



REMARKS

African Pathfinder Leaders Initiative

“2020 Fellows Training Opening“

Windhoek Multi-Purpose Youth Resource Center

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MINISTRY OF SPORT, YOUTH AND NATIONALSERVICE

- APLI's Founder and Executive Director, Sam Mandela Uutoni
- APLI Fellows
- Young Leaders
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and Gentleman

Good morning and Compliments of the New Year.

As the New Year dawns, on such a high note, it is at this point at which we take time to make a few conclusions about the things that we have been considering during the past year. A New Year generally signifies a point at which we make New Year's goals and resolutions.

It's with excitement that I stand before you to welcome you all to this promising event of the first residential training of the APLI, which also sets the tone for what one can say "will be a great year ahead".

Ladies and Gentlemen, APLI Fellows,

Youth Empowerment is a process where youth are encouraged and enabled to take charge of their lives, by addressing contemporary social situations and then take action in order to improve their access to resources and opportunities.

APLI efforts of harnessing leadership, community and entrepreneurship development, are such initiatives and opportunities, that address youth empowerment.

This is particularly appropriate in view of the fact that the youth unemployment rate in Namibia is currently estimated at 46.1%¹.

APLI's efforts at developing and mobilizing change-makers, innovators and young leaders in diverse fields across Namibia stem from the need to address the shortage of skills, resources and networks that young people need to fully realize their goals and create sustainable change in their communities and for them to further to become active contributors to societal change by:

APLI Fellows, this opportunity is not just to nurture leadership, self-development and social responsibility, this is also an opportune moment that provides you with a network to ensure that your ventures and future endeavors reach their full potential.

“A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.” — Oliver W. Holmes

Ladies and gentlemen, your presence here today serves as a reminder to us all of the integral value of investing in the youth as well as stakeholder collaboration and consultation, as key agents for building strong networks.

It is also vital to develop opportunities for us, by us, that encourage focused youth-led and driven investment in in pursuance of instilling the spirit of Ubuntu and as well as the spirit of Pan-Africanism amongst Namibian youth.

¹ www.nsa.org.na

As the Ministry mandated to empower youth, we continue to devise strategies to advocate for youth empowerment and towards the promotion of sport in Namibia.

The Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service together with key stakeholders has recently finalized the review of 3rd National Youth Policy, which is a specific and relevant tool intended to catalyze the already underway process of youth development in Namibia, through focused intervention programs which not only develop youth but also make a meaningful and relevant contribution to the success of the Vision 2030, National Development Plan 5 (NDP 5), the Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPP) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This policy is grounded on the following youth development pillars:

- i. health and well-being;
- ii. employment and economic empowerment;
- iii. education and skills development,
- iv. Political and civic participation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to further appreciate the opportunities that we further offer to youth. Opportunities such as the **121 Youth Constituency Enterprises**, which we, together with DBN, as a key stakeholder, are facilitating to assist youth with establishing enterprises at constituency level.

It is through strong partnerships that we are able to continue to deliver on our mandate. The relentless efforts of organizations such as APLI are valued as they augment efforts by government, to achieve its mandate.

APLI Fellows, it is my sincere hope that the 2020 Fellows training will allow you a chance to break barriers and to develop into noble leaders and to further discover your rightful roles you yearn to possess at the core of society.

Allow me to share a quote by C. JoyBell C. who has authored books of poetry and literature and whose writings are considered to being a source of inspiration.

“The only way that we can live is if we grow. The only way we can grow is if we change. The only way we can change is if we learn. The only way we can learn is if we are exposed. And the only way that we are exposed is if we throw ourselves into the open.”

So, my message here is to get out of comfort zones, and expose yourselves to new opportunities.

I thank you and all the best with the year ahead.