

# CASUAL DAY 2025

IMPACT REPORT: Beyond the Label



## Embracing Unity Through Inclusion and Diversity

Friday, 5 September 2025 • 31st Annual Casual Day



a project of

**NCPD**

National Council of & for  
Persons with Disabilities

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR NATIONAL DIRECTOR

As we reflect on the 31st Casual Day, I am filled with immense pride in what this movement continues to achieve, not only in rands and cents, but in the lives it touches, the systems it changes, and the attitudes it shifts.

In 2025, our theme challenged South Africa to see Beyond the Label. And South Africa answered. Police officers learned to listen differently to survivors with disabilities. Veggie gardens are ensuring nutritious meals for many rural families. A school that had been absent since 2019 returned with renewed energy. A young woman with a disability named Avery became the face of our television campaign, reminding us all that every child deserves to feel valued, seen, and celebrated.

These are not statistics. These are the moments that tell us Casual Day is working.

None of this happens without you, our partners, our schools, our NPOs, our companies, our businesses, our retailers, our government colleagues, and the millions of South Africans who wear the sticker and carry the message. Your support funds activities which turn a single day into year-round impact.

As we prepare for Casual Day 2026 under the theme “*Beat As One, Rhythm Matters*”, we look forward to you walking this path with us again this year. Together, we are building a South Africa where disability simply contributes to the rich diversity that makes us who we are.



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Therina Wentzel  
National Director  
National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities

## THE MOVEMENT AT A GLANCE

Casual Day 2025 in numbers, a snapshot of reach, not revenue.



Every number represents a person reached, a barrier lowered, or a community brought closer to inclusion.

## BEYOND THE LABEL, THE 2025 NCPD CASUAL DAY THEME

“Beyond the Label wasn’t just our theme, it still is and will remain a vision for a world where people are recognised for their humanity rather than the labels society places on them.”, NCPD – Casual Day 2025 Campaign Launch

The 2025 campaign called on every South African to look beyond assumptions, stereotypes, limiting labels, and this in a country where this message is both urgent and deeply personal. For every ally who stood alongside us, it was a commitment made visible.

Dressed in the campaign's signature Dynamic Blue, participants across all nine provinces demonstrated that a person with a disability is not defined by what they cannot do, but celebrated for everything we can.

Casual Day merchandise, T-shirts, bucket hats, caps was made by persons with disabilities, ensuring that the campaign did not merely advocate for inclusion but actively practised it through meaningful economic participation.

The visual identity featured Dynamic Blue, a colour chosen to symbolise limitless possibilities and the oceans of change that begin with a single ripple.

## IMPACT IN ACTION, YOUR SUPPORT AT WORK

### When Justice Learns to Listen

For a woman with a disability who has survived gender-based violence, reporting the crime is often a second ordeal. The police station stairs she cannot climb. The court preparation officer who speaks over her instead of to her. The shelter that quietly says it "isn't equipped" for someone like her.

Through NCPD's Disability Equity Training for the Criminal Justice System and GBV Service Providers, designed and delivered by persons with disabilities themselves, Casual Day funds closed those gaps in 2025:

- **362** South African Police Service members trained
- **137** Court Preparation Officers equipped to support disabled survivors
- **47** Victim Assistance Officers reached
- **100** shelter staff working directly with women survivors
- **266** practitioners across GBV justice sectors trained
- **35** GBV NGOs and CBOs, and **22** government departments reached

*"Casual Day brought a different kind of energy into the workplace, people were not just participating, but engaging with purpose."*

— Ziphokazi, HR Manager, Armscor

Following the training, NCPD's helpline receives significantly fewer complaints about police conduct in trained areas, evidence that awareness translates into changed behaviour.

### Cultivating Hope, Food Security and the Green Economy

As an environmental development initiative functioning in the circular economy, NCPD's programme of aquaponics, tunnels, and wheelchair-accessible raised vegetable gardens has wide-reaching impact. These inexpensive, replicable systems deliver skills development, self-sustainable food production, income generation, and business know-how for persons with disabilities and their surrounding communities.

These gardens are deliberately designed to be wheelchair-accessible from the outset, ensuring that persons with disabilities are not merely beneficiaries but active participants in food production and

enterprise development. The model has proven particularly effective in rural communities where both disability exclusion and food insecurity intersect.

Annually, the food security programme directly supports **1 490** persons with disabilities, while NCPD's broader local community and rural development initiatives reach a further 6 500 direct beneficiaries across the country.

### The Right to Go, Beaches, Roads, and Parking Bays

Most South Africans don't think twice about a day at the beach, a drive to a family lunch, or a parking bay close to the shops. For persons with disabilities, each of those ordinary freedoms has a gatekeeper.

### Casual Day funds support the NCPD in opening those gates:

A beach access mat and two amphibious floating beach wheelchairs were handed over at Gonubie Beach in Buffalo City Metro, met by the learners of Vukuhambe School

- **14** Blue Flag beaches across the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Western Cape were assessed for universal accessibility through NCPD's partnership with WESSA
- **135** beach permits issued to persons with substantial mobility impairments
- **43** vehicle rebate applications processed for adapted vehicles
- **36** parking discs issued, while NCPD continues to advocate for a single, standardised national parking permit system

*"We need to fight against the marginalisation of persons with disabilities. I plead with officials and the public at large that these facilities do not go to waste. The success of this project is on us."*  
— Princess Faku, Executive Mayor, Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality

### Building Capacity in the Frontline

In NPOs across South Africa, social workers, auxiliary social workers, and occupational therapists meet persons with disabilities every day. Dedication is not the same as understanding. Without specific training, even the best-meaning practitioner can overlook reasonable accommodation, address a Hearing impaired client through their interpreter rather than directly, or relegate a jobseeker with a disability to answering phones.

In 2025, NCPD's Disability Equity Training reached **1117** NPO service staff, equipping all persons with the knowledge to make inclusion a lived practice, not a policy on a wall. Every social worker trained is a multiplier: one DET-equipped occupational therapist can transform how hundreds of clients experience an NPO each year.

### Investing in the Next Generation

At any given time, NCPD hosts at least **30** interns nationally and **400** provincially with disabilities on various accelerator programmes. Among the interns, Hearing impaired colleagues have initiated a tin can recycling programme at the Edenvale head office and serve as the team behind the scenes in the Casual Day warehouse, counting, recording, and dispatching thousands of stickers and merchandise items annually.

In 2022, the NCPD leadership took a momentous decision to support youth with disabilities in establishing their own structure: Vava iYouth, headed by Lebogang Boya. Vava iYouth works to ensure self-representation of youth with disabilities in youth structures across South Africa and Africa, fundraise for assistive devices, and facilitate job placements.

NCPD's student and youth programmes extend to partnerships with **11** universities and **8** TVET colleges, reaching **2 100** students and young people with disabilities each year and creating a pipeline of young advocates who carry the inclusion message into their professional careers long after their internships end.

### **From Opportunity to Independence, Economic Empowerment**

Beyond preparing young people for the workplace, the NCPD's Economic Empowerment and Internship Programme creates pathways to sustainable livelihoods for persons with disabilities across all nine provinces. Through the Economic Development Support (EDS) network and the Small Medium Enterprise Ecosystem Digital Platform (SME-DE), approximately 2 000 registered entrepreneurs with disabilities receive tailored support including mentorship from industry-specific experts, training on tender processes and compliance, access to markets, and onboarding onto digital business management platforms in partnership with organisations such as Google and Accenture. The programme's intensive in-office mentorship model, typically spanning one to two years, pairs candidates with and without disabilities side by side, equipping participants with the technical, interpersonal, and human resource knowledge they need to thrive in diverse workplaces. Complementing this, the Youth Employment Services (YES) initiative places interns on 12-month work readiness placements, while dedicated support staff assist beneficiaries with sourcing assistive devices, arranging transport, and navigating learnerships, internships, and apprenticeships. Together, these interconnected programmes ensure that Casual Day funding does not merely raise awareness, it builds the economic independence and self-determination of persons with disabilities.

## **A NATION PARTICIPATING**

The first week of September 2025 saw an extraordinary outpouring of unity. Across all nine provinces, organisations of and for persons with disabilities, non-profit organisations, schools, corporate offices, retail partners, and government departments came together in solidarity. All are part of this story; the examples that follow offer a glimpse of the many ways South Africans stood together.

### **Schools, The Heart of the Campaign**

Special Schools are not just beneficiaries in Casual Day; they are its beating heart, accounting for more than half of all merchandise participation. Across NCPD's children's programmes and education initiatives, 7 210 children and youth with disabilities benefit directly each year, including those in mainstream schools, special needs schools, and those outside of the school system. Their involvement goes far beyond purchasing: schools transform Casual Day into awareness events, skills exhibitions, and community celebrations that bring learners, educators, families, and neighbours together.



### Highlights of Casual Day 2025 at a few of the partner schools:

- **Fulufhelo Special School in Thohoyandou, Limpopo**, South Africa's top Casual Day fundraiser, hosted a full-day celebration featuring a 2.1km fun walk, skills exhibitions in welding, woodworking, upholstery, and hospitality, and attracted 15 major local sponsors. The school uses Casual Day funds for its Technical Occupational Curriculum, equipping **875** learners with practical vocational skills.
- **Grace and Love Special School** returned to the campaign in 2025 after their last participation in 2019, demonstrating the enduring pull of the movement.
- **Pfuxanani Xitlhelani Disability Centre** joined as a new participant and sold 1,191 stickers in their first year, an exceptional debut.
- **Alma School, Con Amore Special School, and Eureka Special School** each consistently distribute more than **10,000** stickers annually in Gauteng.

*“Casual Day is the most important fundraising project for our school and community. Because of Casual Day we are able to get money for our needs at school and also help raise awareness.”*

*— Benedict and Hope Special School*

### Corporates, Going Beyond the Sticker

Corporate participation in 2025 was marked by depth, not just breadth. Companies moved beyond simple sticker purchases to create meaningful platforms for disability inclusion, listening to employees with disabilities, learning from their expertise, and embedding awareness into workplace culture. Just to mention a few:

Three Rivers Platinum created a platform for employees with disabilities to share their lived experiences, significantly deepening understanding across the organisation.

MSD and the Human Rights Commission hosted awareness sessions and themed activities in the lead-up to the day.

Goede Hoop Citrus, NMI, and Capitec Bank rolled out coordinated activations across departments, encouraging full staff participation.

Silverstar Casino (Tsogo Sun) provided year-round partnership including venue sponsorship for the Casual Day “Show and Tell” launch event, Women’s Day celebrations, and Diwali festivities, demonstrating what deep corporate partnership looks like.



### Government, SAPS, and Defence

The South African Police Service participated nationwide, with officers wearing Casual Day merchandise whilst on duty. The South African National Defence Force continued its longstanding partnership. A number of provincial Government departments embraced the campaign, integrating disability awareness into workplace culture.

### Retail Partners

Casual Day stickers and merchandise were made available across South Africa through a network of retail partners, placing disability advocacy in the path of everyday shoppers:

Clicks, Pick-n-Pay, Eskort South Africa, Alpha Pharm, Toys R Us & Babies R Us, JAM Clothing, The Hub, and Food Lovers Market, supported by RTT Group as official courier sponsor, coordinating nearly 5,000 deliveries through its network of over 23 hubs and branches.

### International Recognition

The campaign’s profile extended beyond South Africa’s borders. The World Health Organisation’s South Africa office embraced the Beyond the Label campaign, with staff purchasing stickers and merchandise in solidarity. The United Nations in South Africa highlighted Casual Day as a leading example of disability advocacy in the country.

## Media, Amplifying the Message

Casual Day's advocacy reach extends far beyond stickers and merchandise. In 2025, the campaign's media partnerships delivered over R2.4 million in donated and sponsored airtime, advertising, and outdoor exposure, ensuring the Beyond the Label message reached millions of South Africans across every platform.

## Broadcast and Print

The SABC remained a cornerstone partner, broadcasting a branded television advertisement featuring Avery Young, a young woman with a disability whose natural charisma and joyful spirit made her the perfect ambassador for the 2025 campaign. A dedicated radio public service announcement was produced and flighted in all 11 official South African languages, a commitment to reaching every community in its own voice. Huisgenoot, the country's highest-circulation magazine with nearly 1.5 million weekly readers, served as a key print media partner, while Caxton Local Newspapers carried the campaign into communities across the country.

## Outdoor Advertising

The campaign achieved its widest outdoor visibility to date through partnerships with JCDecaux and JINJA, with Casual Day digital billboards live across 183 screens in high-traffic locations nationwide. Additional billboard exposure was secured through Primedia Outdoor, placing the Beyond the Label message in the daily sightlines of commuters and communities alike.



## THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Casual Day carries the official stamp of approval from the Presidency through Brand South Africa's Play Your Part initiative. But the campaign's true power lies in the partnerships that turn awareness into action throughout the year.

## Harmony in Inclusion, The Field Band

In one of the most vivid expressions of the Beyond the Label theme, a 45-member field band brought together students from two very different institutions: Con Amore School, a specialised school for learners with Autism, and Birchleigh High School, a mainstream institution.

"By performing together, our youth showcase that talent knows no boundaries and true inclusion creates the most beautiful music."

This ensemble is a living example of what inclusion looks like when it moves from policy to practice, not separate, not accommodated, but genuinely together.

### What Partnership Looks Like

The NCPD’s partnerships are not transactional. They are collaborative relationships where corporate supporters contribute through financial sponsorship, venue and event support, logistics, media partnerships, pro bono services, skills development, and assistive device donations. In return, partners align their brand with South Africa’s most recognised disability advocacy platform, gain visibility across the campaign’s national reach, and demonstrate authentic commitment to disability inclusion in society at large.

For partners, this alignment is both a responsibility and an opportunity to contribute to meaningful social transformation.

### 31 YEARS OF INCLUSION

Launched in 1994 at the dawn of South Africa’s democracy, Casual Day has grown from a simple idea into the nation’s largest and most enduring social advocacy campaign for persons with disabilities. Over three decades, the campaign has channelled resources to 749 organisations, DPOs, NPOs, special schools, and community groups, working across education, employment, accessibility, assistive devices, gender-based violence support, food security, youth development, and human rights advocacy.

The trajectory has not always been upward. When COVID-19 struck in 2020, the campaign faced an unprecedented crisis, with participation dropping dramatically. But our movement rallied. Year by year, community by community, we rebuilt, and by 2025, Casual Day has moved closer again to its pre-pandemic participation levels.

This recovery was not driven by a single large donor or government grant. It was driven by all of you who refused to let the disability sector be forgotten.



## MORE THAN CASUAL DAY, THE NCPD ECOSYSTEM

The programmes highlighted in this report are part of a wider ecosystem. Beyond Casual Day, the NCPD drives year-round impact across:

Employment and enterprise: job preparation and placement for **4 200** jobseekers annually, creating **4 300** jobs; enterprise development reaching **2 000** entrepreneurs with disabilities; and arts and crafts programmes supporting **218** artisans for the tourist market

The Nappy Run (est. 2011): annual awareness and nappy donation drive benefiting **2 900** children and adults with disabilities

ICT accessibility: advisory services to ICASA for persons who are blind, partially sighted, or Hearing impaired, the NCPD's widest-reaching programme, benefiting an estimated **1.35** million South Africans

Assistive devices and mobility: wheelchairs, hearing aids, and over **3 000** parking permits processed annually

Universal design: access audits for private and public centres

Awareness, therapy and human rights: programmes reaching over **31 000** direct beneficiaries per year

Performing arts and culture: creative programmes for youth with disabilities

### OUR VISION

An all-inclusive and equitable society where the human rights of all are upheld and protected.

### OUR MISSION

Advocating, lobbying and raising awareness for and with Persons with Disabilities in achieving collaborative social and economic inclusion through innovation, partnerships, research, development and services.

**LOOKING AHEAD, CASUAL DAY 2026**  
**BEAT AS ONE, RHYTHM MATTERS**  
**Friday, 4 September 2026**

The NCPD has unveiled the theme for the 32nd Casual Day: Beat As One, Rhythm Matters. This campaign celebrates the belief that every person carries their own rhythm, and that when those rhythms come together, something extraordinary happens.

Dressed in a signature burnt orange, warm, earthy, and electric with purpose, the 2026 campaign promises a season of solidarity, momentum, and shared transformation. Stickers, T-shirts, bucket hats, and caps are already in production.

Every sticker purchased and every item of merchandise acquired directly benefits disability organisations across South Africa. Since 1994, the campaign has channelled support to nearly 750 organisations on the frontlines of inclusion.

**JOIN THE MOVEMENT**

Whether you are a corporate partner, a school, a government department, a retailer, or an individual who believes in a more inclusive South Africa, there is a place for you.  
 Purchase stickers and merchandise • Become a corporate partner • Volunteer

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 Facebook & Instagram: @TheNCPDZA

The National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities Championing the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities since 1939.

