

MINISTER METH CHAMPIONS YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AT SASOL'S BRIDGE TO WORK PROGRAMME IN SASOLBURG



#Yazini



Department of
Employment and Labour



@deptoflabour



employmentandlabour



employment & labour

Department:
Employment and Labour
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



A NATION
THAT WORKS
FOR ALL





Minister Meth Champions Youth Employment at Sasol's Bridge to Work Programme in Sasolburg

Sasolburg, Free State | 25 June 2026

The Minister of Employment and Labour, Ms Nomakhosazana Meth, accompanied by the Acting Director General, Ms Jacky Moloisane, and supported by the Free State Chief Director: Provincial Operations, Ms Emily Maneli, attended Sasol's Bridge to Work (BtW) Programme Youth Day event held at the Boiketlong Centre in Sasolburg, Free State, on 25 June 2026.

The Bridge to Work Programme is a strategic initiative aimed at supporting socio-economic development in local communities by providing industry relevant skills to unemployed youth and women. The programme promotes employability, enterprise development and sustainable economic participation, creating opportunities for community upliftment and economic inclusion.

The Youth Day event brought together young people, entrepreneurs, employers and strategic partners to engage on tangible economic opportunities. The event sought to promote youth employment, facilitate engagement between job seekers and potential employers, support entrepreneurs in accessing markets, raise

awareness about the Bridge to Work Programme and strengthen partnerships that contribute to economic growth and job creation.

Delivering the keynote address, Minister Meth reflected on the significance of Youth Month as South Africa commemorates the 50th anniversary of the 1976 Youth Uprising.

"This year marks the Golden Jubilee of the 1976 Youth Uprising, fifty years since young South Africans stood up and altered the course of our nation's history," she said.

The Minister noted that while the youth of 1976 fought against exclusion and inequality in education, the current generation faces the challenge of economic exclusion, unemployment, poverty and inequality.

She highlighted the country's unemployment challenges, citing the latest Quarterly Labour Force Survey which recorded official unemployment at 32.7% during the first quarter of 2026, with more than 8.1 million South Africans unemployed. Under the expanded definition, unemployment stands at 43.7%, with youth unemployment remaining particularly high among those aged 15 to 34 years.

Minister Meth emphasised that government has declared 2026 as the Year of Putting Young South Africans to Work in honour of the 1976



concrete commitments from stakeholders on apprenticeships, workplace exposure opportunities, procurement, inclusion of women and persons with disabilities, and youth employment absorption.

The Minister reiterated government's commitment to strengthening labour market activation through demand led skills development, workplace experience and placement opportunities, and enterprise led job creation. Through the Labour Activation Programme, government continues to invest significantly in initiatives aimed at connecting unemployed South Africans, particularly young people, to sustainable employment opportunities.

generation, underscoring the importance of practical interventions that connect young people to economic opportunities.

She commended the Bridge to Work Programme for addressing the gap between skills development and employment by focusing on meaningful transitions into the labour market.

"Bridge to Work recognises that unemployment is not simply about a shortage of jobs. It is often about the distance between potential and opportunity," she said.

The Minister further acknowledged Sasol's contribution to South Africa's industrial economy and called on the company to partner with the Department of Employment and Labour to expand and scale the programme.

"I invite Sasol to partner with the Department of Employment and Labour to scale this model. Let us connect employer demand to skills pipelines, create larger placement commitments, deepen pathways into entrepreneurship and design interventions that produce measurable employment outcomes," she said.

Minister Meth also invited Sasol to become a strategic partner in the Department's planned Youth Employment Summit, which aims to secure

Following the formal programme, Minister Meth and Acting Director General Moloisane participated in a walkabout of the exhibition area where they engaged directly with exhibitors, entrepreneurs, programme beneficiaries and stakeholders showcasing initiatives aimed at supporting youth employment, skills development and enterprise growth.

One of the exhibitors visited during the walkabout was Yenzo IT Solutions (Pty) Ltd, trading as Yenzo Tech, a beneficiary of the Department's Unemployment Insurance Fund Labour Activation Programme.

Established in 2018, Yenzo Tech is a 100% Black owned South African ICT company with operations across Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Eastern Cape and Limpopo. The company provides digital solutions to clients in the financial, mining, petrochemical and public sectors, offering services that include ICT consultancy, ICT infrastructure, managed services, training, Wi Fi deployments, network infrastructure, SD WAN solutions, VoIP systems and skills development programmes.

During the engagement, representatives from Yenzo Tech highlighted the impact of the Department's Labour Activation Programme funding on skills development and employment creation. Through a R14 million Labour Activation



Programme funded 12-month learnership project, the company has trained 221 learners in high demand digital and technical skills.

The project included training for 121 Fibre Optic Technician learners, of whom 119 successfully completed and graduated from the programme, as well as 100 learners enrolled in AWS Data Analytics training, with 30 having completed the programme to date while training continues for the remaining participants. The company reported an employment placement rate of approximately 40%, demonstrating the positive outcomes that can be achieved through strategic partnerships between government and the private sector in equipping young people with market relevant skills and facilitating access to employment opportunities.

The walkabout provided the Minister and Acting Director General with an opportunity to witness first-hand the impact of labour market activation interventions and to engage with beneficiaries whose lives have been positively transformed through skills development and workplace readiness programmes.

Concluding her address, Minister Meth encouraged young people to remain determined and resilient as they pursue economic opportunities.

“You are not the lost generation. You are the bridge generation. The generation that must convert political freedom into productive capability, the generation that must move South Africa from unemployment to participation, from dependency to enterprise.”

The event highlighted the importance of collaboration between government, business and communities in building sustainable pathways to employment, entrepreneurship, dignity and shared prosperity for South Africa’s youth.

Brought to you by the Department’s Corporate Communication





employment & labour

Department:
Employment and Labour
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



National Economic
Development and
Labour Council



**ONE DEPARTMENT
COMMUNICATING IN ONE VOICE**

Physical Address:

Laboria House: 215 Francis Baard Street, PRETORIA

Postal Address:

Private Bag X117, PRETORIA, 0001