



tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Tourism sector urged to double efforts to curb youth unemployment

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NELSPRUIT - Deputy Minister of Tourism Mr. Fish Mahlalela today called on the tourism sector to double government's initiatives to curb youth unemployment in the country.

Speaking at a graduation ceremony to honour Mpumalanga learners who successfully completed Hospitality Youth Training Programme (HYTP) learnership, Deputy Minister Mahlalela lamented over the low number of graduates who had been successfully placed within the industry.

The HYTP is an initiative of the Department of Tourism that addresses skills shortages in the sector, whilst contributing towards government's greater objective of creating employment for the youth. The Mpumalanga graduates received CATHSSETA accredited National Certificates in Fast Food Services (NQF level 3) after successfully completing a 12-month learnership programme at various hospitality establishments within the Province.

"Our country is faced with high unemployment rate, especially amongst the youth. As government we have taken a stance to strengthen our skills development and empowerment initiatives to capacitate the youth to prepare them for the world of work."

"As we celebrate the achievement of the 289 youth who are graduating today, I am equally concerned that a large number of them are yet to find employment or support to pursue entrepreneurship opportunities in the hospitality space. However, I am also hopeful that their acquired qualification will give them a competitive edge as they search for employment, and importantly it will renew their hope," said Deputy Minister Mahlalela.

With the National Development Plan (NDP) target for job creation set at 11 million jobs by 2030, Deputy Minister Mahlalela insisted that businesses within the tourism value chain could contribute immensely in government attaining this goal by employing skilled youth, and by continuing to offer on the job experience for those who have undergone similar programmes.

"Our skills development training programmes are world class, and I'm confident that we are releasing qualified and proficient young people who can provide an excellent service."

"The entirety of the tourism value chain has the potential to help us curb unemployment by offering employment opportunities for competent graduates. The multiplier effect of investing in competent youth will not only yield positive gains for the tourism market, but for our economy."

"I therefore call on the sector to boldly invest in employing our graduates, and help us build a thriving economy and a better country," concluded Deputy Minister Mahlalela.

For further inquiries:

Mr Blessing Manale – (Spokesperson)

Department of Tourism

Tel: +27 (0)12 444 6607

Cell: +27 (0)66 487 8867

Email: bmanale@tourism.gov.za