

# WHY TOURISM SMMES HOLD THE KEY TO AFRICA'S JOB CREATION BOOM

**T**he tourism sector has long been hailed as a job-creating powerhouse, but according to industry leaders participating in a BOND Day panel discussion, it's the small and emerging businesses - Tourism SMMEs - that truly hold the key to unlocking inclusive economic growth across Africa.

Septi Bukula, founder of Rendzo Network and an advocate for strategic SMME empowerment, explained how his network prioritises SMEs in everything from event logistics to experience delivery. "If it can be done by an SMME, it must be done by an SMME," he said, underscoring a business model that puts local entrepreneurs at the heart of international events.

Tourism SMMEs aren't just subcontractors, they're becoming the main stage act. Bukula's network actively promotes itself as a platform where world-class experiences are powered entirely by small businesses. From managing ground logistics to crafting bespoke cultural experiences, these enterprises are proving that big doesn't always mean better.

This strategic elevation of SMMEs is not just about contracts, it's about building long-term capability. "We've moved from tactical to strategic collaboration," Bukula explained. By partnering with institutions like the South African National Convention Bureau and city governments, his network is now bidding for major international events, alongside municipalities, not under them.



In practical terms, this means more business for SMMEs, more training opportunities, and more local hiring. It also means new tourism nodes in lesser-known regions, thanks to targeted development initiatives like the Drakensberg campaign, which brings together local stakeholders to collectively boost their tourism offering. "We're not just saying collaboration, we're doing it," Bukula added. His approach proves that when SMMEs are empowered with the right partnerships, funding, and visibility, they don't just benefit, they lead.

Tourism SMMEs are often embedded within local communities, offering authentic experiences that resonate with conscious travellers. This alignment between job creation, social impact, and cultural tourism is exactly what Africa needs to redefine its travel story on a global stage.

By prioritising the empowerment of small tourism businesses, the industry isn't just creating jobs - it's cultivating leaders.

And that's a future worth building.

## UNVEILING THE RICH HISTORY OF THE NELSON MANDELA MUSEUM'S BHUNGA BUILDING AND THE YOUTH AND HERITAGE CENTRE

**A**s the Nelson Mandela Museum prepares to showcase its treasures at Africa's Travel Indaba from May 13th to 15th in Durban, we invite travelers and history enthusiasts alike to explore the significance of our iconic Bhunga Building and the Youth and Heritage Centre in Qunu.

### A Symbol of Resistance: The Bhunga Building

During the apartheid era, the Bhunga Building served as the seat of the Transkei Legislative Assembly, a government imposed by the apartheid regime. Despite its controversial past, the building has been transformed into a beacon of hope and freedom, housing an impressive collection of gifts and exhibitions that celebrate the life and legacy of Nelson Mandela.

### Treasures Within

The Bhunga Building is home to an array of artifacts, including gifts presented to Nelson Mandela from around the world. These tokens of appreciation and admiration offer a glimpse into the global impact of his tireless advocacy for human rights and equality. Our exhibitions also delve into the history of the Transkei region, providing a nuanced understanding of the complexities of South Africa's past.

### Join Us at Africa's Travel Indaba

We're excited to share the story of the Nelson Mandela Museum's Bhunga Building and the Youth and Heritage Centre with travelers and industry professionals at Africa's Travel Indaba. Our team will

be on hand to answer questions, provide insights, and showcase the museum's offerings. We look forward to welcoming you to our stand and sharing the spirit of these incredible destinations with you.

By visiting the Nelson Mandela Museum's Bhunga Building and the Youth and Heritage Centre, you'll not only be exploring significant pieces of South African history but also supporting the preservation of our cultural heritage. Join us on this journey of discovery and inspiration.

For more information about the Nelson Mandela Museum, the Bhunga Building, and the Youth and Heritage Centre, please contact on our social media platforms

Facebook: Nelson Mandela Museum

Twitter: @Mandela Museum

Instagram: @official\_nelsonmandelamuseum

TikTok: @NelsonMandelaMuseum

Website: [www.nelsonmandelamuseum.org.za](http://www.nelsonmandelamuseum.org.za)



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