



tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Tourism House, 17 Trevenna Street, Sunnyside. Private Bag X 424, PRETORIA · 0001
Tel + 27 (0) 12 444 6000· Fax + 27 (0) 12 444 7000. Call Center: 0860 121 929**

Speech delivered by the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Tokozile Xasa, at the occasion of the launch of the National Tourism Careers Expo 2015 at Naval Hill in Bloemfontein

25 August 2015

Programme Director
MEC
Executive Mayor
HOD
DDG
Dept of Education Rep
Members of the Media
Honourable Guests
Ladies and gentlemen

The future of our country lies in the hands of our Youth! Without a focus on developing this specific group, we have no foundation on which to build. The key question I would like to pose to you today, as we launch the 7th annual National Tourism Careers Expo, is this: How are we as a country ensuring that the youth of South Africa are empowered to seize their destiny and create for themselves a life that is better than their ancestors.

Ladies and gentlemen, while I am optimistic about the future of the tourism industry and the possibilities it holds, I cannot overlook the challenges that we face in the country, and the impact that this has on our mandate as the Department of Tourism to unlock the vast untapped potential that lies within the tourism sector.

The economic landscape of South Africa is impacted by what has become known as the triple threat – unemployment, poverty and inequality. Empowerment and a collaborative approach to creating opportunities is the key to disarming this triple threat.

The Quarterly Labour Force Survey indicates a jobless rate of 26.4% in the first quarter of 2015. This is almost half of South Africans in the economically active age bracket and is an increase of 2.1% within a three month period. All sectors of the economy, including the trade and wholesale sector where tourism and hospitality is located, are equally affected by this decline.

Unemployment peaks in the 21 to 30 year age group – those categorised as youth. Almost a third of the people in this category are unemployed. Four out of five of these unemployed youth have never held jobs before. With no work experience, low education levels and a

Lack of skills, their chances of being employed are very slim.

If we now turn to the tourism sector, it becomes clear that the opportunities that exist and the skills required to access the sector are not aligned.

According to the 2014 Impact Report by the World Travel and Tourism Council, the travel and tourism industry has contributed 9.4% to the GDP and creates 10% of the jobs in the country, either directly or indirectly. If you add to this the report from Statistics South Africa that indicates an increase in tourist arrivals of 4.7% between 2012 and 2013, we can see that the tourism sector is in good health.

The opportunities in tourism are there, but the barriers for normal South Africans to access these opportunities are the greatest challenge.

The Department of Trade and Industry's Youth Enterprise Development Strategy highlights two more

barriers to economic participation, other than the skills challenge – untransformed industrial sectors and poor access to finance and economic opportunities.

The World Bank's 2015 Report - Doing Business in South Africa – places us at number 43 out of 189 global economies. This report looks at how easy or difficult it is for entrepreneurs to open and operate businesses.

Some of the elements mentioned in the study that is very relevant for the tourism and hospitality sector are: starting a business, access to credit or funding and property registration.

Government has a role to play in creating an environment that makes access easier, and prioritises measures that removes the barriers to generate employment. For example the introduction of tax incentives for investment, incentives for employment, support for enterprise development and skills development programmes.

Already programmes such as the Youth Wage Subsidy, financial and non-financial support for SMME's, Expanded Public Works Programme, and special economic zones, are alleviating the scale of the problem.

In the Department of Tourism we have several training and skills development programmes that enable us to carry out on our goal of creating a space in the sector for youth employment to flourish.

EFFORTS OF DEALING WITH YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT BY NDT

The **Food Safety Assurers Programme** takes innovation to another level, where we have now created a whole new career path in the sector. Young, unemployed tourism and hospitality graduates are exposed to the theory and practise of food safety. They are trained on the job at host businesses in the hospitality sector.

This programme has successfully graduated its first group of 100 learners in the Mpumalanga, Limpopo and KZN Provinces. The impact some of them have shown in their host businesses has been so significant that a large number of them have been offered permanent employment. As we expand this programme, the next intake of learners will be 300, and it will be spread across all 9 Provinces.

Our **Chefs Training Programme and Sommelier Programme** have met with the same level of success. In 2011 we enrolled 810 unemployed young people on a professional Chef training programme accredited by City and Guilds. This is an NQF Level 3 qualification. 300 of these young people carried on to a second level at NQF Level 5, and the remainder who did not make it to this level were able to find employment. We enrolled another 500 youths at entry level and 300 at diploma level in 2012, with 450 more in 2013.

For the Sommelier training pilot in 2012, 200 young people from the townships were exposed to the world of wine tasting. 54 of them were permanently employed at the end of the one year course. In 2014 another 270 learners were enrolled, with an additional subject of bartending added to the list of subjects.

And lastly, our Tourism Buddies Programme is an on-the-job learnership that exposes young people to the world of hospitality, giving them knowledge, skills and work experience to enter the job market. In 2013 we took 2 000 youth onto the programme/ More than half of them found permanent or temporary employment at the end of the learnership. In last week we launched the next intake onto the Buddies programme, with enrolment of 500 learners.

Ladies and gentlemen, as I was explaining some of the initiatives already taking place in our sector, you would have heard one phrase quite a few times. That phrase is – “in partnership with”. For me this is the most important concept when it comes to inclusive tourism sector growth. None of us can do it alone, and at the end of the day we all benefit.

It is essential for us at the Department of Tourism to continue our work to bring stakeholders together to firstly highlight the potential of the travel, tourism and hospitality sector; secondly share knowledge and information amongst each other; and thirdly bring service providers together in a one-stop-shop kind of environment for the benefit of entrepreneurs and community members.

NATIONAL TOURISM CAREERS EXPO (NTCE)

We start right at the source by targeting school-age learners with information about careers in the tourism industry. The annual **National Tourism Careers Expo (NTCE) which we are currently launching** is done in partnership with CATHSSETA and the Education Departments in the Provinces.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL TOURISM CAREERS EXPO

NTCE is one of the initiatives aimed at promoting tourism as a career of choice.

WHAT ARE THE KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE NTCE

The programme is aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- Promotion of tourism as a career and profession of choice
- Promotion of the tourism industry as an employer of choice
- Promotion of a demand led system of education and training in tourism by using the NTCE as a melting pot for the meeting of all key education stakeholders.
- Stimulate innovation and entrepreneurial creativity by young people whilst promoting research and development in tourism education and training; and
- Inculcate a culture of domestic tourism from an early age.

The success of this initiative has seen it grow in stature every year for the past six years. The seventh instalment will take place in Bloemfontein from 1-3 October 2015.

The focus was on high school educators that are teaching tourism subjects at schools and instilling a passion to pursue a career in this field. Many of these educators have themselves never worked in the tourism sector, or experienced tourism related products. Our **Educators Exposure Programme**, in partnership with FEDHASA, conducts seminars across the country for these educators, and works to give them workplace experience by placing them in hospitality facilities.

KEY FOCUS AREA OF THE NTCE

The National Tourism Careers Expo is one of the tools that we employ in the Department of Tourism to bring together stakeholders in a collaborative way to learn from each other, and to spread the message that the tourism sector is a thriving and critical part of the South African economy.

THE NTCE BENEFITS SINCE ITS INCEPTION: KWA-ZULU NATAL

Increase on learners and schools numbers

The NTCE 2008 – 2011 in the Kwa-Zulu Natal Province started with a growth of between 13 043 to 22 347 participants of which 85% of participants were normally learners.

When NDT started with Educators Seminars in 2008, the educators at various sessions in KZN during this period were invariably complaining that tourism and hospitality offering schools were being closed each year but since the NTCE started the numbers have grown steadily.

A presentation by Ms Cheryl Watson – Deputy Director from Department of Basic Education in July 2013 shared the following statistics relating to learners and schools numbers increase:

- The number of tourism schools between 2008 and 2012 have increased by 601 from 2085 to 2686 nationally which is 22% increase.
- The number of tourism learners between 2008 and 2012 have increased by 24 246 from 69008 to 93254 which is 26% increase.
- The number of hospitality schools between 2008 and 2012 have increased by 62 from 384 to 446 which is 14% increase.
- The number of hospitality learners between 2008 and 2012 have increased by 2605 from 8378 to 10938 which is 23%.

Capacity building

Capacity was built in various areas by varying degrees.

- This includes big event management skills learnt by partners (NDT & CATHSSETA) including the DEDT officials
- Unemployed graduates volunteers contracted to various service providers
- SMMEs sub contracted to supply various services, transport, accommodation and food and beverage services.
- Customer service levels were already a key focus for service delivery.

Learners and educators capacity building

- Capacity building of learners and educators through the NTCE is the key achievement in this regard.
- Learners from the most rural areas in the provinces were exposed to the industry for the first time each year as new groups would attend.

Educators Seminars

These sessions started as a mobilisation exercise for educators to attend the NTCE but grew up significantly based on demand. Since 2008, we now have the Educators Seminars as annual event by NDT in support of tourism and hospitality educators in the country. Tourism educators are fast becoming more organised and empowering themselves to help and support their learners in class.

Their enthusiasm and passion for the subject is growing remarkable despite the fundamental challenges they face with the subjects at schools. They also are becoming the critical tool to use in encouraging learners not only to take up the subject as a subject of choice but also a career of choice.

Localised procurement

Through hosting the NTCE the province had the following benefits;

- An opportunity to procure from the small, medium and big business enterprises and approximately 90% of cost from the overall R17 million NTCE budget benefited the local enterprise from the province.
- The SMME beneficiaries in this regard are involved in catering, transport, accommodation and other relevant services that the NTCE event would require. The actual cost benefit can only be verified in a formally organised impact study.

Marketing and visitors to the NTCE host province & city or town

- It is an obvious fact that the NTCE brings to the host city or town visitors that would have not ordinarily visited the destination had it not be about the NTCE. This is besides the monthly preparatory visits by the NTCE Partners and PSC members attending meetings post and prior the event.
- The overall attendance of the NTCE by all participants from within and outside the host province is on its own a guaranteed number of tourists to the host destination at the event. This is without extrapolating the net benefits on a number of days spent by each NTCE participant, expenditure made during the stay and follow up repeat leisure visits. This would obviously be an aspect to be investigated through an impact study.
- The host province and city naturally get media exposure during the event and the indirect marketing exposure received assist in selling the host province and the city as a tourism destination. The provincial marketing agency is also presented with a captive audience to sell the destination to participants as well as the national at large.

THE NTCE 2012 – 2014: BENEFITS TO THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

NTCE 2012 – 2014 Legacy Programme

The NTCE 2012 – 2014 Partners in the Eastern Cape Province planned to identify elements of the NTCE that would constitute the NTCE Legacy Programme for the province. The following projects

have already been identified and are underway for implementation as NTCE 2012 - 2014 Legacy Programme:

- Annual Employment Readiness Clinics targeting unemployed graduates
- Tourism Centre of Excellence – Tourism HRD Training Academy
- Private Investment Initiative by Hilton Hotel Group World Wide
- Aviation Academy

The plan is for the partners to continue supporting the province as they implement the above NTCE Legacy Projects for the next 3 years and thereafter the same approach will be adopted for the new host province.

Capacity building

The following initiatives for capacity building efforts were undertaken.

The NTCE has built capacity on mega events management. It has left a legacy of understanding that events are a catalyst to tourism seasonality and geographic spread challenges. This is achieved through the NTCE approach being hosted by rural and less visited provinces through a bidding process.

The NTCE Eastern Cape version has already unearthed human capital challenges that led to the province deciding to establish a long term project of work readiness clinics for young people. This came through the Virtual Classroom and Recruitment Arena platforms at the NTCE 2012 and 2013.

Educators Seminars

The NDT and Umalusi partnership on Curriculum Evaluation process has led to Umalusi leading the NTCE Educators Seminars programme.

Umalusi brought along tourism and hospitality experts that constitute the Curriculum Evaluation Working Group and they would present on technical topics that NDT Educators Seminars would not be able to deliver on.

The costs of bringing these experts to the NTCE are shared between Umalusi and the NTCE budget.

Educators Seminars at the NTCE benefited 347 educators in 2012, just below 500 educators in 2013 and 700 educators 2014 from all provinces in the country.

The NTCE 2014 Educators' Seminars were graced by the presence of Higher Education South Africa (HESA) which shared with educators' information on the process subjects designation for university entry. This is one challenge that leads to young people and parents shying away from taking tourism as a subject and profession of choice. Therefore educators are advised on how to deal with issue at school whilst designation of tourism and hospitality subjects in itself is still being considered.

Marketing and visitors to the NTCE host province & city or town

It is an obvious fact that the NTCE brings to the host city or town visitors that would have not ordinarily visited the destination had it not be about the NTCE. This is besides the monthly preparatory visits by the NTCE Partners and PSC members attending meetings post and prior the event. The overall attendance of the NTCE by all participants from within and outside the host province is on its own a guaranteed number of tourists to the host destination at the event. This is without extrapolating the net benefits on a number of days spent by each NTCE participant, expenditure made during the stay and follow up repeat leisure visits. This would obviously be an aspect to be investigated through an impact study.

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The 2014 NTCE indeed has marketed Eastern Cape as the adventure tourism because one of the platform of the NTCE was the adventure corner where learners were demonstrated and participated

in the adventure activities.

Localised procurement

Through hosting the NTCE the province had an opportunity to procure from the small, medium and big business enterprises and approximately 90% of cost from the overall R18 million NTCE budget benefited the local enterprise from the province. The SMME beneficiaries in this regard are involved in catering, transport, accommodation and other relevant services that the NTCE event would require. The actual cost benefit can only be verified in a formally organised impact study.

Economic benefits

The economic impact of a major event refers to the total amount of additional expenditure generated within a defined area, as a direct consequence of staging the event. For spending by visitors in the local area (and in particular on accommodation) is the biggest factor in generating economic impact created by the NTCE event.

Social benefits

Participation of local community through hosting the NTCE presented an opportunity for young local people to participate in the event through volunteering and to acquire some skills and exposure in working with big events.

The Ubuntu Institute International Placement Initiative also identified 2 candidates at the NTCE 2013 who fortunately got employment before they were placed abroad.

Partnership Opportunities for educators and learners

The NTCE event created an opportunity to unlock and strengthen partnership such as the Global Travel and Tourism Partnership South Africa (GTTPSA) in terms of learner and educators development. GTTPSA has exposed about six learners and three educators to international platform where these learners represented South Africa in the various GTTP competition in France with all expenses paid by them.

Various District and Local Municipalities from the Eastern Cape also contributed and partnered with the NTCE brand by ensuring that learners from the respective municipalities do partake on the NTCE event and contribute with the transportation of learners and educators to the NTCE event.

FREE STATE AS A NEW HOST PROVINCE

The NTCE 2015 marks the first instance of the Free State Province as the host for the NTCE 2015 to 2017 period and the seventh since it started in 2008 in KwaZulu-Natal Province. It has also been hosted by the Eastern Cape Province in 2012 to 2014.

I would once again like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Free State as the new host province and hopefully the baton that they have inherited from the Eastern Cape will enable them to take NTCE to greater heights. You may be aware that the preparations to host this event are at an advanced stage. This media event is meant to launch the publicity campaign that should maximise attendance and participation of South Africans – and especially the Youth - at the Expo. It is also meant to create awareness of the purpose of the NTCE.

The publicity campaign for the NTCE as launched today should reach out to all corners of the country, even to those deep rural South Africans who might not make it to Bloemfontein on the 01st to 03rd October 2015. While we expect to stimulate interest towards the attendance of the NTCE through this campaign, it is equally important that our message of appeal reaches the various segments of our target audiences. That is what this session will do today. The NTCE Partners have produced a new Theme that will appeal to learners, students and tourism graduates.

This theme is ***“TOURISM ALIVE WITH OPPORTUNITIES”***.

The primary target market for the Expo is learners from grade 09 – 12, and students at FET Colleges and Universities, especially those doing tourism and hospitality as subjects. This target group also includes unemployed tourism graduates, educators and lecturers at high schools, colleges and

universities. Parallel to this target market are the industry players who drive the tourism products from various sub sectors. This includes public and private product owners, and government departments and their entities.

The purpose of the NTCE platform is to promote tourism as a career and profession of choice while at the same time promoting the industry as an employer of choice. In this endeavour we also wish to encourage young people to take up abundant entrepreneurial opportunities that exist in the tourism sector.

May I at this point give you an idea of what to expect at the NTCE 2015. As part of formalities the NTCE will be officially opened in the morning of 01 October 2015. The opening ceremony will include amongst others the announcement of the Global Travel and Tourism Partnership South Africa (GTTPSA) Schools Competition Winners and the overall launch of the NTCE Programme for the three days. On the second day we conduct the Best Tourism Awards.

As part of the three day programme, we expect the Hilton Hotel together with its Partners to actively facilitate a number of key activities such as a Chefs Corner and Mixology platforms. This will be part of the Hospitality Training Academy platform. The South African Chefs Association (SACA) will lead the Chefs platform with their presidential theme **"Chefs are Rock Stars"**.

We will have a "Mock Hotel" at what the NTCE partners are already calling the **"Hospitality Corner"**.

The Hilton will also pledge to recruit 10 students at the NTCE Platform for apprenticeship and they will also advertise their vacancies at the Virtual Classroom and Recruitment Arena of the NTCE 2015. This recruitment arena is a platform meant to equip final year students with CV compilation skills as well as advice and guidance on how to sell themselves during job interviews.

Unemployed graduates will also benefit from exposure to existing vacancies in the industry and assist and assistance to apply directly online. An aftercare arrangement is in place to follow up on applications submitted in order to monitor outcomes. Through this initiative we hope to facilitate the absorption of unemployed graduates into the mainstream labour market as an attempt to reduce unemployment.

An exciting new platform will be launched at the NTCE this year that brings the aviation on board. This could either be in the form of airplane simulation or audio-visuals coupled with presentations to demonstrate what an airplane is all about. It will also bring in an element of the hospitality services that are rendered in the airplane that require certain essential skills.

The good work done in the Free State with respect to the Planetarium, Responsible Tourism and Liberation Heritage will find a significant showcase at the Expo. Apart from exposing learners to careers that exist in this specialised area of tourism, these will be platforms that showcase our tourism niche market segments.

We will also have learner competitions in Public Speaking, African Cuisine and Knitting where learners will be competing against each other from the various provinces. The winners will leave with a revolving trophy to their province and school. There are also a number of other prizes for the second and third runners up.

To add to all the exciting platforms that I have spoken about, we will also have an array of exhibitors that will be showcasing their products as well as career and professional opportunities.

We therefore call upon all media houses to support the vision of the NTCE, and to amplify our message that Tourism is Alive with Possibilities. As I said the beginning of my speech – how are we empowering the youth to access opportunities? Media partners, you are a crucial link in our mission to change the unemployment landscape of this country. We will support you with your story write ups by supplying you with information for publishing during the next four weeks.

We need to build quality cadres that will sustain the growth of the sector to higher levels in the future. The NTCE is a long-term initiative for promoting the development of future human capital in order to support the current and future growth of the tourism sector.

We therefore urge learners, students and tourism graduates to attend the National Tourism Careers Expo on 01 – 03 October 2015 on Bloemfontein at the Sand Du Plessis Theatre, and explore the

possibilities that lie within the tourism sector.

I thank you.