

# YOUTH CO-OPS REMOVING DEPENDENCY SYNDROME

By Majaha Nkonyane

**THE idea of youth co-operatives has been commended for removing the dependency syndrome amongst the youth and has helped groom hard-working young people who prioritise savings.**

This observation was made by the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce Industry and Trade Siboniso Nkhambule who was represented by the Director of Investor Road Map Unit Albert Chitoti in the Africa Youth Co-operative Conference which began yesterday at The George Hotel in Manzini. The PS said government, in supporting youth co-operatives, had established a tripartite agreement with Botswana and Lesotho (BOLESWA).

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The agreement is meant to be an exchange programme where youth from these countries will share ideas and plan collaborative initiatives.

This agreement is an effort by government to expose local youth to what other countries are doing. It is also meant to create space for the youth of the three countries to be able to share ideas on how best they can employ the co-operative model to do businesses for upliftment of their livelihoods.

The principal secretary said financial literacy education in Africa is not so much a concern in the minds of cur-

riculum developers for all schooling levels. "I realise a great need for a paradigm shift in all nation's education providers to consider including financial literacy education at all levels of schooling.

This will assist in building a generation that will grow with a deeper understanding of how to better manage finances," he said.

He also said cooperatives were an alternative model for business with high contributions to sustainable development above job creation and very much appealing to young people.

## Dvokolwako High still leading in co-op savings

By Majaha Nkonyane

**DVOKOLWAKO High School has definitely raised the bar in the country's schools so-operative movement with savings totalling E41 000 in eight months.**

Making a presentation at the third youth cooperative conference, Temalangenzi Dlamini a Dvokolwako High School pupil revealed that they recorded the biggest savings within school cooperatives since inception in February. "It gives me pleasure to be part of such a historic success in my school as well as in my country as our school Dvokolwako High School presently is the highest in savings with money over E41, 000. Our goal, as a savings cooperative is simply to save money, which we source from our daily pocket money," she said. Dlamini said their hunger to save

and create a co-operative was sparked by the introduction to financial literacy and the awareness to financial management. Their savings according to Dlamini, will be used for depositing money into a bank account of their own. To enjoy the benefits of having money at the end of the year and to acquire knowledge that will shape their future through savings.

Dlamini said the first registration of members was made from February 23 until June 22 when they closed registration. Registration fee was set at E10 which attracted 190 members to join the cooperation. The registration fee later rose to E25 on April 14 and 15 more members were added. Active membership according to Dlamini now stands at 205 and by the end of the first term, the co-operative had already saved over E6 000.

## Govt challenged to create opportunities for youth

By Majaha Nkonyane

**THE incoming government has been challenged to create more opportunities for the youth opportunities as more than 60 per cent of the country's population is made up of the youth. This was said by European Union (EU) Ambassador to Eswatini Esmeralda Hernandez Aragones.**

The ambassador said the youth co-operatives conference came at an ideal moment as the country just put in place a new government. "In the past week His Majesty's People's Parliament (Sibaya) was held on the debate of the challenges facing Eswatini where young people were present. As the country needs to build resilient young people in saving, authorities of the

country need to give young people a voice and opportunities that will help them grow and save," she said. According to Hernandez Aragones, the youth is at the fore front of development everywhere in the world. She said government needs to be aware that if they do not involve the youth in decision making, they may face restless and revolting young people.

This according to Hernandez Aragones creates more reasons for the government to take the youth more seriously. Local organisations were also challenged in giving the youth more attention.

The ambassador mentioned that the EU had established a number of youth empowerment oriented forums for a more social Europe, where young people could have full access to quality education, affordable housing and healthcare, free from any discrimina-

tion. Within the Eswatini context the ambassador revealed that the EU supports youth empowerment through a number of sectorial programmes, which include amongst others agriculture, trade, education and social protection. "In the education sector, the EU has since 2010, paid for all grade one pupils in the country resulting in a 98 per cent enrolment rate in primary schools thus helping the kingdom achieve universal primary contribution to the sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).