



MEDIA STATEMENT

Date: Friday, 23 April 2021

Attention: Journalists, News Editors and Executive Producers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MKHATSHWA ENGAGES WITH *LULAWAY* – A YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS SERVICE PROVIDER – AND GOVERNMENT FINANCE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS WITH A VIEW OF FORGING PARTNERSHIPS

Sandton – MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Vusi Mkhathshwa today held a meeting with *Lulaway* – a Services SETA-accredited training provider with youth employment solutions – which prides itself for having placed thousands of unemployment youth in jobs across the country.

“I am really looking forward to working with anyone or company which can place our youth in jobs. As government, we have the mandate to create jobs, so that we can reduce unemployment, especially amongst the youth who are in the majority and the mostly affected”, said MEC Mkhathshwa.

Lulaway has placed the Province’s 2 500 young people in various permanent jobs over the past three (3) years.

“I think *Lulaway* is a strategic partner towards us addressing youth unemployment in our Province. They partly have a solution in addressing our challenge of creating permanent jobs and job opportunities for our young people.

MEC has urged *Lulaway* to profile all SMMEs in the Province, so that government could know in which areas to intervene, by providing financial and non-financial support, in order to create the much-needed job opportunities.

“As government, we continue to be committed to fund SMMEs given their high potential to create the much-needed job opportunities for our people. *Lulaway* should now go back, drill the information further and provide us with more details, per district, and per locality, so that we can make informed decisions about available possible interventions”, concluded the MEC.

Meanwhile MEC Mkhathshwa indicated that his mission is to revive rural and township economies in the Province, with bias towards empowering young people, including women and people with disabilities.

“My interest is to see rural and township economies thriving again. We want to support young people in these areas, with financial and non-financial support, through our Entities like MEGA and other development finance institutions. We will, thus, camp in those areas to make sure that our rural areas and townships thrive again. We want young people to own franchise stores, car washes, filling stations and many other businesses”, explained MEC Mkhathshwa.

MEC Mkhathshwa also held an engagement with the NEF’s (National Empowerment Fund) Divisional Executive for Strategic Planning and Significant Investment, Mr Setlakalane Molepo, and the acting CEO of MEGA, Mr Isaac Mahlangu, to discuss possible areas of collaboration with finance development institutions.

Mr Molepo indicated that finance development institutions, like the NEF, would be willing to collaborate with the Department in funding SMMEs in the Province, through the creation of a blended-funding model between MEGA and the NEF. The blended-funding model would incorporate funding from both the Department (Economic Development and Tourism) through MEGA and institutions like the NEF. The meeting agreed that the creation of such a Fund would be taken further with the NEF.

“I agree that the blended-funding model should be considered as a vehicle to bridge the funding gap, we are currently experiencing. MEGA will now approach the NEF for further discussions on the matter. And from what Mr Molepo from the NEF said, I am positive that the talks will surely bear fruits”, added Mr Mkhathshwa.

-ENDS-

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