



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Mpumalanga youth graduate from Hospitality Training Programme

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Deputy Minister of Tourism, Elizabeth Thabethe officiated the graduations ceremony of two hundred and seventy-five (275) Mpumalanga learners who participated in the Hospitality Youth Training Programme in Mbombela stadium, Nelspruit today.

The Hospitality Youth Training is a programme of the Department of Tourism through its Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) offering unemployed youth a CATHSSETA accredited National Certificates in Food and Beverages Services (NQF level 4), and National Certificates in Accommodation Services (NQF Level 2).

“We are gathered here to celebrate the good returns of government’s investment in young people who are passionate about the tourism industry. This training programme is one of the department’s initiatives that seeks to ensure that young people are included in the tourism economy, uplift their livelihoods and radically transform the economy”

“We must all enjoy the continued growth of the sector, and we are working with the public and private sector to ignite economic growth and create necessary jobs for our youth” said the Deputy Minister

In the 2016/2017 financial year the Department approved a budget of one hundred and forty million Rands (R140 000 000) for the training of two thousand (2000) learners from all provinces, for a twelve-month period. Seventeen million and seventy-seven thousand five hundred Rands (R17,077,500 million) of that budget was allocated to Mpumalanga to train over three hundred (300) unemployed youth since November 2016.

The structural training consisted of 30% theory and 70% practical training. Learners were recruited from ten local municipalities within Mpumalanga and placed at various hospitality establishments within the province in order to obtain workplace experience. The various training and development initiatives undertaken by the National Department of Tourism continue to enhance and develop skills among young people enabling them to acquire knowledge which allows them to become productive participants in the economy of the country.

Deputy Minister also highlighted that since tourism is a people-centred industry, the skills acquired through this programme does not only place the youth on course for employment but also exposes them to networking opportunities that can result in them starting their own ventures in the industry.

Prior to conferring the learners with their certificates, the Deputy Minister addressed the host employers in a session where she encouraged multi stakeholder collaboration in ensuring that learners participate in the workplace integrated learning.

“Critical to training and development is mentorship and that is where you as industry play a very important role. As government we would like to send our appreciation for the opportunity you have given the learners, and the parents who supported their children complete this programme” Thabethe added.

The parents were also grateful for the opportunities granted to their children. “many of us didn’t have means of financially supporting our children to advance their studies, this opportunity is a good stepping stone for those who want to further their studies in the field of hospitality.” Said Siphumulile Sigudu, one of the parents.

The Deputy Minister also awarded certificates of appreciation to host employers who assisted in the programme;

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