

TO ALL MEDIA/ NEWS EDITORS

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NYDA LED BY EXECUTIVE CHAIR DR. MYENDE PAID TRIBUTE TO FORMER DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON MS. BAVELILE HLONGWA

Today, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) conducted a meaningful outreach programme in KwaZulu-Natal to honour the enduring legacy of the late former Executive Deputy Chairperson, Ms. Bavelile Hlongwa.

Led by the Executive Board Chairperson, Dr. Sunshine Myende, this visit reaffirms the agency's unwavering commitment to the socio-economic advancement of young people, especially those in historically disadvantaged communities. Additionally, the Executive Board Chairperson was accompanied by the Umdoni Local Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr. Mbali Luthuli, and Deputy Mayor, Cllr. Phila Thabete.

During the engagement, the school management raised critical issues affecting learners and the broader community. These included the critical issue of teenage pregnancy and the pressing need for infrastructure such as computer laboratories and multi-purpose sports facilities. Such facilities are essential to promoting holistic development and providing safe, constructive alternatives for youth engagement outside the classroom.

The programme also included oversight visits to NYDA grant recipients and youth-headed indigent households in uMzinto. These efforts form part of the NYDA's broader campaign to bring services directly to young people, particularly those in rural areas, townships, and informal settlements. The aim is to provide practical support that alleviates poverty, combats youth unemployment, and creates pathways to empowerment.

In a practical demonstration of this commitment, the NYDA, in partnership with the local municipality, will support two young unemployed single mothers who were visited during the outreach. One will be enrolled in a business management training programme with a pathway to start-up funding, alongside job placement support. The second will receive assistance to return to school and will be enrolled in both the Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives and the National Youth Service programme for immediate socio-economic relief.

This outreach carries profound significance, as the informal settlements visited are the very communities where the late Bavelile Hlongwa was raised. Her memory and legacy live on through the ongoing work of the NYDA to serve, uplift, and empower young South Africans.

Reflecting on the outreach programme, Executive Chairperson Dr. Myende said, "As we honour Bavelile Hlongwa's legacy, the NYDA remains resolute in taking services to all young people where they are, as they are. Not every young person will go to university, but every young person must have access to skills, support, and opportunities that enable them to break the cycle of poverty."

“To the young women who have faced challenges like teenage pregnancy: do not give up. This is not the end of your dreams. Use the opportunities we bring to empower yourselves, protect yourselves, and become the authors of your own future,” said Dr. Myende.

This visit affirms the NYDA’s strategic vision of building an inclusive, youth-centred development agenda, aligned with the principles of the National Development Plan (NDP) and the broader national commitment to socio-economic transformation.

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