

MEDIA STATEMENT

Date: 19 November 2015

Attention: News Editors/Assignment Editors

EMBARGOED UNTIL 19 NOVEMBER 2015 AT 20H00

MPUMALANGA GOVERNMENT AND THE SAB LAUNCH THE YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME FOR YOUTH-OWNED BUSINESSES IN THE PROVINCE

Mbombela – The Mpumalanga Government, led by Premier David Mabuza, and the South African Breweries (SAB), through its 20-year old youth entrepreneurship development programme, **SAB KickStart**, this week announced a partnership investment of **R1-million** to assist young entrepreneurs to build sustainable small businesses in the Province.

The Mpumalanga Youth Entrepreneurship Programme (MYEP) will target youth-owned SMMEs and cooperatives in three municipal districts of the Province and provide them with ~~skills~~ training, mentorship and capital funding. The programme will be open to youth between the ages of 18 and 35 with new innovative businesses of not more than 6 months in operation, participating ~~playing~~ in industries such as tourism, manufacturing, agriculture (mainly agro-processing) and unique services.

The announcement of the Programme was made at the 20th Annual SAB KickStart National Awards held in Mbombela on Thursday, 19 November 2015. The Awards took place during the annual Global Entrepreneurship Week which runs until 22 November 2015.

The SAB Kickstart Programme is an output of the SAB-Mpumalanga partnership that is linked to three areas of cooperation, namely, Enterprise, Rural and Human Capital Development.

Mpumalanga MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Sikhumbuzo Eric Kholwane was appreciative of the programme and its contribution towards government plan for youth entrepreneurship development in the province.

“I want to thank the SAB for this investment and its contribution towards government plans for youth entrepreneur development. We have set a target in the National Development Plan (NDP) – that of creating an inclusive society that builds the capability of its active citizenry by 2030. It is therefore inspiring and fulfilling to realise that the *SAB KickStart Programme* is at the core of the issues being pursued by our government through the National Youth Policy-2020, explained MEC Kholwane.

The SAB will aid the entrepreneurs, who are successful, with seed capital to expand their businesses with an intention that they will act as a pipeline for the annual national youth entrepreneurship programme. The programme will be rolled out in January 2016 starting with recruitment across Ehlanzeni District, Gert Sibande District and Nkangala District. Each district will hold a 3 day long boot-camp for 50 youth entrepreneurs who would have been selected from the pitching clinics held in those districts.

The startup boot-camp will be geared towards enabling and capacitating youth entrepreneurs of Mpumalanga with business skills and tools of trade in order to strengthen their products or services. The programme is targeting to identify 9 young entrepreneurs, with an intention to provide them with seed capital, high level mentorship and business development support for a period of 4 months.

In addition, SAB through its flagship enterprise development programme, KickStart, will invite candidates participating with an opportunity to be considered for the annual national competition for the class of 2016.

“We believe that this partnership and specifically the investment (**R1 million**) will help unlock numerous opportunities for the youth of our Province, including increasing the skills base of the Province as contemplated in the *Mpumalanga Economic Growth and Development Path (MEGDP)*. This will also contribute to economic growth as more of our youth enter the economic mainstream”, concluded MEC Kholwane.

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