



Mopani District  
Municipality

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**MOPANI**

## **MOPANI LAUNCHES YOUTH SOLAR BUSINESS LABS TO TRAIN YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS IN RENEWABLE ENERGY**



The Mopani District Municipality has launched the Youth Solar Business Labs, a pilot programme that aims to turn youth unemployment and intermittent electricity supply into opportunities for local businesses and cleaner energy.

“We consider this an honour and absolute privilege to stand before you on this occasion,” the acting Executive Mayor, Cllr Lucky Mohlala said at the launch held on Monday, 23 March.

“This marks a significant step toward our goal of contributing to renewable energy as a district — a key programme for job creation, cleaner air, more reliable electricity and real opportunities for our local businesses, particularly the youths.”

MMC Mohlala highlighted recent gains in electrification — around 98% of district households now have access to electricity, up from 88.7% in 2011 — but warned that many rural communities still face intermittent supply and load reduction. “We have an obligation to promote alternative renewable energy, elevating solar as an immediate solution,” he said.



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The Mopani Youth Solar Labs combine practical skills training, enterprise incubation and direct service delivery. Trainees will learn to install and maintain solar systems and to run viable businesses that provide maintenance and customer support to households, farms and public facilities across the district.



“As a district where youth unemployment remains distressingly high, this programme creates a pathway from education to decent jobs. Through on-the-job training, start-up capital and market access, we want graduates to create jobs rather than apply for jobs,” he said.



The pilot will run at two Letaba TVET College campuses and at Moshupatsela farm, which will serve as the anchor site linked to an Agri-PV catalytic project.



The incubation scheme will support small, medium and micro enterprises to develop solar solutions for smallholder farmers, tourism businesses and households. At least 10 participants will receive start-up grants of R70,000 each, with a deliberate bias toward young women.