

MEDIA RELEASE

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NDA CALLS FOR YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN CIVIL SOCIETY

The National Development Agency (NDA) is a government agency tasked with the responsibility of contributing towards poverty eradication in South Africa. As the country celebrates youth month and reflects on the role that youth can play in the advancement of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), the NDA is making a call to the country's youth to be involved in the civil society organisations sector to ensure continuity.

Fighting poverty is the central role the youth must play in extricating themselves out of this scourge. The NDA calls on the youth of South Africa to play an active role in being part of CSOs and starting CSOs within their communities, to respond to the development challenges faced by the youth and broader society where they find themselves in.

Poverty, inequality and unemployment remains unacceptably high for young people in South Africa. The proportion of young people between the ages of 18 – 24 years living below the poverty line increased from 36.2% in 2006 to 38.4% in 2015, those between the ages of 25 – 34 years increased from 23.4% to 28.9% over the same period. Unemployment for youth between the ages 15 – 24 years in 2017 was 52.2% whilst those between the ages of 24 – 34 years was 33.5% far higher than the total economically active population.

To respond to the poor state of affairs for the youth in South Africa, the NDA will double its efforts in supporting programmes for young people. The NDA's CSOs development programme will focus on facilitating establishment of youth community based organisations to fight poverty through creation of viable and sustainable cooperatives and income generation programmes with a potential of job creation and sustainable development of young people from poor communities.

The NDA commits itself to facilitate the registration of these youth owned organisations into formal entities, provide institutional capacity building and technical training, provide grants with the aim of strengthening their capacities and facilitate linkages to markets for their products and services. The future of South Africa's economic development and prosperity lies with the youth who constitute the majority of the population. Building an economically viable movement in this population group is the appropriate strategy for meeting the National Development Plan (NDP) goal of eliminating poverty, reducing inequalities and unemployment.

Twenty-four years into a democratic South Africa, it is important to discuss the role that young people must play in the CSO sector. The improvement and development of communities across South Africa is not only essential for the country today but also critical for the future social and economic stability of the country.

"We can't simply celebrate youth day and youth month without having comprehensive discussions about empowering young people to not only improve their economic situations and be successful individuals, but to also give them the necessary tools to be change agents in South Africa. It is essential that we encourage young people to begin to assess their communities and be part of CSOs that seek to improve these communities," said Mrs Thamo Mzobe, NDA CEO.

The NDA is concerned with the limited involvement of the youth in South Africa in the CSO sector. According to Statistics South Africa, the South African youth accounts for more than 36.2% of the South African population (ages 15 – 34). The youth are in the forefront of the development challenges

South Africa continues to face. It is therefore essential that the youth and youth-led organisations take the front-lead in the CSO sector; mobilising society and ensuring that communities begin to engage stakeholders in dealing with the challenges of youth unemployment, access to education and health issues among others.

The NDA calls on all youth who are interested in being change agents in their communities to collaborate with it in alleviating poverty in South Africa by being part of CSOs in their communities and starting CSOs that will make an impact in communities and improve the lives of young people and broader society. To find out more about CSOs and NDA's CSO development programme, you can visit the NDA website www.nda.org.za or contact the NDA national office on 011 018 5500.

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