



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Women need to be on the forefront of the tourism industry**

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The Department of Tourism in partnership with the City of Tshwane held the 2015 Women in Tourism business breakfast at Moretele Park Mamelodi. The main objective of the breakfast is to organise women in the tourism to brainstorm and discuss burning issues in the sector.

The focus for this year's event fell on what women in the tourism sector can do to contribute to the economy, as well as sharing ideas and mentorship to young people who are interested in the sector.

Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms. Tokozile Xasa, highlighted the fact that women need to be in the forefront of the sector as they are the backbone of the industry. "UNWTO has confirmed that women have the highest percentage of representation in the industry, however, women still only represent one fifth of all tourism ministers and tourism board chairs globally". Although we have made great strides as a country in the past 21 years, the tourism sector specifically has not seen the level of gender equality that reflects the demographics of the country.

"There are about 1.5 million people who are working and contributing to the tourism industry directly and indirectly" said Xasa. However most young people join this industry by default and that is a concern as tourism needs to be a career of choice".

Ms Lindiwe Kwele Deputy City Manager: Strategy Development& Implementation City of Tshwane said tourism is one of the four pillars of the GDP. "As the city of Tshwane we are targeting young people. As it stands there are about 400 thousands young people who are in the capital city."

In March 2016, the Department of Tourism will launch the Executive Development Programme for women in the tourism sector. This follows the study conducted in 2011 by the Tourism B-BBEE Charter Council to assess the state of transformation in the tourism sector.

The priority is to involve as many stakeholders from within the sector, as well as those in education and academia to collaborate in programmes that provide skills development for our people – with a specific focus on women and the youth.

The Department of Tourism welcomes this partnership with the city of Tshwane, and more programmes will be initiated from this partnership to assist young people.

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