



Private Bag X424, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa. Tel. (+27 12) 444 6780, Fax (+27 12) 444 7027
Private Bag X9154, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa. Tel. (+27 21) 469 5800, Fax: (+27 21) 465 3216

MEDIA STATEMENT

DATE: 30 JULY 2024

TOURISM MINISTRY COMMEMORATES MANDELA MONTH WITH ABUSED WOMEN SHELTER CLIENTS

At the opening of the first democratic Parliament in 1994, President Nelson Mandela said, “Freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression... Our endeavours must be about the liberation of the woman, the emancipation of the man and the liberty of the child”. END QUOTE.

It is on reflection of these words and in acknowledging the plight of women and children who suffer many forms of abuse that today, in commemorating Mandela Month, Minister of Tourism, Patricia de Lille spent time with women and children who are survivors of abuse from a shelter in Cape Town.

“In today’s society, it is an indictment that thousands of women and children face abuse daily and often the perpetrators are their loved ones. The statistics around women and children who are abused or killed are alarming and a travesty in a country where our freedom was fought for by many leaders including Tata Madiba,” Minister de Lille said.

Each year, as a country we commemorate Mandela Month with acts of service to the most vulnerable in our country.

“The commemoration calls on us to spend at least 67 minutes of our time in service to those in need and to engage in these activities throughout Mandela Month. We must however strive to be of service and help those in need every day and not just during Mandela Month,” Minister de Lille said.

This year, Minister Patricia de Lille and the Ministry spent a day with women and children from a shelter in Cape Town and treated them to a day as a tourist in Cape Town.

The beneficiaries were treated to a Red Bus rooftop tour around the city and a lunch.

Minister de Lille also appealed to MECs for Social Development and Tourism across the country to reach out to shelters and arrange tourist tours for them so that they too can experience all the beauty our country has to offer.

“It pains me that in a country where men and women died for our freedom that many of our women and children are not truly free. In commemorating Mandela Month, we spent time with the women and children abuse survivors to show that we care and to show them that they deserve the best,” Minister de Lille said.

Minister de Lille wishes to express her deepest gratitude to the management and staff at this shelter for their unwavering commitment in taking care of these women and children, to help them heal and restart their lives through counselling and skills development.

“There are many shelters across the country who serve this higher calling to provide shelter, love, care and healing to our women and children and we thank each and every social worker and staff member at shelters all over South Africa for their important work. We acknowledge this tough task and thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your love and service,” Minister de Lille said.

This shelter has been operational since 1992 and assists around 150 women and children each year.

The women and children at the centre face various forms of abuse such as physical, emotional, financial, mental abuse, child neglect, physical and sexual assault.

The centre offers women and children temporary accommodation, counselling, aftercare services, referrals, skills development and court support.

Over the years, the centre has been instrumental in helping women and children recover and rebuild their lives.

One client is a 38-year-old woman, who was addicted to heroin since the age of 16 and had been in a physically and emotionally abusive relationship for more than 10 years.

She had 2 children in foster care when she was admitted at the centre in 2021. Her health was in critical state as she had several untreated chronic illnesses. She spent nine months in the shelter, within this time she obtained a protection order against the perpetrator, she completed detox and rehabilitation programs, she became medically compliant and her health improved. Family reunification was achieved and her children were legally placed back in her care.

At the centre, she found inner healing and has been empowered through various skills development programs and access to services. After exiting the shelter, she continued attending rehab and living a life of sobriety and mending the relationship with her children.

Another client was admitted because of physical and emotional abuse, she completed the program at the centre and found a job.

“Our women and children are to be treasured and protected we call on society to help protect our women and children and help those in need by reporting abuse and standing with them to heal from their pain and move on to live the lives they deserves to live,” Minister de Lille concluded.

As the Department of Tourism we know that it is still in our hands to make a difference and bring positive change to all our communities. We remain committed to working with all partners to achieving growth in tourism that will lead to economic growth and job creation. We will continue to emulate the values of our dear former President Nelson Mandela in all the work we do and to live and work in service of others to see our great nation become the united country Tata Madiba worked for.

/ENDS

Media Queries Contact:

Zara Nicholson

Media Liaison Officer to Minister of Tourism – Patricia de Lille, MP

Mobile: +27 79 416 5996

Email: znicholson@tourism.gov.za