

TO ALL MEDIA/ NEWS EDITORS

JOHANNESBURG, GAUTENG

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## **NYDA INTENSIFIES YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN THE FACE OF PERSISTENT YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT**

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) has noted the latest Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) released by Statistics South Africa, which underscores the persistent and urgent challenge of youth unemployment in our country.

The Agency acknowledges the marginal shifts in the overall unemployment rate. However, it maintains that the disproportionately high rate of joblessness among young people remains a national crisis that demands collective and unwavering attention. This demographic remains particularly vulnerable in the labour market, as evidenced by the 58.5% unemployment rate among those aged 15-24, followed by a rate of 38.4% for those aged 25-34.

The NYDA recognises that behind these statistics are millions of young South Africans with aspirations, talent, and potential, who are currently locked out of economic participation. This reality reinforces our conviction that youth development and job creation must remain at the very apex of our national agenda.

In direct response to this challenge, the NYDA has redoubled its efforts through a suite of targeted programmes designed to equip young people with the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to secure a prosperous future. This multifaceted approach focuses on three critical pillars: Entrepreneurship, Employability, and Education.

### **Key NYDA Programmes Actively Reducing Youth Unemployment:**

- **Jobs and Vacancies Placement:** The National Youth Service (NYS) programme and Jobs portal offer young people opportunities to gain critical work experience, develop soft skills, and access meaningful employment across various sectors.
- **Skills Development and Training:** The Agency offers a range of skills programmes, from Artisan Development to Learnerships that are facilitated by our stakeholders, designed to make young people more employable and responsive to the demands of the current labour market.
- **Youth Entrepreneurship Support:** Through our Grant Programme, the Agency provides seed funding to young entrepreneurs to start or grow their businesses. This is coupled with mentorship, business development support, and market linkages to ensure their ventures are sustainable and can create jobs for other young people.

The NYDA Executive Chairperson, Dr Sunshine Myende, expressed the NYDA's commitment to youth development. "The figures released in the latest QLFS are a clarion call for consolidated and accelerated action. We cannot afford to be a nation where a significant

portion of our most energetic and innovative citizens are sidelined. The NYDA remains unwavering in its commitment to turn the tide on youth unemployment through targeted, impactful, and sustainable interventions.”

“We call upon all sectors of society, government, corporates, civil society, and communities to partner with us in this critical mission. By investing in our youth, we are not just reducing a statistic; we are investing in the very future of South Africa,” said Dr Myende.

The NYDA remains steadfast in its commitment to being the primary agent for youth development in South Africa. The Agency is dedicated to creating an ecosystem where every young person has a fair chance to succeed, whether through starting their own business or gaining meaningful employment.

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