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**MINISTRY OF TOURISM**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY:**

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**Mr K P Sithole (IFP) to ask the Minister of Tourism:**

1. What structures have been put in place to attract the local tourists in order to boost

local tourism?

(2) what capacity building and skills development programmes exist for capacitating the district and local government officials about tourism strategies;

(3) whether her department has mechanisms put in place to reach the rural areas for the purpose of involving persons in rural communities in the tourism space; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? NW3005E

**Reply**

1. **What structures have been put in place to attract the local tourists in order to boost local tourism?**

The Department hosts the Domestic Tourism Steering Committee, a national structure which seeks to promote domestic tourism accross all provinces. Provincial departments responsible for tourism and their respective tourism marketing agencies represent provinces to ensure a localised input into developing an annual domestic tourism campaign aligned to World Tourism Month. Other departments and key stakeholders also form part of the committee; e.g. Department of Sports, Arts and Culture; Brand SA and the private sector represented by Tourism Business Council of South Africa.

The committee seeks to draw up a national calendar of events designed to drive domestic tourism with a focus on geographic spread.

1. **What capacity building and skills development programmes exist for capacitating the district and local government officials about tourism strategies;**

The Department has a few programmes to capacitate the district and local government officials.

Firstly the Local Government Tourism Peer Learning Network: This is a platform for a dialogue by Tourism/ Local Economic Development and Development Planning Practitioners from various municipalities within a province. The dialogue is on a range of topics, such as tourism development models, policies, research studies conducted, and trending tourism topical issues. This platform is also used for identification of areas of intervention, norms and standards, and guidelines for tourism development within local government sector.

Secondly the Tourism Capacity building programme workshops also include district and local government officials. The main purpose of this annual initiative is to provide an integrated approach on capacity building for the public sector and community members within the selected municipalities, and to create a platform for stakeholder engagement and information sharing. Through needs analysis a programme is developed to assist local government officials.

Thirdly, the department has conducted training for tourism and Local Economic Development (LED) officials on the Destination Planning Manual and Tourism Precinct Development Methodology in 2018/19 amongst others. The purpose of this capacity building process was to institutionalise tourism development planning tools at these critical levels, with a view to infuse an understanding of integrated tourism planning as well as easy-to-use planning tools, which local government planners may apply in their day-to-day tourism planning programmes.

1. **Whether her department has mechanisms put in place to reach the rural areas for the purpose of involving persons in rural communities in the tourism space; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?**

The implementation of tourism spatial master plans is focused on socio-economically depressed regions, which encompass rural areas, villages, townships, and small towns.

The 2018/19 ownership and operating model for accommodation and tourism related products provides a sustainable tool to empower rural communities in both the ownership and management aspects of operating existing tourism related offerings and/or product. This is especially the case where land has been restored for ownership by communities, that present opportunities for tourism development.

Further, the 2019-2021 development, piloting and implementation of the budget resort network and brand, aims to reinforce the preceding process by opening such “franchise” to products that are concessioned state owned, community owned, and privately owned, as well as offer members a range of benefits and shared services, and outline expectations and set standards for quality and services.

Rural communities are set to benefit as follows

(i) optimal development of tourism potential on restored land, or land identified by municipalities;

(ii) reduced marketing, design and other costs;

(iii) optimal marketing, and access to targeted markets; and

(iv) properly managed and frequented products.

The Department coordinates and facilitate a platform namely “*Tourism Information Sharing Session*” in rural municipalities and provinces, where the department and other relevant stakeholders within the tourism value chain communicate their priorities, planned projects and programmes for various tourism beneficiaries. In turn the “*Tourism Information Sharing Session”* enable better planning, coordinated and aligned tourism policies, projects, programmes and in the three spheres of government and other developmental entities or agencies of government.