

Student funding groups, donors recognised

NEWS / 25 NOVEMBER 2018, 10:00AM / LESEGO MAKGATHO



Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme chairman Sizwe Nxasana. Picture: Bongwiwe Mchunu

Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP) hosted a recognition dinner to honour bursars, funders and donors who helped in funding tertiary students in 2017 and 2018.

ISFAP is an initiative that funds poor students and enables them to pursue degrees in fields where skills are scarce and occupations are in high demand.

ISFAP chairman Sizwe Nxasana said the gathering was held to recognise those companies and organisations that made an important contribution to the programme.

“We all know that the government has really made a significant effort in making sure that students from poor and working-class backgrounds through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) are funded.

“However, the demands and the needs are much greater than what the government alone can handle. And this is why the involvement of the private sector is particularly important,” said Nxasana.

The chief executive of public sector banking at First National Bank (FNB), Siphosiso Silinda, was recognised as one of the donors who made a difference. Silinda said they (FNB) were donors because there was no chance the government could solve the skills shortage problem by itself.

“And when you look at ISFAP, there’s no way they can deal with this themselves. So as funders, we need to make sure that we help in terms of enabling institutions like ISFAP to help deal with the challenges we are facing in education,” said Silinda.

Absa was another notable donor. Absa Group head of citizenship Sazini Mojapelo said they had partnered with ISFAP to enable students in public universities to access education in a more holistic and sustainable manner.

“Education in this country is an area we need to be able to unlock and see how it’s done at scale in a more sustainable manner.

“But it also allows the private sector to have the platform to work with the public sector to deal with the fees crisis,” said Mojapelo.

The Sunday Independent
