

Heineken Beverages reiterates Tavern Transformation Programme

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In a bold show of its ongoing commitment to responsible alcohol trading and inclusive economic development, Heineken Beverages hosted a high-level roundtable and media visit to two towns taverns participating in the company's Tavern Transformation Programme. The event brought together key industry stakeholders, government representatives, and members of the media to experience first-hand the potential of reimagining taverns as community-minded, economically viable enterprises.



Alexandra Police in attendance



Millicent Maroga Heineken Beverages corp affairs director

The outlet visits, which preceded the roundtable, offered an immersive look at the early successes and re: world impact of the pilot phase of the programme. These township-based outlets are part of a growing movement to formalise and elevate taverns as safe, well-managed social spaces that contribute meaningfully to local economies. Traders shared personal stories of growth, the tangible business benefit of being part of the programme, and how the upgrades have improved both customer experience and community perception.



Sandile Nxumalo Heineken Beverages - host, project lead and MC



Tavern Transformation Event

The roundtable discussion facilitated robust dialogue between stakeholders from industry, civil society, an government, reflecting on learnings from the pilot phase and exploring what it will take to scale and sustain

transformation efforts. Central to the conversation was the acknowledgement that tavern owners are often overlooked entrepreneurs who operate within complex social and infrastructural environments – yet they remain an integral part of township life and local economic activity.



Siga Culinary in Alexandra



Siga Culinary in Alexandria

Millicent Maroga, corporate affairs director at Heineken Beverages, emphasised the company's view of taverns as part of a wider ecosystem: "We see tavern owners not just as traders, but as partners in building safer, more responsible and economically vibrant communities. Our vision is to enable them to run thriving businesses that comply with the law, prioritise safety, and serve as positive examples within their communities."



Thate Tavern in Alexandra



Thate Tavern in Alexandra



Thate Tavern in Alexandra

Advocate Fati Manamela, chief director of the Gauteng Liquor Board (GLB), also commended the initiative “What Heineken Beverages is doing with the Tavern Transformation Programme is a significant step towards reshaping how we view and support township businesses. This kind of public-private collaboration is essential if we are to build a sustainable and inclusive economy.”

According to Gift Sedibeng, owner of Siga Culinary, “Our space has been upgraded, and the safety of our

customers has improved. People now visit our establishment not just for the alcohol, but for the whole experience — from our food offering to having low- and no-alcohol options to choose from. It's not just a place to buy alcohol anymore; it's a place where the community can gather and socialise responsibly.”



Team behind Tavern Transformation with key stakeholders and tavern owners

The Tavern Transformation Programme is a key pillar of Heineken Beverages' broader ambition to make a positive, lasting impact in South Africa. It aligns with the company's social responsibility commitments and recognises the role of the informal sector in creating jobs, fostering entrepreneurship, and enabling upward mobility.

This latest engagement marks a milestone in the programme's journey, signalling Heineken Beverages' intent to build on pilot learnings, deepen industry collaboration, and extend support to more outlets in the months ahead.

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