

## “THERE ARE CHANGES, WORK IS BEING DONE” – SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON FOLLOWING OVERSIGHT VISIT AT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY



The Portfolio Committee on Social Development conducted oversight visits in the Gauteng Province to receive progress reports from various government entities within the Social Development Portfolio including the National Development Agency (NDA). The NDA's report to the Committee focused on the programmes they are implementing and their impact, funding, budget expenditure, challenges and successes.

The NDA plays a critical role in implementing the government's priorities with particular focus on poverty reduction. The reduction of poverty and monitoring of provision of social services are key focus areas of the oversight visit. The Portfolio Committee met with the NDA Board, Executive leadership representatives from the entity and visited funded projects focusing on women empowerment and food security in the West Rand, namely Rotanganedza Community Care and Bonang Masikhule Primary Cooperative.

In the meeting guests were warmly welcomed by NDA Board Chairperson, Ms Nozabelo Ruth Bhengu, with opening remarks from the Portfolio Committee Chairperson, Honourable Bridget Masango. “We are checking on the state of social development in South Africa, visiting organisations funded by the Department and its entities on the extend they are meeting the needs of vulnerable communities in the country or not,

in this instance gleaning in on the Gauteng province. As the Portfolio Committee we want to make a contribution to pursue the journey to work closely with the Department and its entities to make our contribution where the vulnerable are concerned”, said Ms Masango.

NDA Acting Chief Executive Officer, Mr Thabani Buthelezi took the delegation through the NDA grant funding programme and annual performance as guided by the NDA Act and mandate. “The NDA grant funding approach to CSOs is aimed at developing organisational capacity to deliver quality services that assist them to be sustainable and where they may be additional needs attract further funding. Our measurement of success is therefore focused on developmental change so far as jobs and new or additional skills are provided”. He further outlined the three criteria that must be met by organisations to qualify for grant funding namely: clear demonstration for community benefit, sustainable viable plan and community capacity enhancement.

The NDA has, over the years, disbursed grant funding to the value of over R1,3 billion to over 2000 CSOs targeting women and youth. In this financial year, 21 organisations have been supported at a value of just under R10 million.

“In line with we our turnaround strategy, we have revised our service delivery model to target the poorest wards through community engagements, allowing us to profile the people and the needs that they have identified themselves. As we are piloting, this has been the lowest number of organisations that have received support from the NDA over thelast financial years. This crystallises our intervention and responds directly to the needs and capabilities of the communities. We will further offer capacity building training to strengthen their compliance, financial and governance abilities,” elaborated Ms Susan Khumalo, the Chief Operations Officer at NDA. The NDA further highlighted the limited and declining budget allocation available for grant funding to organisations citing the initiative to mobilise further resources from partnerships to the value of R344 million in the last five years.

In closing, the NDA Board Chairperson, Ms Nozabelo Ruth Bhengu, stressed the importance of the NDA in reversing challenges of poverty. “The NDA has a pivotal role to play to transform South Africa into a mixed economy system, characterised by participation of state-owned enterprises, private owned and community owned enterprises wherein communities draw from their capabilities to make sustainable livelihoods for themselves. **We must ensure that we build enterprises led and owned by communities”.**



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**The Portfolio Committee welcomed the NDA's presentation and deliberated on the following matters:**

- The declining NDA allocation from the fiscus, the need for its conduit functions to be strengthened so as to enable it to carry the financial responsibility to grant funds to qualifying organisations
- Through the department, the social impact is clear, however, more needs to be done to deliver on development by and within communities that benefit from social security grants
- Portfolio Committee members undertook to assist the NDA with communication of services to their various constituencies
- Partnerships and the elevation of the NDA role to achieve the country's poverty strategy including the reduction of the 17 million South Africa Social Security Agency grant beneficiaries into sustainable livelihoods was highlighted as important
- Permanent and sustainable leadership strategies for the NDA that will ensure stability

Ms Bhengu also welcomed the contributions of the Committee and in closing stated that she acknowledges the perception of what looks like duplications between the NDA and DSD. "However, she clarified that DSD offers short-term intervention for NPOs with intent for their own survival and require funding to implement programmes. The NDA intervention is, in its nature, intentional and its interventions are longer serving, more so because it is driven by active citizens in communities that assist organisations reach their full potential. whilst creating jobs, providing skills and increases sustainable livelihoods.

NDA Board member, Mr Thembinkosi Josopu, thanked the Portfolio Committee for the oversight visit, the deliberations and said "All members of the Committee are serving people – this is what binds us, the people. We are encouraged when you keep asking the questions. The NDA endeavours to avoid queries from the Portfolio Committee of the same nature and thus undertake to provide concrete progress reports and results".

The meeting was adjourned to visit two NDA funded projects in the West Rand of Gauteng - Rotanganedza Community Care and Bonang Masikhule Primary Cooperative. These site visits provided committee members with firsthand insight into the impact of NDA funding in fostering community-driven development, empowering women and youth, and strengthening local economies. The committee engaged with project leaders and beneficiaries, witnessing how the NDA's support enables these initiatives to grow and create employment opportunities within their communities.



During the visit to Rotanganedza Community Care, Ms. Caroline Tiba, one of the organisation's founders, shared how NDA funding has been instrumental in their expansion and success. Initially established to provide health and social support to individuals affected by HIV/AIDS and chronic illnesses, the organisation has now extended its operations beyond Gauteng to Limpopo and North West. This expansion has not only allowed them to serve a broader community but has also resulted in job creation for unemployed youth and women. Ms. Tiba emphasized the importance of strategic partnerships, stating, "The NDA has helped us greatly in having our organisation at this level, as a result, we have been able to extend our operations further, creating more job opportunities."

Similarly, Bonang Masikhule Primary Cooperative demonstrated the effectiveness of NDA support in boosting small-scale manufacturing. Established in 2013, the cooperative produces school shoes, protective gear, and bags, employing youth from Kagiso and surrounding areas. With NDA funding, the cooperative increased its production capacity to fulfil contracts, including large-scale orders from the Gauteng Department of Social

Development and private sector clients such as Harmony Gold Mine. The committee noted how this cooperative serves as a model for sustainable economic development, empowering local artisans while meeting essential community needs.

***In conclusion, the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee expressed satisfaction with the work being done by the NDA in supporting community-driven projects. The Chairperson highlighted the importance of continued investment in such initiatives to drive sustainable development and economic empowerment. The committee reaffirmed its commitment to advocating for adequate funding and policy support to ensure that organisations like Rotanganedza Community Care and Bonang Masikhule Primary Cooperative continue to thrive and uplift their communities.***

**The following article was posted on the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa on the oversight visit:**

<https://www.parliament.gov.za/news/lets-harness-our-legislative-latitude-champion-cause-nda>