



SPEAKING NOTES FOR EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON
DR SUNSHINE MYENDE

TVETCGC TVET AWARDS GALA DINNER
UMHLANGA, KZN

29 AUGUST 2026



SPEAKING NOTES BY THE EXECUTIVE

CHAIRPERSON OF THE NYDA ON THE OCCASION OF THE TVETCGC TVET AWARDS GALA DINNER – *Message of Support* | ±5 minutes

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*Programme Director,
Honourable Ministers and Deputy Minister's present,
Members of Parliament,
Leadership of TVETCGC,
Chairpersons of College Councils,
Governors and Principals,
Representatives of SETAs and industry,
Student leadership, Students and young people,
Distinguished guests,*

Good evening.

It is an honour to stand before you tonight, in the company of those who govern, lead, teach and invest in one of the most important parts of our education system.

Since 2007, this Council has served as the collective voice of governance across South Africa's public TVET colleges. Tonight's award categories are not simply award names. They are a mirror held up to this sector. Clean audits and improved audit outcomes speak to the decorum and integrity of governance. Student and lecturer placements, and career guidance and employability, speak to the pathways colleges are building from classrooms into careers. Strategic partnerships and Industry Partner of the Year speak to relationships, the kind without which no pipeline moves. It is right that we honour all three tonight, because a college is only as strong as its integrity, its pathways and its partnerships, together.

This gathering also sits inside a very deliberate national architecture. The National Development Plan 2030 names skills development as a catalyst for growth, industrialisation, job creation and social inclusion. The Presidential Employment



Stimulus and the Presidential Youth

Employment Intervention exist to turn training into jobs. The Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan calls on this sector to deliver infrastructure skills, digital skills and green economy skills. And DHET's shift from NC(V) and NATED toward demand-led occupational qualifications is a direct answer to what industry has been asking for. Five different documents. But every one of them ends in the same place: a young person, and whether or not they can find work.

That urgency is measurable. Statistics South Africa's most recent labour force survey puts youth unemployment, ages 15 to 34, at 43.8 percent. That figure is not a footnote to policy. It is the reason the policy exists.

South Africa needs artisans. We need electricians, plumbers, welders, fitters and turners, refrigeration technicians and builders - the people households call when something breaks, the people industry relies on when production stops, the people municipalities need when infrastructure fails. Put simply: we need South Africans on speed dial for one another. That is not a small role. It is the quiet infrastructure of everyday life.

There is one more element worth evoking tonight – the Batho Pele principles. Batho Pele asks every part of the state to be consultative, accessible, courteous, transparent, and quick to put things right. Those are fine words for a government department. But no one lives them more literally than an artisan. When a geyser bursts at midnight, or a transformer trips before exam season, people first is not a principle on a wall. It is a phone that gets answered.

And the trades themselves are changing under the weight of these same policies. The Economic Reconstruction Plan's call for green economy skills, and the sector's own Just Energy Transition, mean today's electrician is increasingly tomorrow's solar technician. Fittingly, meeting here on Durban's coastline, our ports and marine industries open a blue economy of real opportunity too. As colleges respond to these emerging sectors, let us also make sure the doors open wider for young women, because the artisan of tomorrow should reflect the whole of South Africa, not half of it.



This is where the National Youth

Development Agency's work meets yours - not as a distant funder, but as a partner positioned exactly where the classroom ends and the labour market begins. And we would like colleagues in this sector to know that to every TVETpreneur: the NYDA will continue to support them when they apply for our products and services - our grants, our job-preparedness sessions, our business management training, and so forth - because a qualified artisan should never have to build a business alone.

None of this belongs to any one of us. Not DHET. Not SETAs, professional bodies or state-owned enterprises. Not industry, labour or our development partners. Every name on tonight's guest list is a piece of the same pipeline: colleges that understand what the economy needs, industry that opens its doors, lecturers who stay close to practice, and young people supported all the way from classroom to career.

To TVETCGC, thank you for convening this evening and for the decorum of governance you bring to this sector. To our Councils and Governors, thank you for the governance you carry. To our Principals, thank you for turning policy into performance. To our lecturers, thank you for turning knowledge into skill. To our industry, labour and development partners, thank you for investing in South Africa's future workforce. And to our young people - this country needs what you know and what you are capable of doing.

TVETCGC has framed this evening around building skills, strengthening partnerships and transforming lives. On behalf of the National Youth Development Agency, we stand fully inside that sentence, and we congratulate every college, leader, lecturer, student and partner honoured tonight.

When the lights go out, when a pipe bursts, when a machine stalls, a country's true measure of putting people first is not written in a policy. It is written in who picks up the phone. Let us make sure that for the next generation of South Africans, someone always does.

Thank you.