



**The NUMSA National Gender Structure donated essential relief to 2000 flood victims
in Umtata as part of Mandela Day
18 July 2025
Press statement**

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) National Gender Structure joined hands with the Red Cross to commemorate Mandela Day in Joe Slovo Township, Mthatha, Eastern Cape. This year's event centred on solidarity with over 2,000 families devastated by last month's deadly floods across Mthatha and Butterworth.

At least 100 lives were lost, and over 10,000 families were displaced when torrential rains swept through the region. Among those who perished were loved ones of NUMSA members, making this tragedy both personal and collective for the union.

In response, the National Gender Structure launched an emergency relief campaign, mobilizing donations of urgently needed items. NUMSA provided the following essential support:

- Blankets, dry goods, and toiletries
- School shoes, children's stationery, and clothing
- Sanitary towels and tinned food
- Food vouchers for bereaved NUMSA families

This support was sourced through robust fundraising efforts driven by NUMSA members and allies across the country. Addressing attendees at the event, NUMSA's Second Deputy President and Chairperson of the National Gender Structure, Puleng Phaka affirmed:

"As Africans, Ubuntu teaches us that we are because of one another. At NUMSA, our fight is not confined to the shopfloor, it extends to defending the dignity and wellbeing of working class communities. When disaster strikes, we do not turn away. We act. We welcome this opportunity to work with the Red Cross and call on the broader public to continue assisting flood-affected families."

NUMSA extends heartfelt gratitude to the regional leadership of Eastern Cape and Hlanganani, the National and Regional Gender Structures of the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Western Cape and Hlanganani, the Local office in Mthatha, SAFTU affiliates, and our dedicated Shopstewards, staff and members who rose to this occasion. We also thank NUMSA Financial Services and Kungawobantu and supporting service providers for bolstering our relief efforts.

The campaign continues for the next 30 days. Donations can be dropped off at the nearest NUMSA Regional or Local office. Furthermore, we call on all NUMSA Gender Structures to intervene proactively, not only in the Eastern Cape but in their communities wherever there is a need and to adopt a progressive program to lighten the burden on those who are vulnerable and suffering.

President Phaka went on to say,

“True Socialism is not just ideology, it is compassion in action”.

ENDS.

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