



SERVICES SETA PULSE NEWSLETTER

67 MINUTES IN COMMEMORATION OF MANDELA DAY



Services SETA marked Nelson Mandela International Day with more than a moment of reflection. Over 30 employees spent 67 minutes at Tumelo Home for the Intellectually Disabled in Ivory Park, engaging children through hands-on activities, donating clothing, seedlings and gardening tools, and getting stuck into preparing the home's vegetable garden for planting. The visit was the start of an ongoing commitment, with plans already underway to install an irrigation system in the garden's next phase. A single day of service will help to build lasting change at Tumelo Home.

Full story on page 04

Also in this edition:

Student accommodation challenges take centre stage – p06

Ten graduates secure employment – p07

Minister calls on SETAs to drive South Africa's skills revolution – p09

CONTENTS

- 03 AA's Corner**
Partnerships, access and delivery
- 04 Main Story**
67 Minutes in Commemoration of Mandela Day.
- 06 Leadership in Action**
Student Accommodation Summit.
- 07 Learner Achievement**
Ten Graduates Secure Jobs as Services SETA Calls for Stronger Partnerships.
- 08 Learner Achievement**
Graduates Turn Skills into Enterprise.
- 09 Leadership & Oversight**
Minister Calls on SETAs to Drive South Africa's Skills Revolution
- 10 Programme Highlights**
Services SETA-funded learnership programme produces emerging entrepreneurs
- 11 Impact Story**
Bursary Opens Doors for Dineo
- 12 Bursary Outreach**
Taking Bursary Information Closer to TVET Students
- 14 Chamber Focus**
SAIBPP Marks 30 Years
- 15 Services SETA in Action**
Educators and Youth Empowered Through Services SETA Outreach
- 16 Notices & Opportunities & House Ad**
Get Involved and Level Up Podcast House Ad
- 17 Coffee With...**
Coffee With Riana Blundell
- 18 Compliance Corner**
Compliance



BUILDING THE BRIDGE FROM EDUCATION TO EMPLOYABILITY

Consolidating gains as the Services SETA's administration period draws to a close

BY LEHLOGONOLO MASOGA

July marks an important point for the Services SETA as the organisation enters the final phase of the administration period. The focus now is on consolidating the progress made, maintaining stability and ensuring the work continues to deliver meaningful results for learners, stakeholders and the services sector.

Over the past year, the organisation has worked to strengthen governance, improve programme oversight and restore confidence in its ability to deliver on its mandate. These efforts matter, but their true value must be measured by the opportunities created for learners, graduates, entrepreneurs and communities.

Skills development must connect education and training to real economic participation, helping young people move from the classroom into workplaces, businesses and sustainable careers. That requires partnerships bringing government, employers, training institutions, municipalities and sector stakeholders together around a shared commitment to practical outcomes.

The recent New Venture Creation graduation, hosted with the City of Johannesburg, showed the value of this approach, equipping aspiring entrepreneurs with practical business skills alongside workplace exposure and support. The real measure of success lies ahead: whether participants can apply what they've learned, build sustainable businesses and create employ-

ment in their communities. This month also saw the continued rollout of the Services SETA's partnership with the South African Public Colleges Organisation, bringing information on bursaries, financial literacy and workplace opportunities directly to TVET college campuses. Access to information often determines whether a young person recognises and pursues an opportunity, which is why reaching students where they are matters.

Discussions at the Student Accommodation Indaba highlighted the broader conditions that shape student success. Student accommodation is not separate from education and skills development. Safe, dignified and properly managed living spaces support student wellbeing, academic progress and the completion of qualifications. Learners need more than

“The bridge from education to employability is built through action. The responsibility of the Services SETA is to ensure that this bridge remains strong, accessible and capable of carrying more South Africans towards a better future.” — Lehlogonolo Masoga



Lehlogonolo Masoga, Services SETA Administrator.

access to training. They also need the conditions that allow them to remain in education and prepare for meaningful economic participation.

Our commitment to service was also reflected during Nelson Mandela International Day, when employees supported Tumelo Home for the Intellectually Disabled through educational activities, donations and garden work, a reminder that an organisation's values show up in the actions of its people, not only its formal programmes.

These initiatives differ in focus but share a common purpose: building an institution that responds to the needs of learners, students, graduates, entrepreneurs and communities. As the administration period draws to a close, the priority is to secure the progress made and ensure strong governance, accountability, partnership and delivery remain part of how the Services SETA operates.

The bridge from education to employability is built through action. The responsibility of the Services SETA is to ensure that this bridge remains strong, accessible and capable of carrying more South Africans towards a better future.



Services SETA employees mark Mandela Day after spending 67 minutes supporting Tumelo Home for the Intellectually Disabled in Ivory Park, Johannesburg.

67 MINUTES, ONE LASTING IMPACT

Services SETA marks Mandela Day with hands-on support for Tumelo Home for the Intellectually Disabled

BY AMANDA SITHOLE

The Services SETA turned 67 minutes into a living expression of inclusion, hope and dignity. More than 30 employees visited Tumelo Home for the Intellectually Disabled in Ivory Park, Johannesburg, on Friday, 17 July 2026, in commemoration of Nelson Mandela International Day.

Tata Mandela once said there could be no greater gift than giving one's time and energy to help others without expecting anything in return. That sentiment came to life as Services SETA employees spent the day engaging the children at Tumelo Home through fun, educational foundation-phase activities.

The Services SETA also donated clothing, seedlings and gardening tools to support and expand the home's vegetable garden, which supplies vegetables for household use and generates income through sales. Employees rolled up their sleeves to prepare

and cultivate the soil for planting.

Reflecting on Mandela's values of human dignity, service and inclusion, Services SETA Manager of the Transformation Office Johanna Legote said the organisation remains committed to the same principles that defined Tata Madiba's legacy. Support for the home would not end with the day itself, she added. The Services SETA plans to return for the next phase of the garden project, which includes installing an irrigation system to boost productivity.

Solly Khuthana, Managing Director of Tumelo Home, thanked the Services SETA for the partnership and the donations. The day would remain a cherished memory, he said, and would go a long way towards improving the lives of the children at the home. Many of the children, he explained, have no other place to call home. He

hoped more organisations would follow the Services SETA's lead in supporting the home's work.

Mike Nkoma, who has maintained the vegetable garden at Tumelo Home since 2021, said the donated seedlings and tools would improve its output. The garden currently produces a variety of seasonal crops, including Chinese spinach, spring onions, sugar cane, beetroot and cabbage. Nkoma appealed for further support from other organisations, naming a tractor and protective tunnels as key resources needed to expand production and protect the garden's yield.

The Services SETA's Mandela Day initiative was a reminder that lasting change can begin with simple acts of kindness, with each donated seedling carrying the promise of growth for the children at Tumelo Home.



“We deliberately chose to support Tumelo Home for the Intellectually Disabled as part of our commitment to advancing inclusive transformation.”
— Johanna Legote, Manager: Transformation Office, Services SETA



PUTTING STUDENT SAFETY FIRST

SAUS Indaba calls for safer, more dignified student accommodation, with Services SETA among stakeholders in attendance

BY NTALO MANGANYI

Safe and dignified student accommodation is essential to students' wellbeing and academic success. That was the central message of the South African Union of Students (SAUS) Student Accommodation Indaba 2026, held at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Edgewood Campus from 2 to 5 July 2026.

The four-day Indaba brought together student leaders, accommodation providers, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), higher education institutions and other key stakeholders to discuss ways of improving student accommodation through enhanced safety, strengthened policies and minimum accommodation standards.

Delivering the keynote address, Minister of Higher Education and Training Buti Manamela assured delegates that the concerns raised by students were being taken seriously. Listening to those concerns, he said, does not mean any single stakeholder determines what government must say or do. It means taking evidence seriously, engaging honestly, and applying the law, policy and the public interest with firmness.

The Services SETA, which supports student accommodation through its bursary programmes, attended the Indaba, represented by Administrator Lehlogonolo Masoga and Acting Chief Executive Officer Sibusiso Dhladhla.

Masoga highlighted the organisation's commitment to improving students' living conditions. The Services SETA comes into the



Students leaders in attendance of the summit

student accommodation space mainly as a sponsor, he said, but is equally invested in the quality of students' lives, ensuring facilities support learning and set students up to exit the system successfully.

Dhladhla reaffirmed the organisation's commitment to student wellbeing, saying the Services SETA was there to listen and to help shape policies that protect students while giving them the best possible learning conditions.

SAUS President Siyabonga Moses presented findings from student residence inspections conducted by the organisation over the past few years. The findings pointed to several challenges, including delayed payments to accommodation providers, weak enforcement of accommodation standards, and

the location of some NSFAS-accredited residences near clubs and taverns. These conditions expose students to excessive noise and heightened safety risks that can disrupt their academic lives, the findings showed. Students also reported incidents of robbery, stabbing, rape and gang-related violence around some residences.

The Student Accommodation Indaba 2026 reinforced the importance of collaboration among government, student bodies, higher education institutions, accommodation providers and industry partners in creating safe, dignified and supportive living environments for students.

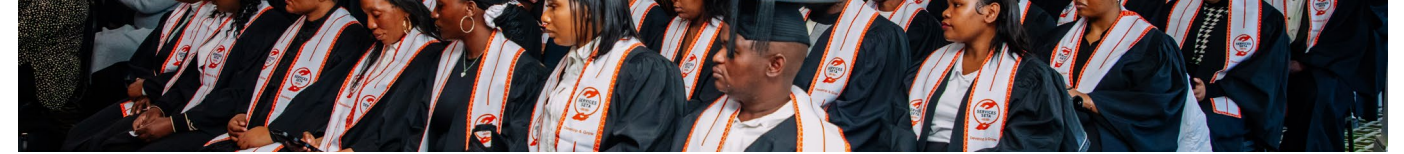


The Accounting Authority of Services SETA Mr. Lehlogonolo Masoga, at the National Student Accommodation Indaba

“We are here to listen and assist in formulating policies that will not only protect students but also ensure they have the best possible learning conditions at their disposal.”
— **Sibusiso Dhladhla, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Services SETA**

TEN GRADUATES FLY HIGH

Services SETA renews call for stronger partnerships



A proud milestone: graduates celebrate completing the New Venture Creation Learnership, with ten already having secured employment.

ADAPTED FROM CHARMAINE NDLELA, INSIDE EDUCATION. EDITED FOR HOUSE STYLE.

Ten of the 69 graduates who completed the New Venture Creation Learnership had already secured employment by the time of their graduation ceremony. The milestone came as the Services SETA renewed its call for stronger partnerships to widen opportunities for young South Africans.

The ceremony took place at the Radisson Blu Gautrain Hotel in Sandton on 26 June 2026. Delivered through a partnership between the Services SETA, the City of Johannesburg's Department of Social Development and Phosaane Institute, the programme drew 98 unemployed young people, of whom 69 completed it successfully. Participants gained practical skills in entrepreneurship, business management and employability, preparing them for formal employment or their own ventures.

Services SETA Acting Chief Executive Officer Sibusiso Dhladhla congratulated the graduates and urged them to use their new skills to create opportunities for themselves and others. He noted that the programme had achieved one of the organisation's highest completion rates nationally, and welcomed the news that ten graduates had already found jobs. Many others, he said, were well placed to pursue entrepreneurship.

Graduates with business ideas should seek incubation and enterprise development support, Dhladhla added, to help structure those ideas into sustainable ventures. He stressed that the Services SETA's role extends beyond training alone. Creating pathways into employment, entrepreneurship and business development matters just as much, particularly since not every graduate secures formal work immediately. Ongoing collaboration between government, industry and skills development institutions remains essential to help graduates convert their qualifications into real economic opportunities.

City of Johannesburg Executive Head of Social Development Martin Ngwako Lebea described the graduation as a celebration of resilience, and as proof of what effective partnerships can achieve. The collaboration between the Services SETA, the City and Phosaane Institute, he said, showed the value of government, skills development institutions and communities working towards a shared goal.

Young people should not be defined only by unemployment, Lebea said, but by their potential and their capacity to contribute to economic growth when given the right support. He encouraged graduates pursuing entrepreneurship to build enterprises

that could, in time, create further jobs in their own communities.

Lebea closed with a renewed call for stronger partnerships, so that more graduates can enter the workplace, build sustainable businesses and contribute to their communities and the wider economy.



Services SETA Acting CEO Sibusiso Dhladhla addresses graduates at the New Venture Creation graduation ceremony in Sandton.



City of Johannesburg Executive Head of Social Development Martin Ngwako Lebea was addressing graduates at the ceremony.

GRADUATES TURN SKILLS INTO ENTERPRISE

Three New Venture Creation Learnership graduates share how the programme reshaped their ambitions and set their businesses in motion



Phindile Maluleke used the knowledge gained through the New Venture Creation Learnership to register his own business and rethink his future.



Zamangwane Moruakgomo increased production in her detergent business from approximately 30 units to between 50 and 70 after completing the learnership.



Amos Tina developed business plans across several sectors after gaining the knowledge needed to turn his entrepreneurial ideas into practical plans.

BYLINE- ADAPTED FROM A REPORT PUBLISHED BY PRETORIA NEWS/IOI

Behind the programme's results are young people applying their newly acquired skills to establish businesses, increase production and turn long-held ideas into practical plans.

For Phindile Maluleke, who hails from Johannesburg, completing the learnership changed how he viewed his prospects. For years, he believed his opportunities were limited because he only had Grade 12. "I was struggling because all I had was Grade 12," he recalled. "It was difficult for me to enrol anywhere until this opportunity came."

Maluleke has since registered his own business, a milestone he attributes to the knowledge and confidence gained through the programme. "The programme changed my way of thinking."

For Amos Tina from Florida, west of Johannesburg, the learnership provided a foundation for business ambitions spanning several sectors. Having completed matric and paralegal studies, Tina joined the programme to gain the business knowledge needed to turn his ideas into practical plans. "I wanted to grow in terms

of knowledge and explore the business world," he said.

He has since developed business plans for a digital security company, a farming enterprise, a community radio station and a motivational speaking organisation. "The biggest impact was learning how to start your own business and where to apply for funding," he said.

Tina believes many unemployed young people remain unaware of the opportunities available through SETAs and government programmes. "We never knew about Services SETA," he said. "I'm standing here to testify that there is a lot to come, and I will not give up."

In Meadowlands, Soweto, fellow graduate Zamangwane Moru-

"Never wait for the government to change your life. Start with the little that you have. Selling small things can grow into something much bigger." — Zamangwane Moruakgomo

akgomo is already seeing measurable growth in her detergent business. Before joining the programme, she produced about 30 units of cleaning products. She now produces between 50 and 70, which has increased her profits.

Access to funding remains a challenge, but Moruakgomo said the programme strengthened her confidence and helped her recognise new possibilities for her business. Her message to other unemployed young South Africans is to begin with the resources available to them and remain resilient. "Never wait for the government to change your life," she said. "Start with the little that you have. Selling small things can grow into something much bigger. Don't ever stop trying."

For Maluleke, the programme's lasting value lies in the knowledge, experience and qualification graduates carry forward. "I encourage everyone who qualifies for this programme to take it seriously," he said. "The stipend is temporary, but the experience, the skills and the certificate will stay with you forever. With this certificate, we can go beyond our imagination."

MINISTER CALLS ON SETAS TO DRIVE SKILLS REVOLUTION

At a national induction for SETA leadership, the Minister set out what he called a period of reform, urging institutions to move from fragmented compliance to a coordinated skills system built around real employment outcomes

BY LEBOGANG KOTSI

Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Buti Manamela, called on SETAs to play a stronger role in addressing unemployment, closing skills gaps and preparing young people for the workplace.

The Minister delivered the keynote address on the opening day of the Induction Workshop for SETA Accounting Authorities, held in Boksburg from 23 to 24 July 2026.

Hosted by the National Skills Authority under the theme "Committed to Improving SETA Governance and Performance through Effective Oversight," the workshop brought together Accounting Authority members, chief executive officers and senior leaders from across the SETA system.

Services SETA was represented by its Administrator, Mr Lehlogonolo Masoga, and Acting Chief Executive Officer, Mr Sibusiso Dhladhla. The organisation's participation formed part of its continued focus on strengthening governance, improving performance and ensuring that its skills-development programmes create meaningful opportunities across the services sector.

Minister Manamela said the workshop took place at an important time for the country's skills-development system. "We are not inducting you into busi-

ness as usual. We are inducting you into a period of reform."

At the centre of this reform is the President's call for a national skills revolution. The Minister said achieving this would require SETAs and other institutions to work together and focus more strongly on the outcomes achieved through skills-development funding.

"The skills revolution is not a slogan, but a programme to reorganise the skills system around the developmental needs of the country. It requires that we move from fragmented institutions to a coordinated system."

Responding to the Minister's call, Masoga said good governance must ultimately support the organisation in fulfilling its purpose. "At Services SETA, we under-

"The skills revolution is not a slogan, but a programme to reorganise the skills system around the developmental needs of the country. It requires that we move from fragmented institutions to a coordinated system." — Buti Manamela, Minister of Higher Education and Training



Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Buti Manamela, calls on SETAs to drive a skills revolution during the induction workshop for SETA Accounting Authorities in Boksburg.

stand that good governance is not only about compliance. It is about ensuring that we deliver on our mandate and provide skills-development programmes that respond to the needs of learners, workers and employers across the services sector," said Masoga.

Minister Manamela also called on SETAs to understand the industries they serve and direct funding towards qualifications and programmes that respond to changes in the economy. "A capable SETA should understand its sector better than any other public institution. It should know where employment is growing and where it is dying, which technologies are reshaping qualifications and where employers cannot find the skills they need."

He said SETA success should be measured by more than enrolment numbers or certificates issued and SETA-funded programmes should also lead to workplace learning, employment, self-employment and enterprise development.

The Minister further called for a stronger National Skills Authority that uses evidence to guide planning, identify gaps and strengthen accountability across the skills-development system.

DINOKANA YOUTH CONNECTED TO SUPPORT AND SKILLS OPPORTUNITIES

Services SETA leads multi-stakeholder intervention to steer Grade 9 learners away from substance abuse and towards education and career pathways

BY NTALO MANGANYI

Grade 9 learners from the Dinokana community, together with parents and other community members, gathered on Friday, 24 July 2026, for a Substance Abuse Prevention and Youth Empowerment Intervention aimed at protecting young people from substance abuse and connecting them to education, bursaries and skills development opportunities.

The programme was hosted by the Services SETA in partnership with the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (SANCA), the North West Department of Basic Education and the Department of Social Development. It brought together stakeholders committed to empowering young people through awareness, education and access to support.

Johanna Legote, Manager: Transformation, Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration at the Services SETA, said the organisation remained committed to creating opportunities that enable young people to realise their potential. "Substance abuse continues to rob many young people of their potential," she said. "Through interventions like this, we are not only raising awareness about its dangers, but also exposing learners to education, skills development and career opportunities that can help them build brighter futures."

Held under the theme "Rural Resilience: A Multi-Stakeholder Approach to Combating Substance Abuse", the programme responded to the growing impact of substance abuse on young people in rural communities.

The intervention focused on Grade 9 learners, who are at an important stage in their education as they begin making subject and career choices. Through interactive awareness sessions and a career exhibition, learners were encouraged to make informed life choices while exploring bursaries, education options and skills development

"Substance abuse continues to rob many young people of their potential. Through interventions like this, we are not only raising awareness about its dangers, but also exposing learners to education, skills development and career opportunities that can help them build brighter futures." — Johanna Legote, Manager: Transformation, Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration, Services SETA

programmes available through the Services SETA and its partners.

Mmathapelo Molebatsane, a social worker from Mamovich NPO, emphasised the importance of taking awareness programmes directly into communities. "When young people understand the dangers of substance abuse, they are better equipped to make informed decisions and resist negative influences," she said. "By reaching learners early, we can help prevent risky behaviours and encourage them to seek support whenever they need it."

Throughout the programme, learners and community members engaged with exhibitors who provided information on career guidance, bursaries, skills development programmes and support services. Parents also received practical guidance on recognising the warning signs of substance abuse and finding help for young people who may be at risk.

Sehume Omphile, a Grade 9 learner from Ramotshere High School, said the programme gave him a better understanding of the consequences of substance abuse while introducing career opportunities he had not previously considered.

BURSARY OPENS DOORS FOR DINEO

After completing her Diploma with no funding in sight, a Services SETA bursary let Dineo Malongane keep going, all the way to a Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing

BY NTALO MANGANYI

When Dineo Malongane completed her Diploma, she was eager to continue her studies and pursue a career in marketing and communications. However, like many young South Africans, her ambition was met with a major challenge: the cost of higher education.

Originally from Tzaneen in Limpopo, the 24-year-old had no funding support to continue her studies after completing her Diploma. The thought of accumulating more student debt while pursuing an Advanced Diploma left her uncertain about whether she would be able to continue her academic journey.

A turning point came when she received an SMS from the Tshwane University of Technology Student Financial Aid office informing her that she had been recommended to apply for a Services SETA bursary.

"That was a miracle," said Dineo.

Taking what she describes as a leap of faith, Dineo submitted her application, which was later approved.

"Receiving the opportunity meant a lot to me because it gave me hope and motivated me to continue working towards my goals," she said.

The bursary covered her Advanced Diploma fees, easing the financial burden that had



Dineo Malongane, now pursuing a Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing at the Tshwane University of Technology.

weighed heavily on her and allowing her to focus on her studies. "It was stressful thinking about the money that would be added on top of what I already owed because I was continuing with my studies," she said. "When I found out my bursary had been approved, it was such a relief. It gave me peace of mind and allowed me to focus on my education."

With her Advanced Diploma successfully completed, Dineo has now progressed to a Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing at the Tshwane University of Technology. She describes the bursary as more than financial assistance. For her, it became an opportunity to continue building the future she had envisioned.

Today, Dineo remains committed to her academic and career

aspirations in the marketing and communications field. She hopes her story will encourage other students facing financial challenges to continue seeking opportunities and not give up on their educational goals.

Having experienced the impact of the bursary first-hand, Dineo also believes more students could benefit from greater awareness of opportunities offered by organisations such as Services SETA.

By investing in students like Dineo, Services SETA is doing more than funding qualifications. It's helping remove barriers to education, enabling academic progression and empowering young South Africans to realise their potential.

TAKING BURSARY INFORMATION CLOSER TO TVET STUDENTS

Services SETA and SAPCO are taking bursary information straight to TVET campuses this July and August, helping students turn funding questions into funding applications

BY AMANDA SITHOLE,
LEBOGANG KOTSI &
NONKULULEKO MDALANA

Services SETA, in partnership with the South African Public Colleges Organisation (SAPCO), began rolling out a nationwide TVET Bursary Activation Campaign during July, bringing funding information and practical guidance directly to students at public TVET colleges.

The activations provide information on bursary opportunities, eligibility requirements and the application process. Students also receive career guidance, financial literacy tips and an opportunity to ask questions about the support available to them.

During July, Services SETA participated in selected campaign activations at Tshwane South, Majuba, False Bay and NorthLink TVET colleges. Funded students shared their experiences and reflected on how the bursary has supported their studies, accommodation and living expenses.

Danovique Swak
Tshwane South TVET College

“Not all hope is lost if you did not receive NSFAS. Take the opportunity to apply for the Services SETA bursary.”



Tatum Wyngaard
False Bay TVET College |
Occupational Certificate:
Welding

“My programme is funded by Services SETA. The funding covers my tuition fees and provides me with a monthly allowance.”

The nationwide campaign will continue at other public TVET colleges throughout August, extending bursary awareness, financial literacy guidance and career information to more students across South Africa.

Thobeka Manyamela
Majuba TVET College | HumanResource Management

“The bursary supported my tuition, accommodation and living allowance from N4 to N6.”



Siphesihle Matayi
Northlink TVET College |
Occupational Certificate:
Office Administration, NQF
Level 2

“The funding is proof that, regardless of one’s background or circumstances, success is achievable through determination and access to the right support.”

30 YEARS, BUILDING FORWARD

SAIBPP marks three decades of progress as Services SETA calls for stronger sector partnerships

BY NTALO MANGANYI

The South African Institute of Black Property Practitioners (SAIBPP) celebrated 30 years of resilience and measurable progress in transforming Black property entrepreneurship in South Africa.

SAIBPP is linked to Services SETA's Real Estate and Related Services Chamber, through which the organisation engages with the property sector on its skills development priorities.

From 1 to 2 July 2026, SAIBPP hosted its Annual Convention in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, under the theme "Dream It, Build It, Live It."

The event marked the Institute's 30th anniversary and served as a platform bringing together industry leaders, regulators, government representatives and property practitioners to consider the future of the sector and chart a path towards it.

As a partner of the convention, Services SETA joined the dialogue on transforming the sector and creating greater opportunities. Mamabele Motla, Executive Manager: Strategy and Insights at Services SETA, called on delegates to partner with the organisation in developing qualifications that respond to industry needs and open more doors for emerging and existing Black property entrepreneurs.

Sustainable skills development



Delegates in attendance.

cannot be achieved by any single organisation, Motla stressed. Meaningful progress depends on strong partnerships between industry bodies, employers, training providers, government and professional organisations, all working towards skills that meet the sector's evolving demands.

"Come and be part of our skills development sector process," she urged. "Tell us the qualifications the industry requires. Let us build capacity together, train people and recognise existing skills through Recognition of Prior Learning."

"Come and be part of our skills development sector process. Tell us the qualifications the industry requires. Let us build capacity together, train people and recognise existing skills through Recognition of Prior Learning."
— Mamabele Motla, Executive Manager: Strategy and Insights, Services SETA

A recurring message throughout the convention was that stronger partnerships between industry, financial institutions, regulators and skills development organisations are essential to raising professional standards, closing skills gaps and unlocking sustainable growth in the property sector.

Among the strategic interventions highlighted was the need to invest in communal land as a catalyst for economic transformation and black property entrepreneurship. For Services SETA, the convention offered an opportunity to engage the sector and help shape the skills it needs.



Ms. Mamabele Motla, Services SETA Executive Manager for Strategy and Insight on a panel discussion.

CAREER GUIDANCE GOES TO THE SOURCE

Two linked Youth Month initiatives in Pietermaritzburg reached educators first, then the young people they guide

BY LERATO LETSIIPA

Services SETA strengthened its Youth Month outreach in Pietermaritzburg through two linked initiatives aimed at improving access to career guidance in rural communities.

On 24 June 2026, the organisation hosted an educator capacitation programme for about 72 educators from the Msunduzi and Vulindlela circuits at Ngabeni Hall. Two days later, Services SETA partnered with Msunduzi Municipality and other stakeholders at the Vulindlela Youth Empowerment Summit, extending the engagement directly to young people.

The educator programme recognised the role teachers play in helping learners understand their options beyond school, forming part of Services SETA's effort to bring skills development information closer to communities where such access is often limited.

Abram Tseka from Services SETA said educators are often learners' first point of guidance. "For many learners, especially in rural communities, the teacher is the first person they turn to when they need guidance about their future. That is why it is important that educators are equipped with the right information," said Tseka. The programme covered practical career guidance and the pathways available through South Africa's Post-School Education and Training system, including universities, TVET colleges, learnerships, internships, apprenticeships and workplace-based learning. A key message was that university should not be presented as the only route to success.

Erica Dawn-Raphoto from the Mining Qualifications Authority said career guidance should begin long before Grade 12: "Learners need information as early as Grade 8 and Grade 9 so they can make informed subject choices that support their future career aspirations."

For Mr Lwazilonke Nxele of Mlungisi Secondary School, the session spoke to the realities of many rural schools. "Too often, information about SETAs is gatekept instead of reaching the people who need it most. Before today, many of us had never even heard of Services SETA," he said.

Clinical psychologist Dr Siyabonga Nzimande also encouraged educators to consider the social, emotional and mental health factors that affect learner performance.

The Vulindlela summit built on the capacitation programme, creating a platform for young people to engage directly with institutions offering education

"In rural communities, many of us grow up without knowing these opportunities exist. Before today, many of us had never even heard of Services SETA."
— Lwazilonke Nxele, Mlungisi Secondary School

and training support. It brought together government departments, traditional leadership, state-owned entities, higher education institutions and development organisations to share information on learnerships, bursaries and entrepreneurship support, giving attendees the chance to better understand their options after school.

By engaging both educators and young people, Services SETA strengthened career guidance and improved access to skills development opportunities in rural communities, helping create clearer pathways to further education, training and employment.



Educators from the Msunduzi and Vulindlela circuits explore post-school education, training and skills development opportunities during the capacitation programme in Pietermaritzburg.



Get Involved & Level Up

Get Involved and Level Up is a human-centred podcast that uses real voices, expert insights and practical guidance to help South Africans better understand skills development and the opportunities available through the Services SETA.

Through conversations with beneficiaries, employers, industry experts and Services SETA leaders, the podcast brings useful information closer to the people it is intended to serve.

WHAT LISTENERS CAN EXPECT

Each episode explores important issues affecting education, training, employment and the workplace. The conversations share practical information, lived experiences and expert perspectives to help listeners make informed decisions about their development and future.



Real Voices

Personal experiences from beneficiaries and stakeholders.



Expert Insights

Perspectives from industry experts and sector leaders.



Practical Guidance

Useful information on education, training and skills development opportunities.

Watch or Listen

Catch the latest episodes of Get Involved and Level Up on your preferred platform.



THE LONG GAME

From Nelspruit, Riana Blundell has watched Services SETA transform — and grown right along with it

BY NTALO MANGANYI

After more than 23 years at Services SETA, Riana Blundell has witnessed the organisation evolve while building a career grounded in service and skills development. From the Nelspruit office, she reflects on the journey.

You have been part of Services SETA for more than 23 years. Take us through your journey.

It has been both rewarding and personally significant. When I joined, I was eager to learn and contribute wherever I could. Over the years I have worked with many talented colleagues, taken on greater responsibilities and gained valuable experience in skills development, stakeholder engagement and service delivery. Key moments include major organisational changes, initiatives that improved programme delivery, and seeing the positive impact of our work on learners, employers and communities. One of the most fulfilling parts has been mentoring colleagues and building lasting relationships with stakeholders.

What does your current role involve?

I support the implementation and performance of discretionary grant projects: inductions, monitoring progress, assisting with remediation where challenges arise and contributing to organisational commitments. I also support audit processes, stakeholder capacitation and the administration of the office. Much of it is about keeping projects on track and communication flowing.

What changes have you seen over the years?

When I first joined, many processes were manual and engagement happened through traditional channels. Services SETA has since embraced technology and developed far more efficient systems. There is also a much stronger focus on quality, accountability and impact. Skills development has moved beyond meeting training targets towards ensuring that learning leads to meaningful employment and economic participation. What has remained constant is the commitment to empowering people.

What continues to motivate you?

Knowing that my work creates opportunities. It is rewarding to see learners gain confidence, secure employment, advance in their careers or build businesses. Being part of that journey, even in a supporting role, gives me a real sense of purpose. After all these years, it is the combination of purpose, people and continuous growth that keeps me committed.

“When you genuinely care about helping people succeed, the work becomes more meaningful.”



Riana Blundell, who has been part of Services SETA for 23 years, smiles for the camera.

What advice would you give someone starting out in skills development?

Remain curious, be patient and always remember the purpose behind the work. Take time to understand the systems and policies, but invest just as much in relationships. Be adaptable, because the environment keeps evolving. Most importantly, approach every interaction with empathy and a willingness to serve. When you genuinely care about helping people succeed, the work becomes more meaningful.

Outside work, how do you spend your free time?

With family and friends, and with music and golden oldies films. Something colleagues may not know is that I come from a musical family and play the piano. It has taught me patience, discipline and the value of continuous learning.

In three words

Impactful. Rewarding. Transformative.

A NEW PROCUREMENT LAW LOOMS

The Public Procurement Act promises the biggest overhaul of public procurement in more than two decades

BY ASANDA MGANDELA

South Africa's public procurement system is moving towards its most significant reform in more than two decades.

The Public Procurement Act 28 of 2024 was assented to on 18 July 2024 and published in the Government Gazette on 23 July 2024. It aims to establish a single framework for public procurement and preferential procurement across organs of state.

For compliance teams, the Act matters now not because it has changed the rules already, but because institutions need to begin preparing for the changes it may introduce.

Where things stand

The Act has not yet come into operation. Its provisions will commence on a date proclaimed by the President, with phased implementation meaning different provisions or institutions could have different start dates. Until then, procurement remains governed by the existing framework: the PFMA, MFMA, Preferential Procurement Policy Framework Act, and Treasury regulations.

Implementation moved a step closer when National Treasury published draft General Public Procurement Regulations for comment on 16 April 2026, with the closing date extended to 15 July 2026 given their complexity. Treasury has confirmed implementation depends on these regulations being finalised.

A Constitutional Court challenge concerning the public-participation process followed during the Act's adoption was heard in May 2026, with judgment pending. The challenge concerns how the Act was adopted, not its procurement provisions.

What the draft regulations propose

Under the proposed bid-evaluation framework, institutions would score functionality, capacity, preference, and price. Bidders would need at least 70% of the points available in each applicable category, not 70 points outright.

For contracts between R20 million and R100 million, bidders may need to show at least 40% of previous procurement spend went to enterprises at least 51% Black-owned and managed, or subcontract at least 30% of contract value to qualifying enterprises.

For contracts of R100 million or more, subcontracting may be a bid condition, subject to feasibility, with at least 25% of contract value subcontracted to qualifying enterprises.

“The Act is important not because it has changed the rules already, but because institutions need to begin preparing for the changes it may introduce.”

Other proposals include direct payment to subcontractors if a main supplier defaults, mandatory vetting of shortlisted bidders, and caps on contract variations: 15% for infrastructure goods and services, 10% for consultancy, and 20% for other goods and services, with higher variations possible where good grounds are recorded.

Why this matters now

The Act and draft regulations don't yet apply to current procurement. Compliance and supply chain teams should still begin:

- Reviewing contracts and plans against the proposed thresholds.
- Monitoring the regulations' finalisation and the Constitutional Court proceedings.
- Assessing whether policies and evaluation processes may need revision.
- Strengthening supplier and subcontractor due diligence.
- Reviewing controls on contract variations, vetting, and record-keeping.

The final regulations may differ from the draft. For now, the priority is understanding the proposed direction while complying with current legislation.



“Everyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve success if they are dedicated to and passionate about what they do.”

- Nelson Mandela

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