



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Hospitality lends a helping hand - Hilton

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The Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa, has today visited two schools located in vulnerable communities in Mmthata, Eastern Cape, as part of her youth engagement programme through hospitality. These schools are Gxulu Junior Secondary and St Patrick's high school.

A dire need for school uniforms and stationery was identified in this area, which is also a recognised poverty node.

The Deputy Minister was joined by Jan van der Putten, Hilton Worldwide Vice-President of Operations: Africa & Indian Ocean and general manager of Hilton Sandton, who generously donated school uniforms, a library and other stationery for the benefit of the learners at these schools.

The focus on youth development and creating opportunities reflect the hospitality industry's continuous and all-encompassing ethos of service, and Hilton Worldwide's commitment to serving and enriching communities, where they live, work and travel.

"Community service is an integral part of Hilton Worldwide's culture and as such we are committed to connecting with and enriching our communities. Today we had the opportunity to make meaningful change in the lives of young people, bettering the present and investing in their future." said Jan van der Putten, Vice President of Operations, Hilton Worldwide: Africa & IO and general manager of Hilton Sandton.

The National Department of Tourism supports youth development through hospitality and this generous donation demonstrates the value that can be derived through a symbiotic relationship between government and the industry.

The Deputy Minister's visit to schools in the Eastern Cape is a first of a number of planned outreach initiatives that will be conducted in various provinces as part of her youth engagement programme, and as a build up to the National Tourism Career's Expo (NTCE).

The National Tourism Careers Expo (NTCE) is a Department of Tourism initiative in partnership with the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sports Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA) and the appointed host province. Targeted at grade 9-12 learners, tourism students and unemployed graduates, the NTCE seeks to position tourism as a valued and vibrant career of choice.

The Deputy Minister added: "I am very encouraged by this magnanimous gesture from the Hilton Sandton and Hilton Worldwide in supporting our youth. Their contribution to uplifting our young people in rural areas is praiseworthy.

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