

College students struggle without funds

● Payment delays due to outstanding documentation and verification, says principal

Msindisi Fengu

Dozens of Eastern Cape tertiary students from disadvantaged backgrounds are struggling to attend classes due to a lack of money for transport, meals and accommodation while unclaimed student allowances are lying idle in the coffers of an Eastern Cape college.

The situation relates to R16m in funding that the Services Sector, Education and Training Authority (Seta) transferred to the EastCape Midlands Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college at the beginning of the academic year.

The college has campuses in Bethelsdorp, Kariega, Makhandanda and Robert Sobukwe Town (formerly Graaff-Reinet).

Several students this week slammed the college management for allegedly being unresponsive to their grievances

and threatening to take action against them for speaking out.

Seta has placed the blame squarely on the college management while the college has pointed to administrative bungles allegedly caused by deserving students.

However, college principal Charl van Heerden has dismissed the allegations.

“We strongly reject the allegations of mismanagement and intimidation,” Van Heerden said.

Van Heerden confirmed that funding was received from Seta for 200 students.

He said a total of 162 students had been successfully verified, while 38 students still had outstanding documentation required to complete the verification process.

“The college has informed the affected students of the outstanding documentation required.

“Some students have already submitted the required documents at their respective campuses,” Van Heerden said.

He said once the outstanding documentation had been received and the verification process had been completed, payments for students who had complied with the Seta requirements were scheduled to be processed on October 22.

“The college can only process payments once students have fully complied with the relevant Seta requirements,” he said.

He said the bursary was managed and governed by an agreement between Seta and the college.

Seta and students, he said, also had their agreement with material conditions such as attendance and academic performance.

Student allowances, he said, were paid in terms of priorities.

These entailed:

- Tuition and registration;
- Prescribed academic textbooks supplied by the college;
- Accommodation to be accredited and paid to the landlord directly if valid lease agreement and banking details are provided; and
- Meal allowance to a maximum of R15,000 covering the period from February to November 2026, and divided equally between the two semesters, with R7,500 allocated to the first semester and the remaining R7,500 allocated to the second semester.

He said payments for the first semester for deserving students were made in three tranches.

The first payment of R3,000 was on October 5, the same amount would be paid for the second semester on October 22 and a third payment of R1,500 was scheduled for November

19. Van Heerden said the bursary office had received an inquiry from a Student Representative Council (SRC) member responsible for bursaries to whom matters were clarified.

“There has been no subsequent communication nor an escalation for management’s attention.

“I have also been informed by the bursary officer that individual inquiries have been received and addressed where students have been informed about their individual statuses or any outstanding compliance matters.

“It appears that students that raised concerns were not complying to deadlines or the conditions of the bursary such as academic performance and submitting required documentation with the appropriate claim form,” he said.

Van Heerden said a verification and oversight session was

conducted by Seta on May 13.

“Unfortunately, there were students that didn’t attend the compulsory verification session.

“This resulted in their statuses being reviewed or payments being withheld until their verification process is concluded,” he said.

Bursaries under the Seta programme, Van Heerden said, were available for all qualifying students studying towards the National Technical Diploma at all the campuses of the college.

“Every agreement entered into by the college, and the compliance thereof, is audited through the relevant internal audit reviews and externally by the auditor-general of South Africa.”

He said students were encouraged to visit their bursary offices at campus level should they need further support.

Services Seta spokesperson

George Matlala said Seta had provided funding to all 50 TVET colleges in SA in this academic year.

The funding was allocated to 200 students in each college and capped at R80,000 — totalling R16m. Matlala said the college received its full amount of R16m on March 24 and that allowances were to be administered by the college.

“It is the Services Seta’s understanding and has been our position that students should receive their allowances and their allowances should not be attributed to their attendance and also the allocation should not be treated as a working integrated learning programme.

“The allowances are to enable learners to attend class, as per the college schedule.

“The withholding of these funds to learners does not assist with achieving our mandate of support for students,”

Matlala said.

He said dates for disbursing funds to students were made based on the college’s discretion and financial policies.

Seta paid over the funds to the college as stipulated in the bursary policy.

The bursary award project was managed by the South African Public College Organisation.

Matlala said colleges had been requested to submit reconciliation reports supported by evidence in the form of fee statements, proof of payments and acknowledgement of receipt for laptops.

“This is still in progress and will therefore reveal all issues raised and the Services Seta will then engage the college to remediate accordingly.

“These matters have also been escalated to the TVET directorate of the department of higher education and training.”

troubled waters



People look at the Budhi Gandaki river on a damaged bridge connecting Nepal’s Dhading district and Gorkha district, in the aftermath of a flash flood caused by a dry landslide Picture: PRAKASH MATHEMA/AFP

Sally Rooney books cannot be sold in UK

Irish author Sally Rooney can no longer sell her books in the UK because of her support for the activist group Palestine Action, her publisher Faber said yesterday.

Rooney has previously expressed her support for the group, which was banned as a “terrorist” organisation by the UK government in July 2025.

It is not banned in Ireland, where Rooney lives.

The proscription, which the organisation is appealing, puts Palestine Action on the same blacklist as militant groups Hamas and Hezbollah, making it illegal in the UK to be part of,

support or finance it.

“Current legislation in the UK has led to circumstances where Faber cannot pass on UK earnings to Sally Rooney for her work. To sell a writer’s work and not be able to pass on earnings is an unconscionable situation for a publisher,” Faber said.

“As such, and in full agreement with Sally, we have taken the decision that we can no longer supply her works in the UK in any format,” the publisher said, adding that it would continue to sell her work in other countries and regions.

The best-selling author of

“*Normal People*” previously said she would donate earnings to Palestine Action, and told the High Court in London that the proscription would have an impact on freedom of expression.

“As a result, the fulfilment of contracts to publish my work in the UK could now constitute a serious criminal offence,” Rooney said.

“After a process of consultation and deliberation, and with my full agreement, my publisher Faber has therefore determined that it can no longer supply my work within the UK,” the author said. — *AFP*

Five arrested after foiled courier hijacking

Herald Reporter

Five people were arrested during a foiled courier hijacking in Nelson Mandela Bay this week.

The accused, aged between 24 and 42, face charges of attempted hijacking, armed robbery, and unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition.

Police spokesperson Captain Sandra Janse van Rensburg said Motherwell police officers were on duty in the Kwazakhele and Motherwell areas on

Tuesday when they received information about a shooting in Ncememe Street, Motherwell NU7.

“Members responded and were informed that occupants of a white Mazda 323 had allegedly attempted to hijack a courier vehicle.

“The suspects allegedly fired several shots at the courier vehicle as it drove away, leaving one passenger behind.

“The passenger was then robbed of a cellphone.

“Members searched for the Mazda and spotted it in Tyityaba Street, Motherwell.

“They pursued and stopped the vehicle, where they allegedly found two gas pistols and ammunition,” she said.

Janse van Rensburg said the cellphone taken from the passenger was recovered, and the vehicle was impounded for further investigation.

All five suspects are expected to appear in the Motherwell magistrate’s court this week.

Bethelsdorp residents without power for nearly two weeks

Bryan Goliath

Irate Bethelsdorp residents are at their wits’ end after going almost two weeks without electricity.

Extension 21 residents, including pupils and the elderly, have had their food spoil and lives disrupted by the outage, which resulted from a tripped circuit breaker at the Bloemendal substation.

Technical teams and stand-by operators have been dispatched to restore power.

But this has brought little solace to those affected by the outage.

Kroneberg Primary School principal Lloyd Cunningham said the outage had a negative impact on the day-to-day operations of the school.

“Under no circumstances are things normal at school. We just cannot function properly,” he said.

“The whole education system is in dire straits. Without power we are lost.

“The feeding scheme cannot supply the needy kids with the necessary food.

“And it is so important that they eat, because for some of them it is the only nutritional meal they have for the day.”

He said the administrative block of the school had not been functioning for almost two weeks as a result.

“It is detrimental to everyone here at school.

“Being a headmaster, I can only imagine the anxiety of the matriculants in the area.

“Something must be done and very soon. We all pray for a positive outcome.”

A woman, who did not want to be named, said many residents bought food at the beginning of October and their meat had since spoiled in the fridges.

“We feel that we are not

being taken seriously. How can this problem persist for so long?

“Doesn’t the municipality have experts to work on the problem?”

“This really is not a joke. Our dignity and human rights are being infringed upon.

“We want no more excuses and just want the power restored as soon as possible.”

The woman said she was concerned for the elderly and those on medication.

“Some people suffer from breathing problems and are in need of a nebuliser.

“Also, medicines need to be

placed in a refrigerator.

“It is only by the grace of God that we did not have a casualty yet. Therefore, it is very important that the lights must be on soon.”

The councillor for the area, Noleen Moodley, apologised to the residents for the inconvenience.

“We had a contactor on site, but unfortunately there were problems.

“At the moment, a contractor and the municipality are working on the problem.

“Hopefully, power will be restored soon. This is an unfortunate situation.”



SUNDAYS RIVER VALLEY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

APPOINTMENT OF A TURNKEY CIVIL ENGINEERING PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDER FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NOMATHAMSANQA SPORTS FACILITY PHASE 3 FOR A PERIOD OF THIRTY-SIX (36) MONTHS

BID INVITATION
BID NO: SRVM 001/2027

Sundays River Valley Municipality (SRVM) invites suitably qualified, competent, and experienced Professional Service Providers on a turnkey basis for the implementation of the Nomathamsanqa Sport Facility Phase 3 project. The appointed Service Provider shall be responsible for the planning, design, procurement, construction, contract administration and handover of the project.

The physical address for collection of tender documents is: **SRVM Cashiers Office, No. 23 Middle Street, Nqweba**. Documents may be collected during working hours from 08h30am till 16h00pm from **16 October 2026**. Tender documents will be available at a **non-refundable deposit of R 300.00 each (no cash accepted)** Banking details are as follows: **First National Bank, Account Number 620 254 90856, Branch Number 210817, Reference – Tender Number**. Proof of payment should be provided upon tender collection.

Completed bid documents are to be placed in a sealed envelope endorsed with **APPOINTMENT OF A TURNKEY CIVIL ENGINEERING PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDER FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NOMATHAMSANQA SPORTS FACILITY PHASE 3 FOR A PERIOD OF THIRTY-SIX (36) MONTHS SRVM-001/2027** and must be deposited in the Bid Box, at the offices of the Sundays River Valley Municipality, Supply Chain Office, No. 23 Middle Street, Kirkwood not later than **26 November 2026 at 10h00am**.

A compulsory clarification meeting with representatives of the Employer and the Employers Agent will take place at the Nomathamsanqa Community Hall, in **Addo Location, on Thursday 12th November 2026** starting at **11h00am**. Thereafter, the tenders will be taken on an inspection of the site. **Attendance and completion of the attendance register(s) is compulsory for all Tenderers**. Please note that **NO** attendees arriving more than **15 minutes** late will be allowed to attend the clarification meeting.

TENDERS WILL BE EVALUATED IN TERMS OF THE 80/20 PREFERENTIAL POINT SYSTEM AS PER PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT REGULATION, 2022 AS WELL AS FUNCTIONALITY.

STAGE 1 EVALUATION: FUNCTIONALITY

No.	Criteria	Maximum Points
i)	EXPERIENCE OF THE BIDDER	30
ii)	FINANCIAL REFERENCES	10
iii)	KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE	50
	• Project Leader • Town Planner • Land Surveyor • Geologist • Social Facilitator	20 10 10 5 5
IV	METHODOLOGY	10

• The minimum qualifying score for functionality will be **70 of 100 points**, and bids that fail to achieve the minimum qualifying score will be disqualified.

STAGE 2 Price and Specific Goals

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Price	80
Specific Goals – B-BBEE (Original or certified B-BBEE Certificate)	10
LED (Proof of address signed by ward Councillor / Lease Agreement)	10
Total	100

SUPPLIERS/SERVICE PROVIDERS SHALL TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING BID CONDITIONS:

[a] Sundays River Valley Municipality Supply Chain Management Policy will apply;

[b] Sundays River Valley Municipality does not bind itself to accept the lowest BID or any other BID and reserves the right to accept the whole or part of the BID;

[c] Bids which are late, incomplete, unsigned, or submitted by facsimile or electronically, will not be accepted.

[d] Price(s) quoted must be valid for at least ninety (90) days from the date of your offer.

[e] Price(s) quoted must be firm and must be inclusive of VAT.

[f] A firm delivery period must be indicated.

[g] **The following compulsory documents must be submitted with the tender.**

1. Valid Tax Clearance Certificate- OR Status Pin.
2. B-BBEE Certificate **Original or Certified copy**, Sworn Affidavit **Original or Certified Copy**.
3. **Original** certified ID Copies of Entity's Director(s) (Certification not older than 3 months before the closing date)
4. Completed MBD forms - 1, 4, 5, 6, 1, 8 & 9.
5. Company registration Documents.
6. Municipal statement of Rates or Billing Clearance not older than three months or valid Lease Agreement.
7. Tenderers must have a CIDB contractor grading designation of 7CE or higher.
8. **Audited Annual Financial Statement for the past 3 years.**
- [h] Proof of Central Supplier Database (CSD) registration- a full report printed.

Failure to submit any of the above requested documents will invalidate your bid and it will not be evaluated further.

Technical enquiries related to this bid can be directed to sonwabile@srvm.gov.za or 042 230 7765. SCM enquiries related to this bid can be directed to phelokazin@srvm.gov.za or 042 230 7807.

Mr. T. Klaas
Municipal Manager



SUNDAYS RIVER VALLEY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

APPOINTMENT OF A TURNKEY CIVIL ENGINEERING PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDER FOR THE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROJECTS FOR A PERIOD OF 36 MONTHS

BID INVITATION
BID NO: SRVM 002/2027

Sundays River Valley Municipality (SRVM) invites suitably qualified, competent, and experienced Professional Service Providers on a turnkey basis for the implementation of the human settlement's projects. The appointed Service Provider shall be responsible for the planning, design, procurement, construction, contract administration and handover of the project.

The physical address for collection of tender documents is: **SRVM Cashiers Office, No. 23 Middle Street, Nqweba**. Documents may be collected during working hours from 08h30am till 16h00pm from **16 October 2026**. Tender documents will be available at a **non-refundable deposit of R 300.00 each (no cash accepted)** Banking details are as follows: **First National Bank, Account Number 620 254 90856, Branch Number 210817, Reference – Tender Number**. Proof of payment should be provided upon tender collection.

Completed bid documents are to be placed in a sealed envelope endorsed with **APPOINTMENT OF A TURNKEY CIVIL ENGINEERING PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDER FOR THE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROJECTS FOR A PERIOD OF 36 MONTHS WITHIN SUNDAYS RIVER VALLEY MUNICIPALITY FOR SRVM-002/2027** and must be deposited in the Bid Box, at the offices of the Sundays River Valley Municipality, Supply Chain Office, No. 23 Middle Street, Kirkwood not later than **26 November 2026 at 12h00pm**.

TENDERS WILL BE EVALUATED IN TERMS OF THE 80/20 PREFERENTIAL POINT SYSTEM AS PER PREFERENTIAL PROCUREMENT REGULATION, 2022 AS WELL AS FUNCTIONALITY.

STAGE 1 EVALUATION: FUNCTIONALITY

No.	Criteria	Maximum Points
i)	EXPERIENCE OF THE BIDDER	30
ii)	FINANCIAL REFERENCES	10
iii)	KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE	50
	• Project Leader • Town Planner • Land Surveyor • Geologist • Social Facilitator	20 10 10 5 5
iv)	METHODOLOGY	10

• The minimum qualifying score for functionality will be **70 of 100 points**, and bids that fail to achieve the minimum qualifying score will be disqualified.

STAGE 2 Price and Specific Goals

Evaluation Criteria	Points
Price	80
Specific Goals – B-BBEE (Original or certified B-BBEE Certificate)	10
LED (Proof of address signed by ward Councillor / Lease Agreement)	10
Total	100

SUPPLIERS/SERVICE PROVIDERS SHALL TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING BID CONDITIONS:

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[b] Sundays River Valley Municipality does not bind itself to accept the lowest BID or any other BID and reserves the right to accept the whole or part of the BID;

[c] Bids which are late, incomplete, unsigned, or submitted by facsimile or electronically, will not be accepted.

[d] Price(s) quoted must be valid for at least ninety (90) days from the date of your offer.

[e] Price(s) quoted must be firm and must be inclusive of VAT.

[f] A firm delivery period must be indicated.

[g] **The following compulsory documents must be submitted with the tender.**

1. Valid Tax Clearance Certificate- OR Status Pin.
2. B-BBEE Certificate **Original or Certified copy**, Sworn Affidavit **Original or Certified Copy**.
3. **Original** certified ID Copies of Entity's Director(s) (Certification not older than 3 months before the closing date)
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5. Company registration Documents.
6. Municipal statement of Rates or Billing Clearance not older than three months or valid Lease Agreement.
7. **Audited Annual Financial Statement for the past 3 years.**
- [h] Proof of Central Supplier Database (CSD) registration- a full report printed.

Failure to submit any of the above requested documents will invalidate your bid and it will not be evaluated further.

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