



**Coca-Cola** Beverages  
South Africa



**destea**  
department of  
Economic, Small Business Development,  
Tourism and Environmental Affairs  
FREE STATE PROVINCE

## PRESS RELEASE

### SUPPORTING FREE STATE YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH THE BIZNIZ IN A BOX PROGRAMME

13 JUNE 2023

Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa (CCBSA) in partnership with the Free State Department of Economic, Small Business, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEa) has launched an entrepreneurship competition targeted at young people during this month of June. This collaboration comes in the wake of the release of unemployment numbers for the first quarter of 2023. Unemployment is still at an all-time high of 32.9% with the youth unemployment rate now sitting at 46.5%.

The Bizniz in a Box competition, a product of the Bizniz in a Box programme was successfully launched last year to cast the net to award the most deserving, young entrepreneurs for their businesses to grow. Five entrepreneurs from the Free State province last year were awarded with mobile kitchens and this year more opportunities for young entrepreneurs are available to boost their businesses. They stand to win prizes such as mobile kitchens, business equipment or various business solutions.

The Bizniz in a Box programme is part of CCBSA's economic inclusion programme to empower small, micro, and medium enterprises (SMMEs) - especially women and youth in our host communities. Pinky Lebitso, CCBSA Public Affairs, Communications and Sustainability Manager, notes that there is no single entity that can manage the youth unemployment challenge on its own and have collaborated with the provincial government to co-create sustainable solutions that will empower young people.

During the tabling of his 2023/2024 Budget Speech, MEC for DESTEa **Thabo Meeko** said, "the task of influencing economic growth and development must be anchored on an aggressive approach to decisively resolve the three interrelated challenges of Poverty, Unemployment and Inequality". Government alone cannot change the current pattern and the impact of these challenges that is why we have a partnership with CCBSA. The Department also believes that this is a giant step towards youth empowerment, development, growth, and great investment in the province."

Lebitso, added that the decision to partner with the Free State government was a natural progression towards working jointly to alleviate youth unemployment. "Through our collaboration to empower small, micro, and medium enterprises (SMMEs) by setting them up in businesses, we can go further and also provide incubation and support through training and resources to ensure they grow their businesses, to create livelihoods for themselves and other young people. This can change the quality of their lives", she said.

As such CCBSA in partnership with DESTEa launched this competition on Lesedi FM where listeners, who meet the competition criteria, do a 60-second business elevator pitch and send to # **061 351 8303** and have the chance to be chosen to do their pitch live on the **Thakgoha and ReaThella Shows**. The best presentation chosen by the panel stands a chance to win mobile kitchens or business equipment, or business support. This competition will run from **Tuesday, 13 June to Friday, 30 June 2023** on the shows.

**This Youth month, young people with a South African identity document stand a chance to WIN**



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## **Criteria for competition**

To be considered for the Bizniz in a Box programme, candidates must be South African between the ages of 20 - 35 years and have at least two years of entrepreneurial experience. Ideally, each applicant's business should address the needs of the local community like convenience stores, fast foods stores, car washes and shisanyamas.

Since 2021, CCBSA in the Free State has supported 110 young entrepreneurs and as a result created 80 additional jobs with a total level of investment worth R16 million towards business infrastructure. In the North West province the target for this year is to support 50 entrepreneurs with an estimated cost of R7 million.

END

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