

Media Statement

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NLC Site Visit Showcases Impact of Funding at Gugulethu St Benedict Home for the Aged

24 March 2026 - The **National Lotteries Commission (NLC)** Board and Executive Management visited the Gugulethu St Benedict Home for the Aged in Elukwatini, Mpumalanga, to assess the impact of its funding and reinforce accountability across supported projects.

The visit forms part of the Commission's ongoing efforts to strengthen transparency, accountability and measurable impact in grant-funded initiatives, particularly during Human Rights Month.

The delegation included NLC Board Chairperson, Professor Barney Pityana, Board Members Mr. King Tembinkosi Bonakele, Ms. Beryl Ferguson and Ms. Precious Mvulane, as well as representatives from the local Bhuleni Dhlamini tribal council, Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality and Gert Sibande District Municipality.

In the context of Human Rights Month, the NLC continues to demonstrate its role in advancing dignity and care for vulnerable groups, aligned with the Bill of Rights.

A Legacy of Care for the Elderly

Established in 1984, the Gugulethu St Benedict Home for the Aged provides 24-hour, non-discriminatory residential care to elderly persons aged 60 and above, supporting their emotional, social, physical and psychological well-being.

The centre currently cares for 66 beneficiaries aged between 65 and 112, many of whom are wheelchair-bound, bedridden or living with chronic health conditions. The facility employs 33 staff members, including caregivers, nurses, security personnel, kitchen staff, and administrative personnel, many of whose positions are supported by NLC funding, contributing directly to local employment and continuity of care.

Funding Driving Tangible Impact

The NLC allocated R2.3 million to the organisation under its Protection of the Vulnerable focus area, to support operational costs, staff salaries, and the installation of a solar power system to ensure uninterrupted service delivery.

The visit highlighted tangible impact, including recent cases where severely neglected elderly individuals were rescued from unsafe living conditions and provided with dignified care at the facility.

"Social cohesion is a very important task for nation-building. Our model is to build a caring society in which people are not oblivious to others' suffering. We want to promote the idea of a caring society," said NLC Board Chairperson, Professor Barney Pityana.

“We need to recognise and acknowledge the NLC as a state entity which aspires to build a thriving nation. We cannot do this job without the people who work on the ground. Our responsibility is to use the resources entrusted to us in partnership with those who are passionate about community development.”

Strengthening Stakeholder Engagement and Accountability

The site visit formed part of broader stakeholder engagements in Mpumalanga, including the Post-Indaba Stakeholder Engagement held on 20 March 2026 at the Emnotweni Arena in Mbombela, which brought together approximately 350 representatives from Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) and Non-Profit Companies (NPCs).

The engagement focused on communicating resolutions from the National Indaba 2025, strengthening compliance, and improving access to funding systems.

“We convened this engagement to communicate the National Indaba resolutions, educate organisations on the Thuthuka Online Grant Management System and compliance requirements, and gain a deeper understanding of the province’s needs,” said NLC Commissioner, Ms. Jodi Scholtz.

Key themes emerging from the engagement included:

- Strengthening governance and compliance capacity among NPOs and NPCs
- Improving access and usability of digital grant management systems
- Enhancing collaboration between government, traditional leadership and community organisations
- Aligning funding priorities to address critical community needs such as infrastructure, food security, skills development and environmental protection

These engagements reinforce the NLC’s strategic focus on ensuring that grant funding is both accessible and accountable, while delivering measurable impact at the community level.

Restoring Dignity Through Targeted Funding

The beneficiaries supported by the Gugulethu St Benedict Home come from backgrounds of abuse, neglect and extreme poverty, with many reliant on social grants for survival. Residents are drawn from across South Africa, including Gauteng, Western Cape and Mpumalanga, as well as neighbouring Mozambique.

The project stands as a clear example of how targeted funding, combined with strong community partnerships, can restore dignity and significantly improve the quality of life for some of the country’s most vulnerable citizens.

-ENDS-

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