

THE SAAYC CHRONICLE

NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PR DESK

Welcome to the inaugural edition of SAAYC IMPACT – Mid-Year Review 2026.

As we reflect on the first six months of the year, we are proud to present a collection of stories that capture the heart of the Southern African Association for Youth Clubs (SAAYC). This publication celebrates the milestones we have achieved, the lives we have impacted, and the partnerships that continue to strengthen our mission of empowering young people across South Africa.

From leadership development and skills training to community outreach, stakeholder engagements, and Youth Month celebrations, the first half of 2026 has been marked by purpose, growth, and meaningful impact. Every programme implemented, every success story shared, and every community reached is a testament to the dedication of our staff, volunteers, partners, and the resilient young people we serve.



This newsletter is more than a reflection of our activities—it is a celebration of the individuals and communities that make SAAYC's work possible. Within these pages, you will discover inspiring success stories, programme highlights, key organisational achievements, and moments that demonstrate our unwavering commitment to creating opportunities and building brighter futures for South Africa's youth.

As the Public Relations Department, we remain committed to sharing authentic stories that showcase the impact of our work, strengthen our organisational identity, and keep our stakeholders connected to the journey we are taking together.

Thank you for your continued support and for being part of the SAAYC family. We invite you to journey with us through this Mid-Year Review as we celebrate how far we have come and look forward with confidence to the opportunities that lie ahead.

Together, we are empowering youth, transforming communities, and building a brighter tomorrow.

Londeka Msibi

F I N A N C E

S T R E N G T H E N I N G F I N A N C I A L E X C E L L E N C E T H R O U G H C O M P L I A N C E A N D E F F I C I E N C Y

The Finance Department kicked off 2026 with a strong focus on strengthening financial governance, improving compliance, and enhancing operational efficiency. Through disciplined financial management and continuous process improvements, the department has contributed significantly to SAAYC's financial stability and organisational success.

One of the department's biggest achievements was the successful completion of the SAAYC NPC Audit, which recorded significantly fewer and less severe findings than in previous years—a clear indication that strengthened financial controls and proactive corrective measures are delivering results.

Equally impressive was the successful completion of the National Youth Service (NYS) Audit, where the Finance Department achieved zero audit findings, demonstrating exceptional compliance, accuracy, and accountability.

To further strengthen financial systems, the Finance team is currently participating in specialised training and capacity-building programmes facilitated by Chartered Accountants. These initiatives are equipping the team with advanced knowledge and practical tools to enhance financial reporting, record management, and audit readiness.

The department successfully submitted all Q1 VAT returns without receiving any queries from SARS, thanks to rigorous invoice verification processes and strict adherence to VAT regulations.

In another notable achievement, SAAYC has incurred zero SARS penalties since the beginning of 2026, reflecting improved accuracy and compliance in all tax submissions.

Several internal financial processes were enhanced during the quarter, including:

- Improved accounts payable processes, resulting in fewer late or missed supplier payments.
- Faster processing of departmental requisitions, reducing payment delays.
- Consistent and timely submission of budget tracking reports to the Executive Director.
- On-time delivery of payment tracking reports to both the Executive Director and Administration Manager.

Working closely with the Administration Department, the Finance team helped develop a more structured procurement and payment process, improving workflow, accountability, and efficiency across the organisation.

Regular weekly reconciliation meetings with the Administration Intern also strengthened financial accuracy by ensuring requisitions were correctly allocated and discrepancies promptly resolved.

As the year progresses, the Finance Department remains committed to maintaining sound financial governance while continuously improving systems that support SAAYC's mission.



HUMAN RESOURCE

BUILDING CAPACITY, SUPPORTING PEOPLE AND STRENGTHENING SAAYC

The Human Resources Department continued to play a vital role during the first quarter of 2026 by strengthening organisational capacity, supporting employee wellbeing, and enhancing systems that enable SAAYC to deliver on its mission of empowering young people and communities.

Growing Our Team

A major milestone during the quarter was the successful recruitment and onboarding of key personnel who have strengthened service delivery across the organisation:

- **Mr. Tlou Boloka – Centre Manager, Orange Farm**
- **Ms. Magret Mei – Centre Administrator, Soweto**
- **Mr. Letlhogonolo Motsomi – Facilities and Maintenance Assistant**
- **Hope Mofokeng –**

These appointments have enhanced centre operations, facilities management, programme implementation, and administrative support across SAAYC.

Supporting Employee Wellbeing

As part of SAAYC's commitment to employee wellness, the Human Resources Department provided administrative support for the Solar and Energy Saving Project.

Through this initiative, eligible employees received assistance with the installation of residential solar energy systems and access to energy-efficient appliances, helping staff manage increasing electricity costs, improve energy efficiency, and remain productive during power interruptions.

Throughout the quarter, HR continued providing comprehensive employee support services, including:

- Recruitment and onboarding
- Employee relations support
- Staff wellness initiatives
- Leave administration
- Guidance and day-to-day support for managers and employees across all SAAYC Centres and the National Office

Regular Centre support visits also enabled the department to strengthen communication, address operational challenges, support staff development, and promote positive workplace environments.

Supporting National Youth Service

HR also continued providing critical support to the National Youth Service (NYS) Programme through participant administration, compliance management, beneficiary support, stakeholder engagement, and project implementation activities, contributing to the successful rollout of the programme.

Looking Ahead

As SAAYC enters the next quarter, the Human Resources Department remains committed to strengthening organisational growth through effective people management, staff development, employee wellbeing, recruitment, compliance, and capacity-building initiatives.

By fostering collaboration, innovation, and a people-centred culture, HR will continue supporting SAAYC's vision of empowering communities and creating sustainable opportunities for young people.



Strengthening Organisational Performance

The department continued driving improvements in governance, compliance, and organisational systems by collaborating closely with management and support departments to strengthen accountability and operational effectiveness.

A key achievement during the quarter was the continued implementation of SAAYC's enhanced Performance Management Framework, promoting clearer performance expectations, employee development, accountability, and stronger alignment with the organisation's strategic objectives.

A D M I N

MAINTAINING EXCELLENCE THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE, OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

During the first half of 2026, the Administration Department continued to play a vital role in ensuring the efficient operation, maintenance, and functionality of the SAAYC National Office and Centres. Through proactive facilities management, infrastructure improvements, and operational support, the department maintained safe, functional, and welcoming environments that enable staff, partners, and programme participants to thrive.

Strengthening Infrastructure

A key achievement during the reporting period was the successful maintenance and repair of the National Office roof structure, ensuring the long-term safety and integrity of the building.

The maintenance project included:

- Repairing and reinforcing damaged timber members and supporting roof trusses.
- Removing and replacing deteriorated structural components where necessary.
- Tightening loose fixings to improve structural stability.
- Inspecting and securing roof sheeting supports to ensure proper alignment and compliance with safety standards.

The work was carefully coordinated to minimise disruption to daily operations while maintaining strict health and safety requirements throughout the maintenance process.

Expanding Parking Facilities

To improve accessibility and accommodate organisational growth, the Administration Department successfully oversaw the extension of the National Office carport shade structure.

The expanded parking area now provides additional covered parking for staff members, visitors, and stakeholders, enhancing convenience while protecting vehicles from adverse weather conditions.

Maintaining Operational Excellence

Throughout the reporting period, the department remained committed to the ongoing maintenance and efficient operation of the SAAYC National Office. Regular inspections, preventative maintenance, and facility improvements ensured that office infrastructure remained safe, functional, and conducive to productive working environments.

In addition to supporting the National Office, the Administration Department continued to oversee the maintenance and upkeep of infrastructure across SAAYC Centres, coordinating repairs and facility improvements that support the delivery of quality youth development programmes.

Supporting Organisational Efficiency

Beyond infrastructure management, the department continued providing essential administrative and operational support across the organisation by coordinating procurement processes, managing office facilities, supporting logistics, and ensuring that staff and programme teams had the resources required to deliver services effectively.

Looking Ahead

As SAAYC continues to grow, the Administration Department remains committed to maintaining high operational standards through proactive infrastructure management, preventative maintenance, and continuous improvements to organisational facilities. By investing in safe, efficient, and well-maintained environments, the department continues to support the successful delivery of SAAYC's programmes and services across the country.



P R O G R A M M E S

E A S T E R N C A P E & N O R T H E R N C A P E

The Eastern Cape Programme continued to make meaningful strides in strengthening youth-led organisations through impactful training, professional development, and strategic partnerships. During the quarter, the focus remained on equipping youth leaders with practical skills, enhancing organisational capacity, and building sustainable community-driven initiatives.

Running an Effective Youth Organisation (REYO) Training

A major milestone during the quarter was the successful facilitation of two Running an Effective Youth Organisation (REYO) training sessions held in Bloemfontein and Gqeberha. These sessions marked the first national training intervention for the 2026 cohort participating in the SAAYC Club Development Pathway.

The training was designed to strengthen organisational capacity by equipping youth-led organisations with practical knowledge and essential tools for effective programme management. Participants explored key topics including project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder engagement, communication, and organisational sustainability.

The interactive format encouraged active participation, peer learning, and the exchange of experiences among organisations from different provinces. Smaller training groups also allowed for personalised engagement, enabling facilitators to better understand each organisation's unique strengths and development needs.

Key Outcomes:

- Youth organisations strengthened their organisational and programme management capacity.
- Participants acquired practical skills to implement impactful community initiatives.
- Strong engagement and enthusiasm demonstrated participants' commitment to organisational growth.
- The training created valuable networking opportunities, fostering collaboration between youth organisations across provinces.
- Smaller cohorts enabled tailored support and more meaningful organisational assessments.

The REYO programme laid a solid foundation for the 2026 cohort, positioning participating organisations to create lasting impact within their communities.

Investing in Professional Growth

Continuous learning remained a priority as Programme Coordinators participated in several capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening their ability to support youth development programmes.

Grant Funding and Global Perspectives Workshop

Programme Coordinators attended a specialised workshop hosted by the University of the Free State, in partnership with Professor Patrick Makokoro. The workshop provided valuable insights into the evolving funding landscape for non-profit organisations, covering donor priorities, funding trends, and effective proposal development strategies.

The knowledge gained has strengthened the team's ability to identify funding opportunities and support youth organisations in developing competitive funding proposals.

Social Entrepreneurship Training

Programme Coordinators also participated in a two-day Social Entrepreneurship Training facilitated by Ithumeleng Hlapane. The training explored innovative approaches to addressing community challenges through sustainable social enterprises.

Through practical exercises and collaborative learning, participants gained valuable skills that will enable them to mentor and support SAAYC Clubs in developing sustainable social enterprises that create both social and economic impact.



MRS. LAUREN GALLANT
Programmes Coordinator: Eastern Cape & Northern Cape

PROGRAMMES

EASTERN CAPE & NORTHERN CAPE

United Nations Human Rights Mechanisms Training

The Programmes Team concluded the quarter by attending the United Nations Human Rights Mechanisms Training in Pretoria, hosted by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities in collaboration with the South African Human Rights Commission. The training deepened participants' understanding of international human rights systems while providing valuable networking opportunities with stakeholders across the human rights sector.

A key takeaway was the importance of adopting a human rights-based approach to programme design—recognising community challenges as human rights issues requiring inclusive, sustainable, and targeted interventions. This knowledge will continue to strengthen SAAYC's programmes and ensure that youth development initiatives remain rights-based, responsive, and impactful.

Through these initiatives, the Eastern Cape Programme continues to strengthen the capacity of both youth organisations and Programme Coordinators, reinforcing SAAYC's commitment to developing empowered young leaders, sustainable organisations, and resilient communities.



P R O G R A M M E S

K W A Z U L U N A T A L

KwaZulu-Natal delivered a productive first half of 2026, focusing on youth empowerment, organisational capacity-building, and leadership development. Through the successful implementation of training programmes, club assessments, and National Youth Service (NYS) initiatives, the province continued to strengthen youth organisations and create opportunities for sustainable community impact.

National Youth Service (NYS) Phase 4 Success

The year began with the successful implementation of the NYS Phase 4 Social Entrepreneurship Training, engaging 25 youth organisations and equipping 350 young people with entrepreneurial knowledge and practical skills. The training empowered participants to identify innovative solutions to community challenges while promoting sustainable livelihood opportunities.

To showcase the programme's impact, the province also conducted NYS Impact and Success Story Site Visits, highlighting the achievements of participants and documenting inspiring stories of young people making meaningful contributions within their communities.

Strengthening Youth Organisations

Between March and May, the KwaZulu-Natal team conducted Club Assessment Visits for organisations joining the 2026/2027 SAAYC Club Development Cohort. These assessments evaluated organisational readiness, compliance, and operational capacity, enabling the development of tailored support plans to strengthen governance, programme delivery, and long-term sustainability.

Running an Effective Youth Organisation (REYO).

In May, KwaZulu-Natal successfully hosted the Running an Effective Youth Organisation (REYO) Training in Durban, bringing together representatives from all 15 provincial youth clubs. The training equipped participants with practical skills in organisational leadership, governance, programme management, and sustainable operations, further strengthening the ability of youth organisations to serve their communities effectively.

Developing Strong Youth Leaders

Building on the REYO programme, the province hosted a Governance and Leadership Training in June, providing youth leaders with practical tools to enhance leadership, improve governance practices, and strengthen organisational development. The interactive training encouraged collaboration, knowledge sharing, and active participation, empowering leaders to drive sustainable youth-led initiatives across KwaZulu-Natal.

Through these initiatives, KwaZulu-Natal continues to build resilient youth organisations, develop confident leaders, and create opportunities that empower young people to become active agents of positive change within their communities.



MS. KWANELE MYENI

Programmes Coordinator: KwaZulu Natal



P R O G R A M M E S

L I M P O P O

The Limpopo Programme continued to make significant progress during the first half of 2026 by expanding its reach into rural communities, strengthening youth organisations, and building strategic partnerships that create sustainable opportunities for young people.

Expanding Our Footprint

A key milestone during the reporting period was the successful recruitment of 15 new youth clubs into the SAAYC Club Development Programme. Conducted in partnership with the Department of Social Development and local radio stations, the recruitment campaign increased awareness of SAAYC's programmes while expanding the organisation's presence in deep rural communities across Limpopo.



Building Strong Organisations

To strengthen organisational capacity, representatives from all 15 newly recruited clubs participated in the Running an Effective Youth Organisation (REYO) Training. The programme equipped participants with practical knowledge in governance, leadership, programme management, and organisational sustainability, empowering clubs to better serve their communities.

Further strengthening organisational governance, 15 Board Members also completed a specialised Board of Directors Training, enhancing their leadership capabilities and reinforcing good governance, policy implementation, and strategic decision-making within their organisations.

Empowering Youth Through Partnerships

Limpopo continued to expand meaningful partnerships with key stakeholders, including the Polokwane Local Municipality, University of Limpopo, and Core Energy.

These collaborations created new opportunities for youth participation in agricultural development and entrepreneurship. Notably, four SAAYC clubs were successfully enrolled in the Polokwane Municipality Agricultural Incubation Programme, where they received access to financial support, mentorship, market opportunities, and resource mobilisation initiatives.

The province also participated in the Youth Agricultural Trade Fair, where SAAYC showcased its work through exhibitions and panel discussions, including an insightful session on Unlocking Agricultural Finance.

Celebrating Youth Month

Youth Month was commemorated through impactful community events hosted by SAAYC clubs across the province.

- FNT Foundation reached more than 800 young people through Youth Day commemorative activities.
- Sekhabane Enrichment Centre engaged over 200 young people through indigenous games, sports, arts, and cultural activities that celebrated youth leadership and community participation.

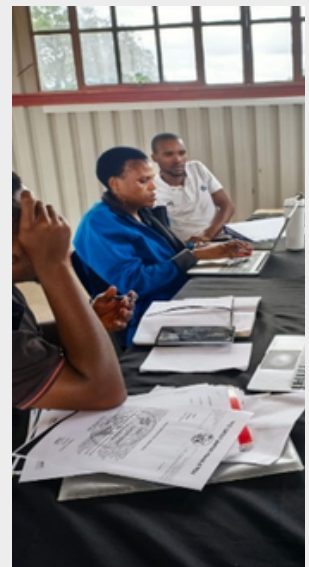


MRS. SALOME MABASO

Programmes Coordinator: Limpopo

P R O G R A M M E S

L I M P O P O



Strengthening Strategic Partnerships

Limpopo continued to build valuable relationships with government departments, municipalities, educational institutions, and media partners to expand programme reach and impact.

Key partnerships included:

- National and community radio stations that supported programme awareness, recruitment, and advocacy.
- The Department of Social Development, which assisted with resource mobilisation and participant support.
- The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), providing entrepreneurship and life skills training.
- Polokwane Municipality and Core Energy, supporting youth entrepreneurship and agricultural incubation initiatives.

Through strategic partnerships, capacity-building initiatives, and expanded community engagement, the Limpopo Programme continues to empower youth organisations, strengthen leadership, and create sustainable opportunities that contribute to the social and economic development of young people across the province.

P R O G R A M M E S

M P U M A L A N G A

Building Stronger Youth Organisations for Sustainable Community Impact
The Mpumalanga Programme made significant progress during the first half of 2026 by focusing on organisational development, leadership, and governance. Through the successful recruitment of new youth clubs and the delivery of targeted capacity-building programmes, SAAYC laid a strong foundation for long-term youth development across the province.

Growing the SAAYC Network

The first phase of the 18-month Youth Club Development Programme focused on recruiting, assessing, and onboarding youth organisations committed to driving positive change within their communities.

Following a comprehensive assessment process, 13 youth clubs were successfully admitted into the programme and began their organisational development journey.

Strengthening Organisational Capacity

To support the growth of participating organisations, SAAYC delivered two flagship training programmes:

- Running an Effective Youth Organisation (REYO)
- Board and Governance Training

These programmes equipped youth leaders with practical knowledge in governance, leadership, compliance, strategic planning, organisational management, and sustainability.

A total of 11 youth clubs successfully completed both training programmes and continue to receive ongoing mentorship, monitoring, and technical support through site visits and regular engagement.

As a result, participating organisations have demonstrated notable improvements in:

- Governance and leadership practices.
- Organisational compliance and accountability.
- Strategic planning and operational management.
- Professionalism and organisational branding.
- Social media visibility and community engagement.

In keeping with SAAYC's commitment to knowledge sharing, participants also facilitated internal feedback sessions within their organisations, ensuring that newly acquired skills were transferred to fellow members.

Creating Community Impact

Throughout the reporting period, SAAYC-supported clubs remained actively involved in community development by implementing programmes that addressed local needs and empowered young people.

These initiatives included:

- Youth Month commemorations.
- Educational support programmes.
- Child protection awareness campaigns.
- Sports tournaments and recreational activities.
- Financial literacy workshops.
- Reading and literacy programmes.
- Cultural celebrations and youth empowerment initiatives.

SAAYC also provided support for selected community projects, including sponsorship towards Youth Month activities and local sporting events.



MR. JABU MAHLANGU

Programmes Coordinator: Mpumalanga

P R O G R A M M E S

M P U M A L A N G A

Celebrating Success Stories

The province celebrated several inspiring achievements that demonstrate the growing impact of youth organisations within the SAAYC network.



One standout success was YUDO, which was invited to the South African Broadcasting Corporation studios in Johannesburg to discuss the organisation's work, the significance of Youth Month, and the important role young people play in community development.

Another notable achievement came from Sinawe Youth Development Centre, which successfully completed the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) National Youth Service Incubator Programme, further strengthening the organisation's capacity and creating new opportunities for sustainable community impact.

Building Strong Partnerships

During the first half of the year, the Mpumalanga Programme strengthened relationships with municipalities, community organisations, civil society partners, and youth development stakeholders.

While the primary focus remained on recruitment, onboarding, and organisational capacity-building, these strategic partnerships have established a solid foundation for expanded collaboration, increased programme reach, and greater impact in the months ahead.

Looking Ahead

With a strong cohort of youth organisations now onboarded and equipped with essential leadership and governance skills, the Mpumalanga Programme is well positioned to deepen organisational support throughout the remainder of the 18-month development journey.

By continuing to invest in mentorship, collaboration, and youth leadership, SAAYC remains committed to strengthening community-based organisations that create lasting opportunities and positive change for young people across Mpumalanga.



P R O G R A M M E S

S O W E T O C E N T R E

The Soweto Centre has had an exciting and impactful first half of 2026, delivering a diverse range of educational, recreational, and developmental programmes designed to nurture creativity, leadership, digital skills, and personal growth among young people. Through engaging activities, strategic partnerships, and skills development initiatives, the Centre continues to create meaningful opportunities that empower youth to reach their full potential.

Learning Through Fun and Creativity

The year began with a successful Easter Holiday Programme, where members participated in fun-filled educational and recreational activities that promoted teamwork, critical thinking, and social interaction. To ensure a welcoming and supportive environment, participants were provided with refreshments after each day's activities, encouraging consistent attendance and active participation.

Creativity and innovation remained key focus areas throughout the quarter. Members took part in the Design Squad Global (DSG) Power House and Water Well Project, applying basic engineering concepts while designing sustainable solutions through teamwork and problem-solving.

Additional creative activities included the DIY Maze Game Project and the Winter Wonderland Decoration Project, where members developed artistic expression, planning skills, patience, and collaboration while transforming the Centre into an engaging learning space.

Celebrating Heritage and Active Citizenship

The Centre commemorated important national milestones through educational programmes that encouraged civic awareness and cultural appreciation.

During Freedom Day, members participated in activities exploring South Africa's democratic journey and the importance of responsible citizenship.

Youth Month was marked by an educational excursion to the Soweto Theatre, where members attended a live performance commemorating the Soweto Uprising. The experience deepened participants' understanding of South Africa's history while honouring the courage and legacy of the youth of 1976.

Developing Future-Ready Digital Skills

The Soweto Centre continued investing in digital literacy through the ICTAGE Programme, where learners demonstrated exceptional commitment and academic excellence.

The programme achieved an impressive 81.8% participation rate, with all enrolled learners successfully completing and passing their examinations. Several students achieved outstanding results, reflecting the quality of instruction and the dedication of participants.

Members also enhanced their digital capabilities through the Life Skills Programme, learning to create professional PowerPoint presentations, strengthen visual communication skills, and confidently present before an audience. These experiences significantly improved participants' confidence, communication, and presentation abilities.

Exploring Artificial Intelligence and Innovation

Through the Clubhouse Network, members were introduced to emerging digital technologies, learning how to create AI-generated imagery using Google Gemini and integrate these designs into Canva and other creative platforms.



MS. LERATO MAHAMOTSA

Centre Manager: Soweto

P R O G R A M M E S

S O W E T O C E N T R E

Innovation continued through Design Squad Global, where members designed a prototype mobile application called SA Wallet. The concept aims to improve digital accessibility by securely storing important personal documents such as identity documents, driver's licences, passports, and bank cards, while contributing towards addressing crime and digital exclusion within township communities.

These achievements demonstrate the Centre's commitment to supporting young people beyond programme participation and into education and employment opportunities.

Growing Membership and Community Support

A successful community recruitment campaign increased Centre membership and expanded participation in programmes, enabling the Centre to positively impact even more young people throughout Soweto.



Growing Opportunities for Young People

The Centre celebrated several life-changing success stories during the reporting period.

- All Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) participants successfully received their National Youth Service (NYS) certificates.
- Sixteen NYS participants enrolled in retail training and secured workplace placements in various retail stores.
- Former NYS participants received support to apply for tertiary education and were successfully admitted to college.
- Two former NYS participants enrolled in beauty school after connecting with a recruiter during the Social Entrepreneurship Programme.



The Centre also received a generous donation of toys from community partner Keabetswe Motsamai, enriching recreational resources and creating additional opportunities for learning through play.

Overall Impact

Through educational programmes, digital skills development, creative projects, cultural experiences, and youth empowerment initiatives, the Soweto Centre continues to provide a safe and inspiring environment where young people can learn, grow, and thrive.

By equipping members with practical skills, confidence, leadership abilities, and exposure to emerging technologies, the Centre remains committed to preparing young people for success in education, employment, entrepreneurship, and active citizenship.

P R O G R A M M E S

O R A N G E F A R M C E N T R E

Empowering Youth Through Digital Skills, Agriculture and Creative Expression.

The Orange Farm Centre continued to create meaningful opportunities for young people during the first half of 2026 through programmes that promoted digital literacy, food security, academic support, entrepreneurship, and the creative arts. By combining practical skills development with community partnerships, the Centre strengthened its impact while empowering youth to build brighter futures.

Building Digital Skills Through ICTAGE

The ICTAGE Programme continued to equip young people with essential digital and workplace skills.

Key achievements during the reporting period included:

- Two programme participants successfully secured employment after completing the course.
- One participant independently designed and developed their own website, demonstrating advanced digital competency.
- Participants achieved an average pass rate of 75% or higher, with most completing their examinations within one or two attempts.
- Learners completed the programme with significantly improved computer literacy, preparing them for further education and employment opportunities.

Promoting Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture

The Food Security Programme achieved important milestones that strengthened both community development and youth employment.

The Centre successfully completed its hydroponic farming system, improving crop production and supporting sustainable agricultural practices. Fresh produce harvested from the project was donated to the Meals & Meals Programme, helping provide nutritious meals to vulnerable community members.

Participants also attended agricultural and financial management training, gaining valuable knowledge in sustainable farming practices and financial planning. The programme further created employment and learning opportunities for young people interested in pursuing careers in agriculture.

Key initiatives included:

- Daily homework supervision and academic support.
- Access to research facilities and printing services.
- Life skills workshops and educational awareness campaigns.
- Engaging holiday programmes that combined education with recreation.
- Partnerships with local schools, community organisations, and stakeholders.

These initiatives contributed to improved learner participation, stronger academic commitment, and the development of teamwork, leadership, and positive behavioural skills.



MR. TLOU BOLOKA

Centre Manager: Orange Farm

Supporting Education and Life Skills

Through the Education Support Programme (ESP), the Centre continued providing comprehensive academic and personal development support to learners.

P R O G R A M M E S

O R A N G E F A R M C E N T R E

Club Spotlight: Struggles Theatre Production

One of the Centre's standout success stories during the first half of 2026 was the continued growth of Struggles Theatre Production, a youth-led organisation empowering children and young people through the performing arts.



Expanding Arts-Based Learning

The organisation successfully piloted the Imbewu – Arts for Early Learning Programme, introducing creative, play-based learning within Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres. Following the success of the pilot, the programme expanded to four ECD centres, increasing access to arts-based education for young children.

Creating Opportunities in the Creative Industry

Young artists and facilitators gained valuable industry exposure through a partnership with the Joburg Film Festival, attending screenings and networking opportunities that introduced them to careers within the film and creative sectors.

The organisation also strengthened its sustainability by joining the SAAYC 2026/2027 Club Development Programme while continuing to benefit from the ASSITEJ South Africa stipend programme, which supports emerging arts facilitators.

Celebrating Youth Through the Arts

During Youth Month, Struggles Theatre Production presented its original theatre production, *Are We Free or Doomed?*, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising.

The production was showcased at several community venues, including performances during the Human Rights Festival at Constitution Hill, local schools, and community centres, encouraging meaningful conversations around freedom, democracy, identity, and social justice.

The organisation also expanded its educational outreach through partnerships with local schools, delivering theatre, poetry, music, and creative arts programmes that build confidence, leadership, and cultural identity among learners.

Creating Lasting Community Impact

Throughout the reporting period, Struggles Theatre Production:

- Expanded partnerships across the arts, education, and youth development sectors.
- Participated in the loveLife Holiday Programme, engaging young people through creative performances and educational activities.
- Successfully enrolled in the National Youth Service (NYS) Stipend Programme.
- Continued creating employment and professional development opportunities for emerging arts facilitators.
- Maintained consistent programming in theatre, poetry, drumming, and arts education despite challenges within the creative sector.



P R O G R A M M E S

O R A N G E F A R M C E N T R E

Creating Lasting Community Impact

Throughout the reporting period, Struggles Theatre Production:

- Expanded partnerships across the arts, education, and youth development sectors.
- Participated in the loveLife Holiday Programme, engaging young people through creative performances and educational activities.
- Successfully enrolled in the National Youth Service (NYS) Stipend Programme.
- Continued creating employment and professional development opportunities for emerging arts facilitators.
- Maintained consistent programming in theatre, poetry, drumming, and arts education despite challenges within the creative sector.



P R O G R A M M E S

F R E E S T A T E

During the first half of 2026, the Free State Programme focused on strengthening the sustainability and effectiveness of youth organisations by investing in professional development, fundraising capacity, and strategic partnerships. Through collaboration with academic institutions and development partners, SAAYC continued to equip youth leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to build resilient organisations and deliver lasting community impact.

Strengthening Organisational Sustainability

In May, SAAYC representatives and delegates from member organisations participated in a specialised Fundraising and Organisational Sustainability Workshop hosted by the University of the Free State QwaQwa Campus.

The workshop provided practical guidance on fundraising, donor engagement, organisational positioning, and digital storytelling as powerful tools for increasing visibility and securing sustainable funding. Participants gained valuable skills to strengthen programme delivery, improve stakeholder engagement, and enhance the long-term sustainability of their organisations.

Creating Meaningful Partnerships

The engagement also strengthened collaboration between SAAYC and the University of the Free State, creating opportunities for Community Development students to undertake experiential learning placements within SAAYC youth centres and member organisations.

This partnership will not only enrich student learning but also increase organisational capacity by providing additional support to youth development programmes and community initiatives.

Expanding Global Perspectives

As part of this growing partnership, SAAYC Programme Coordinators participated in an international virtual lecture on Grant Funding and Global Perspectives on Improving Outcomes for Children, Youth and Families, presented by Patrick Makokoro.

The session explored global funding trends, evidence-based programme design, and innovative approaches to improving outcomes for children, youth, and families. The knowledge gained will strengthen SAAYC's ability to develop impactful programmes and identify new funding opportunities that support sustainable community development.

Building Stronger Organisations for Greater Impact

These engagements reflect SAAYC's commitment to investing in the growth of youth organisations through continuous learning, collaboration, and strategic partnerships.

By connecting community organisations with higher education institutions, development practitioners, and international experts, the Free State Programme is helping to build stronger, more resilient organisations that are better equipped to respond to the evolving needs of young people and their communities.

Overall Impact

The Free State Programme continues to demonstrate the value of collaboration in advancing youth development. Through capacity-building initiatives, knowledge exchange, and strategic partnerships, SAAYC is strengthening organisational sustainability, improving service delivery, and creating greater opportunities for youth empowerment and community transformation across the province.



M R . A B E L N D A B A

Centre Manager: Free State



P R O G R A M M E S

E T W A T W A C E N T R E

Empowering Youth Through Education, Innovation, Sport and Community Engagement

The Etwatwa Centre continued to make a meaningful impact during the first half of 2026 by delivering educational, recreational, and developmental programmes that equipped young people with the knowledge, confidence, and practical skills needed to thrive. Through strategic partnerships and innovative programming, the Centre created safe and inclusive spaces where children and youth could learn, grow, and actively contribute to their communities.

Promoting Active Citizenship

In March, the Centre commemorated Freedom Day through an educational programme facilitated by representatives from the Electoral Commission of South Africa. The interactive session introduced young people to the importance of voting, civic responsibility, and active participation in South Africa's democratic processes.

Participants gained a deeper understanding of their constitutional rights and responsibilities while taking part in a collaborative hand-painting activity that celebrated unity, creativity, and self-expression.

An Engaging Holiday Programme

The Easter Holiday Programme offered children and youth an exciting combination of educational and recreational activities designed to promote teamwork, creativity, and digital skills.

Programme highlights included:

- Introduction to e-sports, where participants developed strategic thinking, teamwork, and digital literacy.
- A movie day and talent show that encouraged confidence, creativity, and self-expression.
- Easter-themed arts and crafts, where participants designed creative Easter Bunny packages using recyclable materials.

These activities provided young people with meaningful opportunities to learn while enjoying a safe and supportive holiday environment.

Supporting Academic Success

The Educational Support Programme (ESP) remained one of the Centre's flagship initiatives, providing learners with ongoing academic support and opportunities to strengthen literacy and learning.

Working alongside partners Bachaba Di Chaba and the KwaThema Book Club, learners participated in:

- Spelling Bee auditions.
- Structured reading sessions.
- Homework supervision.
- School project support.
- Reading fluency and comprehension activities.

Interactive educational activities, including Scrabble and other educational board games, helped learners expand their vocabulary, improve spelling, strengthen language skills, and develop critical thinking through play.



MS. NOMFUNDO THUSINI

Centre Manager: Etwatwa

Driving Digital Innovation

One of the Centre's most exciting achievements was the continued development of the EIB (Ekurhuleni Information Bot) through the Clubhouse Programme.

Young people collaborated to design and enhance a digital platform aimed at providing residents with easy access to community information and essential services.



P R O G R A M M E S

E T W A T W A C E N T R E

Participants also incorporated STEM-based educational features that support learners with homework and academic development.

The project has enabled participants to develop valuable digital, coding, and problem-solving skills while demonstrating how technology can be used to address real community challenges.

Developing Talent Through Sport

Sport continued to play an important role in youth development at the Centre.

The successful Netball Tournament brought together teams from across the community in a spirit of healthy competition, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Teams competed for championship honours and a netball kit, providing both motivation and valuable sporting resources for the winning team.

Beyond competition, the tournament strengthened community relationships, promoted leadership, and encouraged young people to work together towards shared goals.

Strengthening Community Partnerships

The success of the Etwatwa Centre's programmes was made possible through strong collaboration with key community partners, including:

- The Electoral Commission of South Africa, which supported civic education and democratic awareness.
- Bachaba Di Chaba, which partnered with the Centre to strengthen literacy through Spelling Bee activities.
- KwaThema Book Club, which promoted a culture of reading through structured literacy programmes.

These partnerships enriched programme delivery while providing participants with diverse learning opportunities and access to additional resources.

Creating Lasting Impact

Throughout the reporting period, participants developed a wide range of personal and practical skills, including:

- Leadership and teamwork.
- Public speaking and communication.
- Reading and literacy.
- STEM and digital competencies.
- Creativity and innovation.
- Critical thinking and problem-solving.
- Sportsmanship and collaboration.

Learners participating in the Educational Support Programme demonstrated improved reading confidence, stronger academic engagement, and a growing enthusiasm for learning.

Looking Ahead

The Etwatwa Centre remains committed to expanding opportunities that empower young people through education, technology, sport, and personal development. Future priorities include strengthening literacy programmes, expanding STEM and digital learning initiatives, increasing strategic partnerships, and creating even more opportunities for young people to become confident leaders, innovators, and active citizens within their communities.



PUBLIC RELATIONS

STRENGTHENING THE SAAYC BRAND THROUGH STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

During the first half of 2026, the Public Relations and Communications Department continued to position SAAYC as a leading youth development organisation through strategic communication, brand management, media engagement, and digital storytelling. The department played a central role in showcasing organisational impact, strengthening stakeholder relationships, supporting fundraising and partnerships, and ensuring a consistent corporate identity across all programmes and centres.

Amplifying SAAYC's Impact

The department documented and promoted activities taking place across all SAAYC centres and provinces through compelling stories, photography, videography, newsletters, press releases, and social media content.

Communication campaigns highlighted:

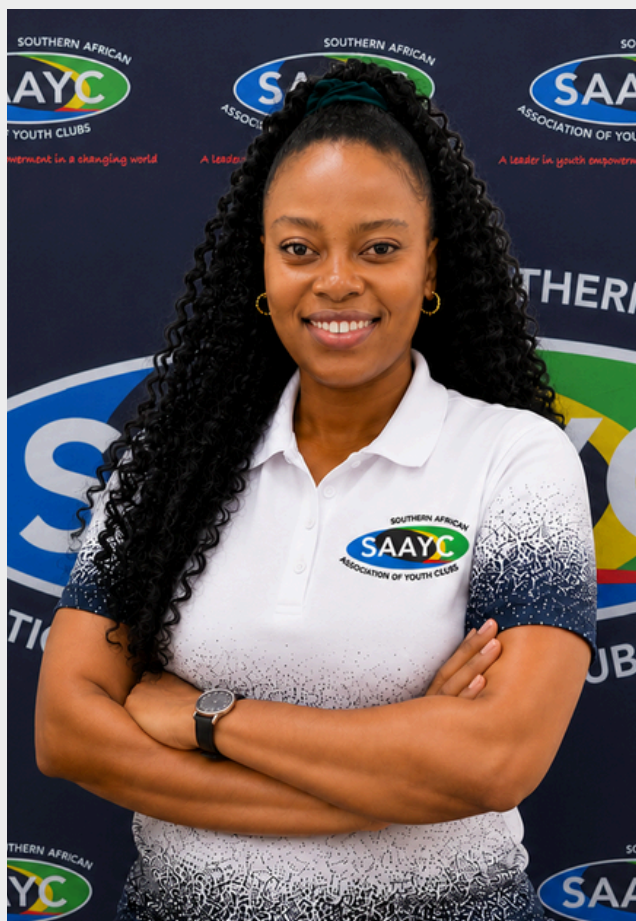
- National Youth Service (NYS) activities and success stories.
- Youth Month commemorations and awareness campaigns.
- Community outreach initiatives.
- Organizational partnerships and stakeholder engagements.
- Centre-based programmes and achievements.
- Staff recognition and internal communications.

These efforts strengthened public awareness of SAAYC's work while increasing engagement across the organisation's digital platforms.

Building Strategic Partnerships

A major highlight during the reporting period was the successful coordination of the DUNNS Clothing Donation Initiative, which provided clothing to vulnerable children, youth, families, programme participants, and dedicated staff members across SAAYC centres and the National Office. The initiative celebrated compassion, dignity, and community support while recognising individuals whose commitment often goes unnoticed.

The Public Relations Department coordinated beneficiary profiling, storytelling, photography, and communications around the initiative, ensuring that each story reflected the human impact of the partnership and reinforced SAAYC's commitment to restoring dignity through collaboration. Beneficiaries included youth participants, programme beneficiaries, support staff, and long-serving employees whose contributions continue to strengthen the organisation.



MS LONDEKA MSIBI

Public Relations Assistant



PUBLIC RELATIONS

Strengthening the SAAYC Corporate Identity

Brand management remained a core function of the Public Relations and Communications Department during the first half of 2026. The department was responsible for ensuring that every public-facing programme, event, campaign, and communication reflected SAAYC's professional image and corporate identity.

Branding and Corporate Identity Management

During the reporting period, the department successfully planned, designed, coordinated, and quality-assured branding for organisational activities across all centres and departments.

Key branding deliverables included:

- Design and production of official SAAYC uniforms and branded apparel.
- Development of promotional materials for national and provincial programmes.
- Design of pull-up banners, gazebos, tablecloths, exhibition displays, and event signage.
- Production of branded corporate gifts and promotional merchandise.
- Design of newsletters, annual reports, brochures, certificates, and organisational publications.
- Creation of digital marketing assets, campaign artwork, and social media templates.
- Development of visual content supporting Youth Month, Mandela Month, National Youth Service (NYS), fundraising campaigns, and organisational events.



Event Branding and Communications Support

The department provided comprehensive branding support for workshops, conferences, stakeholder engagements, community outreach programmes, and national campaigns by producing professional event collateral that enhanced the visibility and credibility of SAAYC.

From concept development through to production and implementation, the department ensured that every event reflected the organization's values, professionalism, and commitment to excellence.

Brand Consistency Across the Organization

Working closely with all departments, service providers, and provincial offices, the PR team ensured that all branding complied with SAAYC's Corporate Identity Guidelines. This strengthened brand recognition, enhanced stakeholder confidence, and presented a unified organisational image across every platform and engagement.

Looking Ahead

As SAAYC continues to expand its reach and impact, the Public Relations and Communications Department remains committed to delivering innovative communication strategies, compelling storytelling, professional branding, and meaningful stakeholder engagement that showcase the transformative work taking place across the organisation while strengthening the SAAYC brand nationally.

Thought Leadership and Industry Engagement

As part of SAAYC's commitment to thought leadership and advancing strategic communication, the PR & Communications Assistant was invited by PEU Communications, a Media and Communications Agency, to participate in a Youth Month discussion on "Brand Authenticity in Public Relations in the Advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI)."

The engagement explored the growing influence of artificial intelligence on the communications landscape, highlighting the importance of maintaining authenticity, credibility, ethical storytelling, and human-centred communication in an increasingly AI-driven world. The discussion also examined how organisations can leverage AI as a tool to enhance communication while preserving trust, transparency, and meaningful engagement with their audiences.

This invitation recognised SAAYC's growing presence within the public relations and communications sector and provided an opportunity to contribute to national conversations on the future of public relations, digital innovation, and youth development. Participation in the discussion further strengthened SAAYC's reputation as an organisation that embraces innovation while remaining committed to authentic and impactful communication.