

## NEF Empowerment EXPO brings hope to entrepreneurs

**Cape Town:** It was not a shortage of inspiration or ideas but a thirst for solutions on funding and business opportunities that brought together well over 340 entrepreneurs at the National Empowerment Fund (NEF) Empowerment EXPO, held on Thursday, 28 March 2019 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre.

Hosted by the NEF in conjunction with the Western Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT) the daylong event sought “to provide valuable information on business planning, access to business finance, franchise opportunities, mentorship support and regulatory compliance,” says Mr Nhlanhla Nyembe, NEF Acting Divisional Executive for SME and Rural Development.



**Mr Nhlanhla Nyembe, NEF**  
Acting Divisional Executive for  
SME and Rural Development

In his address, Mr John Peters, Chief Director for Integrated Economic Development Services in the province, said DEDAT “remains committed to making it easier for SMMEs to do business in the Western Cape. Our successful partnerships with municipalities, corporates (e.g Pick n Pay & Deloitte), tertiary institutions and SMME support organisations and agencies such as the NEF and SEDA will continue to underpin our efforts to develop and grow entrepreneurship and SMMEs. With a



**Mr John Peters, Western Cape Chief**  
Director for Integrated Economic  
Development Services

significant increase in our budget for 2019/2020 for SMME and entrepreneurship support, we will once again forge and strengthen our strategic partnerships to deliver value-adding services to our SMMEs that enable them to grow and increase labour absorption. We envisage continuing our partnership with the NEF in the new financial year to improve access to finance to Western Cape entrepreneurs”.

Also, in attendance were panellists representing BP, Engine, Caltex, Spar Group, Pick n Pay, Spur Group, Nandos and Famous Brands. Financiers included Sefa, IDC and the Old Mutual's Masisizane Fund. Presentations were also delivered by representatives of the Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Energy as well as Environmental Health Services.

Mr Eugene Petersen, Cape Town District Sales Manager at Astron Energy said: “Astron Energy is proud to partner with the NEF to help remove some of the barriers to entry that emerging black entrepreneurs

encounter in the petroleum retailing sector. We understand that this market often lacks business experience so our support goes beyond funding to provide coaching, mentoring and training in order to enhance the new business owner's chance of success.”

The NEF's Mr Nyembe informed the entrepreneurs that since operational inception in 2005 the development financier had “approved 957 transactions worth more than R9.6 billion for black-empowered businesses across different sectors countrywide. We are here because we want more and more black entrepreneurs from the Western Cape to take advantage of the various opportunities that the province has to offer, and indeed to grow their investments across the country”.

He said the NEF was looking for viable business plans from black-owned enterprises in any of the key sectors of the economy, supported by financial projections.

Further, added Mr Nyembe, to qualify for NEF funding of between R250 000 and R75 million, the entrepreneurs would need to meet eligibility and commercial viability criteria inclusive of black ownership, management and operational involvement; risk sharing by entrepreneurs; black women empowerment; community involvement where relevant; compliance with relevant NEF product criteria; job creation, and the geographic location of the business.



Great demand for business funding: Hall 8 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre was at full capacity

Added DEDAT's Mr Peters: “Our Ease of Doing Business programme which to date has contributed savings and benefits worth over R1bn to the provincial economy, will be expanded through collaborative partnerships with municipalities and provincial and national government departments. Through this programme we will continue to identify and address those blockages that constrain business growth. We look forward to playing a significant role in national government's roll out of its red tape reduction programme”.

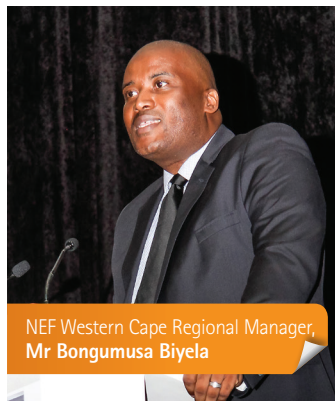
## NEF Empowerment EXPO brings hope to entrepreneurs *Continued.*

Ms Eldene Govender, the head of the NEF's iMbewu Fund, an investment unit dedicated to SME funding and provides innovative finance for start-ups, procurement and franchising, said: "Franchising is one of the most effective means for enabling black economic participation because it reduces investment risk due to the training, marketing, operational systems and general entrepreneurial support typically provided by franchisors. Over the past few years the NEF has entered into agreements with the top oil companies that service the national fuel retail market. The purpose of these agreements has been to facilitate the establishment of more service-station outlets by black entrepreneurs".



**Ms Eldene Govender**  
iMbewu Fund Manager

"To date," she added, "the NEF has invested a total R495 million in 89 petroleum service stations that are owned and managed by black entrepreneurs countrywide, and these support 1 825 jobs. A total 33 of these, or 39%, are owned and managed by black women. Within the NEF's franchise portfolio, service stations rank as the most vibrant and successful".



**NEF Western Cape Regional Manager,  
Mr Bongumusa Biyela**

In his closing remarks, the NEF's Regional Manager in the province, Mr Bongumusa Biyela, expressed confidence that the Empowerment EXPO "will be remembered as an important landmark that helped grow the NEF's invested portfolio in the Western Cape from the current 12% to even greater levels. We value our partnership with DEDAT and the organic relations with the various commercial players that were present at this important

event because they promise to harness the province's potential in driving inclusive growth with the view to opening up opportunities for black entrepreneurs to become part of the African story".



Attendees listen attentively to speakers. More than 340 entrepreneurs from across the length and breadth of the provinces attended

### Entrepreneurs give the thumbs up to the EXPO

Among the hundreds who attended the event was Ms Baxolile Zwane from Panorama in Cape Town and who trades in LPG gas and appliances. She had the following to say: "The value of the information provided here today has been incredible and very helpful. To gather all these franchisors and funders under one roof is a masterstroke because it makes today a one-stop-shop experience. This is information that I have needed for a long time indeed. I should have gone to the NEF a long time ago".

Also impressed was Mr Mandla Oliphant who runs Miviwe Telecoms, an internet access business operating in Khayelitsha and Langa: "This was a fantastic platform for knowledge on all matters business. It is a good opportunity to have all these solutions providers coming out directly to the people. It was also refreshing to hear the testimonies of other entrepreneurs. Regrettably, this needs more than a day".

Ms Tania Cunningham of The Startup Hatchery, an international online business incubator based in Cape Town, says "events like these are vital for the benefit of entrepreneurs because there is still a lack of awareness around the availability of opportunities and how to access them. The information given today has been valuable and should ordinarily be in the public domain so that entrepreneurs may access it with ease. It would be great if more opportunities could be made available for existing and aspiring entrepreneurs to help them learn, connect and grow".



**Ms Tania Cunningham (left)**  
with her business partner,  
**Ms Nasmera Buckus**

Clothing and textile entrepreneur, Ms Nozipho Ntlokwa, says "these sessions are always helpful and insightful. Sometimes we tend to take certain things for granted, and helps to hear how other entrepreneurs have dealt with their challenges to take their businesses to the next level. I have had unfortunate experiences with some of our agencies but it is encouraging that many have committed that they will go the extra mile. These public declarations give us something solid to hold them to. A bonus is the opportunity to network with those who have succeeded in their endeavours".



**Ms Nozipho Ntlokwa (centre),** seen here with NEF Product Advisor **Ms Rowena Nkukwane (left)** and Marketing and Communications Officer **Ms Nthoto Khalema (right)**

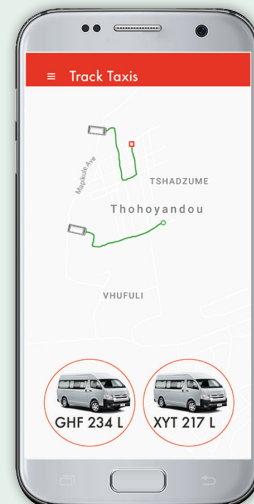
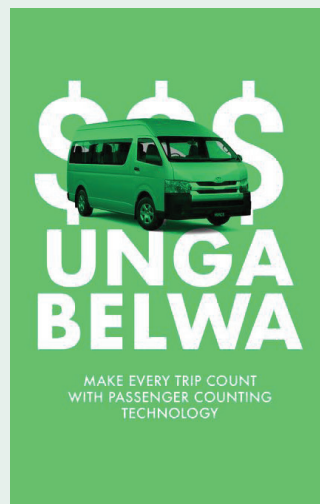


## Appreciation for NEF funding by investees present

Below are some of the investees that gave testimonies of their “constructive and empowering interaction with the NEF”:

### Quickloc8

The business has developed, tested and piloted a tracking device for motor vehicles with complete mobile capabilities operating from a smartphone-based platform. Their main target market is the taxi industry, and the entrepreneur approached the NEF for finance to commercialise and rollout the product. What makes the device unique, among other capabilities, is that it provides GPS location with real time speed, tracks and analyse the driving patterns and performance of drivers, offers antitheft and towing detection functionalities, as well as crash-detection that alerts owners immediately after a collision. The business supports 8 jobs.



### Paulse Coaches

The business specializes in bulk passenger transport and currently provides staff transport services for Pick & Pay, Sea Harvest, government departments and also undertakes special charter services. Paulse Coaches approached the NEF for funding after it was awarded a contract by Tronox Namakwa Sands, a division of Tronox Mineral Sands (Pty) Ltd, for the transportation of mine workers.

The company employs 35 people, of which 70% are youth. As a result of NEF funding Paulse Coaches has grown their fleet from 5 to 22 buses which has increased their market share significantly. The business has acquired its own premises and is now working on acquiring a depot and a workshop.



## Rise Uniforms

Rise Uniforms is 100% owned and managed by a black female, Ms Ntombekaya Nonxuba. The business started trading informally in 2007 and was only formally registered in 2010. Rise Uniforms is a clothing manufacturing company that specialises in mass production of a wide range of clothing items like corporate uniforms and school wear. Currently the business mainly concentrates on uniform production and a clothing line for one client, Pick n Pay, with whom the business holds an annual renewable contract to supply staff uniforms. The business has over 29 designs available in seven product ranges, with more than 600 sample fabrics for custom designed fabrics. Potential clients are able to see, touch and feel the fabric before making a selection for their customised product as they work through their purchase decision.

The company is currently located in 211 Teguka Business Park in Philippi, Cape Town. Philippi is a black township in Cape Town and Rise Uniforms employs mainly women.



## Cardona Investments

Cardona Investments trading as Eastlake Convenience Centre is an entity owned equally by Mr Songezo Nayo and his wife, Mrs Phumla Nayo. The entity trades as an Engen service station located in Muizenberg, in the Western Cape. In addition to the convenience shop (Quickshop), the site boasts a Corner Bakery and a Steers outlet. Eastlake Convenience Centre is located on Prince George Drive (M5), a main road to Muizenberg. It is easily accessible to traffic driving towards the city from Muizenberg. The site is located within a middle-income area, with a shopping complex approximately 1 km away. There is also a generator on site to ensure that the business is operational should electricity outages occur. The business supports 43 meaningful jobs.

