube TradePort officials share information during the seminar hosted by GCIS and the Nelson Mandela Community Youth Centre.



Officials from the IQ and Afrigrow Development Institute address youth attending the empowerment seminar.



Officials from Afrigrow Development Institute and the DEL speak during the seminar.



An eThekweni Business Support official engages with an aspiring entrepreneur, while other youth attendees interact with stakeholders in the background.

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

GCIS and partners commemorate the Milestones of Freedom through youth empowerment seminar

By Doctor Marebane; GCIS, Limpopo

The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), in partnership with the University of South Africa (UNISA) and the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DoJ&CD), hosted a Youth Empowerment Seminar commemorating the Milestones of Freedom campaign at the UNISA Polokwane Campus on 24 June 2026.

The seminar reflected on South Africa's democratic journey and encouraged young people to uphold the values represented in the Constitution. Participants were reminded that the Preamble to the Constitution recognises the injustices of the past, honours those who suffered for justice and freedom and respects those who contributed to building and developing the country. It also calls on citizens to work together to improve the quality of life for all.

Sharing his experience of being in exile, Mr Solly Mkhatswa said, "The youth of 1976 were thinkers, who laid a foundation for today's youth to take over. With limited resources, they managed to get their voices heard and we can proudly say they were the catalysts and drivers of the democracy we are enjoying." He encouraged young people to pursue research that contributed to national development

and addressed challenges such as substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, unemployment and gender-based violence and femicide.

Advocate Tsimane Molepo from the DoJ&CD urged young people to follow the example of leaders such as Onkgopotse Tiro and Peter Mokaba, among others, who played a role in transforming the South African education system.

The Independent Electoral Commission concluded the seminar by encouraging young people to vote during the 2026 Local Government Elections scheduled for 4 November 2026 and to demonstrate patriotism.

The seminar emphasised the importance of preserving the legacy of those who fought for freedom while encouraging young people to contribute to South Africa's democratic and socio-economic development.



Advocate Tsimane Molepo from the DoJ&CD delivers a presentation during the youth empowerment seminar commemorating the Milestones of Freedom at the UNISA Polokwane Campus.



The UNISA Polokwane Campus auditorium is filled to capacity as students attend the youth empowerment seminar.



Students of the UNISA Polokwane Campus in Limpopo.



Ms Nancy Matlala participates in the Youth Empowerment Seminar.