

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Thursday, 11 July 2024

Successful community outreach workshop empowers women entrepreneurs in Namakwaland

[Blou Dak Saal, Concordia, Northern Cape – SOUTH AFRICA] – Yesterday, the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) and the Women Economic Empowerment Programme (WEEP) in collaboration with various ecosystem partners, hosted a pivotal SMME Community Outreach Workshop at Blou Dak Saal in Concordia, Northern Cape.

“The workshop brought together approximately 200 women, fostering a platform for learning, collaboration and empowerment,” says the SABS’s Lead Sales and Business Development Government Services, Mr Dumisani Mngadi.

“The WEEP workshops are a national roadshow designed to equip emerging women entrepreneurs and informal traders with essential skills and resources covering topics such as business compliance, procurement strategies, financial literacy, marketing and access to funding opportunities,” explains Ms Siziwe Zulu, the Post Investment Associate who oversees the participation of the National Empowerment Fund in WEEP.

In July, these workshops will be held in different parts of the Northern Cape, with the first having been held in Concordia yesterday.

Empowering women entrepreneurs

The SABS’s Mr Mngadi says yesterday’s workshop “covered a wide array of topics critical to business success and growth, including Standardisation, Product Testing, SABS Mark, Systems Certification, Business Compliance, Access to Funding, how to save, B-BBEE & Local Content, local opportunities available, Tender Processes, and Market Access Strategies. It aimed to equip participants with the necessary skills and resources to enhance their competitiveness in both public and private sector markets”.

Stakeholders and Government Support

The event garnered significant support from various stakeholders including representatives from State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) such as the NEF, SEDA, SARS, CPIC, NCC, Provincial Treasury, Provincial Government and the Namakwaland District Municipality. Additionally, Mme Reka Thusa, a women’s organisation based in Kimberley and UN Women Generation Equality, alongside the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, participated virtually, highlighting the broad support and commitment to women’s economic empowerment.

Support for SMMEs in Chemical Space

During the workshop, two SMMEs operating in the chemical sector were awarded vouchers valued at R80 000 each under the SABS SMME support scheme. "These vouchers will enable the recipients to conduct crucial testing of their chemical products, enhancing their market readiness and competitiveness," says Mr Mngadi.

Next Workshop Announcement

"The success of today's workshop sets the stage for the upcoming WEEP workshops, scheduled to be held at Tol Speelman Community Hall in Upington on 17 July 2024. This workshop will continue the momentum of empowering women entrepreneurs with essential business skills and access to resources," adds Ms Zulu.

"We are delighted to witness the impact of the WEEP workshops in Northern Cape. These initiatives not only empower women entrepreneurs but also contribute to inclusive economic growth," she said.

"Our partnership with WEEP is a testament to our commitment to supporting women's economic empowerment. Together, we are laying a foundation for sustainable and inclusive economic development," says Mr Mngadi.

The joint efforts of SABS, NEF and other WEEP partners underpin a collective commitment to advancing women's economic empowerment and fostering a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem in Northern Cape.

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