

Nguni language news platform celebrates a year of touching lives

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Newzroom Afrika and Mzansi Wethu's (DStv Channel 163) IsiZulu and IsiXhosa language news broadcast will celebrate a year of touching lives and making a difference for communities with a festive special bulletin on Tuesday, 27 February.

The *Izindaba Zethu* and *Iindaba Zethu* daily bulletin at 7pm CAT, powered by Newzroom Afrika, has proved hugely popular with Nguni language speakers, with its strong focus on putting viewers at the heart of the news and deep connection with communities.

This connection has shone through in the bulletin's coverage of moving tales such as one family's struggle to repatriate their daughter's body after she had died in China.



Iindaba Zethu anchors

The *Iindaba Zethu* team followed the story right up until the family were able to bury her ashes in the Eastern Cape.

Returning to the scene of an earlier piece on an impoverished community's daily battle to feed itself, journalist Ntsiki Nohiya was surprised to see the words *Iindaba Zethu* painted on a wall. The community explained that this was an expression of their gratitude for having their story told, even though they live in a deep rural area.

Another highlight was the uplifting tale of a woman who was unable to access an old-age grant because she didn't have an ID. The Department of Social Development intervened after *Iindaba Zethu* did an insert on her plight, and within a few months she received her grant for the first time.

Not only that, the Eastern Cape Department of Human Settlements undertook to build her a house.

"When *Izindaba Zethu* launched on DStv a year ago, no one could have imagined how much it would contribute to changing people's lives as much as it has," said Nomsa Philiso, CEO of general entertainment: M-Net Channels. "Adding *Izindaba* to the Mzansi Wethu line-up has made the channel a go-to for entertainment while also keeping viewers informed of happenings in their surroundings, all of which resonates with our viewers. Congratulations to the whole news team and

we hope to celebrate more years of being an instrument of change in people’s lives,” said Philiso.



Izindaba Zethu anchors

The *Izindaba Zethu* team has quickly forged an organic bond with isiZulu viewers through its coverage of everything from the challenges facing Denver hostel dwellers to the passing of Inkatha Freedom Party founder Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

The team has also featured cultural themes, such as the Indishi Series, in which Zulu men who work in Johannesburg and stay in hostels organise fundraising events for their daughters or nephews to thank them for staying true to their values.

For Woman’s Day, *Izindaba Zethu* visited Kwa Mai Mai in Johannesburg to speak to women managing a popular shisa nyama there. The women opened up about the good and bad times at the historic Mai Mai, which started as a traditional medicine market.

Along the way, viewers have been actively engaged on social with a recent video about an attempted heist in Dobsonville, Soweto, hitting three million views.

“We’re proud of the way communities have formed an authentic attachment to *Izindaba Zethu* and *Izindaba Zethu*,” said Newzroom Afrika CEO Thabile Ngwato. “Many of our stories are suggested by our viewers and it’s so satisfying to see the power of community-based journalism make a real impact for people whose stories are not heard often enough.”

“The success of our Nguni news platform shows the strong appetite among South Africans for a reliable and trusted news service that truly reflects our country’s rich diversity,” Ngwato said.

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