



## INTERNET ARTICLE

### Minister Mchunu encourages South African youth to contribute innovative ideas in the water sector

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The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr Senzo Mchunu has implored those converged at the Durban International Conference Centre under the Department's National Youth Indaba umbrella to have meaningful engagements so that they make meaningful contribution in the water and sanitation sector.

Minister Mchunu was speaking on the first day of the week-long, annual Youth Indaba, on Monday, 26 June 2023, joined by his deputies, Ms Judith Tshabalala and Mr David Mahlobo, eThekweni Executive Mayor, Cllr Mxolisi Kaunda and Umgeni Water Acting Chief Executive, Dr Sipho Manana.

The Youth Indaba is part of the Department's Youth Month commemoration and aims to highlight available opportunities for youth development and educate the youth about their role within the water and sanitation sector.

"My plea to you is to not only be empowered but to have an outcome that will impact the water sector at the end of this Indaba. It is my wish that after all the commissions and the discussions taking place here, you will emerge better positioned to be able to work with us as the Department of Water and Sanitation to achieve our objectives", said Minister Mchunu.

The National Water and Sanitation Youth Indaba, themed "**Accelerating Youth Economic Emancipation for a Sustainable Future**" has attracted school learners, the employed and unemployed youth, self-employed youth, and the young water professionals

The Indaba seeks to encourage engagements, technical expertise and knowledge sharing among the youth in the sector, with a view of improving institutional governance, job creation, skills development, economic development, social cohesion and, ultimately, the youth contribution to service delivery to their communities.

Throughout the week-long program, the young professionals will engage in interactive sessions and knowledge sharing in their respective fields. The youth will also embark on an excursion to deepen their understanding and to also provide them with practical experiences.

This year's Youth Indaba is an integral part of the Department's ongoing efforts to implement the recommendations of the 2022 National Youth Indaba Conference, which resulted in the drafting and approval of an Action Plan document.

This year's event also serves as an opportunity to launch the South African Young Water Professionals Network, establishing a sector-wide youth forum that will make a contribution to the water and sanitation challenges of the country.

Deputy Minister Judith Tshabalala also reiterated the Minister's sentiments that the outcomes of this year's Youth Indaba should give the youth a broader understanding of the government's objectives and how they affect them. She said the Department aims to educate the youth about their vital role within the Water and Sanitation sector.

"We firmly believe that by actively involving young people in the planning and execution of sector activities, we can enhance service delivery to our communities and pave the way for a sustainable future. Therefore, this Indaba should provide you with a platform for discussions, constructive idea generation that will address the challenges facing the youth in the sector, empowering them to take on leadership roles", said Deputy Minister Tshabalala.

**Sanku Tsunke**

**WATER IS LIFE – SANITATION IS DIGNITY**

**SOUTH AFRICA IS A WATER-SCARCE COUNTRY**