

**4<sup>th</sup> EDITION & 2022**

# **AFRICA YOUTH IN TOURISM**

## **Innovation Summit and Challenge**

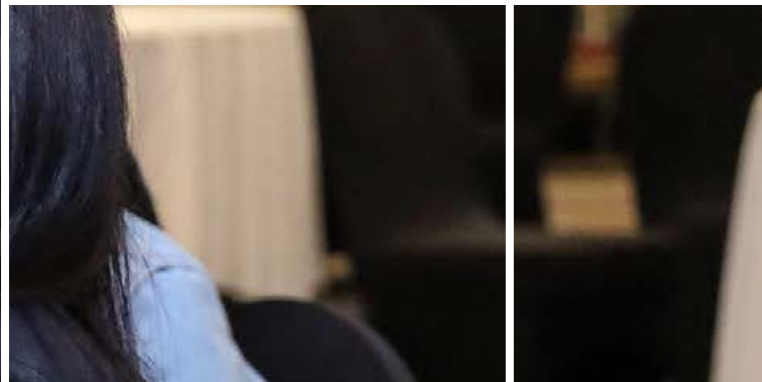
*Developing youth and innovative entrepreneurship solutions for inclusive tourism recovery in Africa.*

**REPORT**

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# CONTENTS

<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Summit Overview.....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Objectives.....	6
2.2 Delegate Participation and Attendance.....	7
2.3 Speaker Profile.....	7
<b>3. Masterclasses: Youth and SMME Digital &amp; Social Media Marketing</b>	
3.1 Synopsis Of Welcome Remarks.....	8
3.2 SME Digital/Social Media and Business Development Masterclass.....	9
3.3 Conceptualising and developing new business models in Commercially Viable Small Enterprises.....	12
3.4 Unpacking the Business of MICE.....	13
3.5 Pursuing a Career in MICE Confidence.....	13
3.6 Jumpstart SMEs and Start-ups.....	14
3.7 Staying in Business.....	14
3.8 Key Learning Points.....	14
<b>4. Day 1: Official Summit Opening</b>	
4.1 Synopsis Of The Welcome Message.....	15
4.2 Message from UNWTO.....	15
4.3 Message from Africa Tourism Partners.....	17
4.4 Message form UN Namibia.....	17
4.5 Namibia’s Tourism Recovery Plan 2022-2024.....	18
4.6 Keynote Address.....	19
4.7 Vote of Thanks.....	20
4.8 Thought leadership and Ministerial roundtable.....	21
4.9 Africa Tourism Innovation Hub.....	23
4.10 Defining your own path of entrepreneurship.....	24
4.11 Future change-makers case study.....	25
4.12 The Arts and Science of quality assurance.....	26
<b>5. Day 2:</b>	
5.1 Welcome and Speed Marketing Session.....	27
5.2 Business Advisory Expert Perspective.....	27
5.3 Professionals Insights into Fintech and Travel Tech.....	29



5.4 Fostering transformation and innovation.....	30
5.5 Deals Pros and Investment Angels Perspective.....	31
5.6 TED TALK: Fostering creativity in domestic tourism - <i>The Case of Africa's Connect</i> .....	31
5.7 Think Tank Session – Business Events/MICE.....	32
5.8 Lessons from the future: reimagining the future of work and skills.....	33
5.9 Pitch Battles: Africa Youth Tourism Innovation Challenge Demo.....	34

## 6. Day 3:

6.1 Keynote Message.....	36
6.2 TED TALK: Pioneering creativity and innovation – The case of Switzerland.....	36
6.3 Employability insights: Embarking on futureproofing education today for.....	37
6.4 Future outlook and Opportunities.....	38
6.5 In conversation with Aviation Experts.....	38
6.6 Future Horizon and change-making.....	39
6.7 Social innovation conversations.....	40
6.8 Career Guidance.....	41
6.9 Conclusion.....	41

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The fourth Youth in Tourism Innovation Summit was hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, Namibia in Windhoek from 26th to 29th July 2022. Delegates gathered at the Summit discussed and shared insights on a range of topics from youth entrepreneurship, innovation, small enterprise development, personal transformation and self-actualization, as well as creation of conducive environments for start-ups and SMEs to thrive.

Delegates from more than 46 countries connected with African and global tourism leaders, entrepreneurial innovators, and partner organisations from across Africa and the rest of the world. A highly interactive programme of events including practical sessions aimed at empowering youth start-ups and SMEs with digital marketing tools and skills, as well as insightful talks and panel discussions on travel and tourism issues and opportunities for youth formed the basis of the Summit content. In addition, the Summit included a desktop exhibition focused on highlighting youth empowerment initiatives, SMEs trade offerings including tour operators, tourism accommodation facilities, transport service providers, educational institutions, as well as travel and marketing technology start-ups and incubators. The ultimate goal was to provide a transformative platform for African Youth, start-up, entrepreneurs, students and small enterprises for income generation and career development.





Key messages emanating from the Summit deliberations centred on the need to support youth start-ups and entrepreneurship to ensure their inclusion in decision making. Such support should go beyond just financial support to incorporate other interventions which will assist youth owned star-ups to become sustainable businesses contributing towards economic growth and job creation in their respective countries. Given that the Continent boasts a very young population, the view was echoed in most of the conference sessions that the youth should be given voice and space to get involved in the tourism economies of their countries. In addition, practical advice and guidance was shared with the youth present on careers in the industry, funding sources, and sourcing finance. Government and private support for all the critical interventions required to fund, support and build youth enterprises, was echoed by most speakers and the youth delegates.

The proposal to establish an African Tourism Innovation Hub in Namibia with effect from 2024 was positively received, with support pledged by panellists from Zimbabwe, Zambia, DR Congo and Algeria. Finally, the importance of collaboration and partnerships between government and private sector, ease of doing business, free movement of goods and services, removal of barriers and facilitation of the necessary infrastructure to support entrepreneurship and innovation, (e.g. broadband and internet access) was reiterated.



## 2. SUMMIT OVERVIEW

The fourth edition of the Africa Youth in Tourism Innovation Summit and Challenge, was held at the Safari Court Lodge, Windhoek Namibia, from 26th to 29th July 2022. Supported by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Namibia, the UNWTO, the Namibia Tourism Board, and BDO South Africa, the Summit keynote address was delivered by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism of Namibia, Minister Pohamba Shifeta (MP).

Incorporating a Namibia SME Digital/Social Media and Business Development Masterclass on 26th July, as well as Tourism Start-ups and Entrepreneurship Expo which ran from 26th July to 29th July, the Summit provided an invaluable opportunity for SMEs and Start-ups to engage with experts in the industry, network and share insights and ideas on business development and market access issues. Youth also benefited from the career guidance opportunities provided by the Career Guidance and Youth Development Clinics conducted as part of the Summit programme.

For SMEs and Start-ups with business concepts or projects in need of funding solutions, the Summit Pitch Battles afforded participating entrepreneurs an opportunity for mentorship and presentation of their business ideas to a panel of experts for adjudication. The outcomes and winners of the Pitch Battles are expected to be announced during October 2022.

### 2.1 OBJECTIVES

The Summit is established to nurture African youth, start-ups, small enterprises and accelerator initiatives to pursue opportunities across the global tourism ecosystem to become industry change-makers and future industry leaders. Other specific objectives are to:

- Create a viable network to support youths, start-ups and small enterprises to maximise their leadership potentials;
- help to drive a transformative change in their societies and nations at large through critical and design thinking;
- train, inspire and equip youths across Africa to impact their world, and proffer lasting innovative solutions for growing Africa tourism sector;
- empower youth at all levels, start-ups and small enterprises by offering market access, business development, value-partnership, mentorship and funding solutions;
- present an opportunity for youth to showcase their tourism related businesses and bankable projects to the global marketplace in order to find the required support; and
- Offer career development opportunities for youth interested in pursuing careers in travel, tourism, tourism academia, hospitality, aviation, conservation and related industries and sub-sectors.

## 2.2 DELEGATE PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

The Summit attracted more than six hundred and ninety (690) in person delegates and speakers, as well as over 2000 virtual attendees from more than forty-five (45) countries, including amongst others, Algeria, Botswana, DR Congo, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Monaco, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Portugal, Uganda, Tanzania, Seychelles, South Africa, UK, Spain, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Delegates included Ministers, tourism officials, policymakers, SMMES, start-ups, students, entrepreneurs and government officials from Africa and the rest of the world. Among these were young women-owned and run tourism businesses, venture capitalists, tourism innovators, entrepreneurs, university students, university lecturers, start-ups, representatives of youth agencies, officials of youth public institutions, education centres, investors and incubators around compelling tourism issues. Others were executives and representatives and staff of youth development, entrepreneurship, tourism career guidance and development organisations.

## 2.3 SPEAKER PROFILE

Over 95 speakers comprising experts, policy-makers, innovators and researchers from over 28 countries came together to share insights and learnings through panel discussions, TED-style talks and one-on-one discussions with the youth delegates on a wide range of topics over four (4) days





### **3. MASTERCLASSES: YOUTH AND SMME DIGITAL & SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING**

#### **3.1 SYNOPSIS OF WELCOME REMARKS**

The opening address was delivered by the Deputy Director, Administration, Planning and Tourism in the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism of Namibia. Welcoming the delegates the Deputy Director noted the importance of the Master Class in empowering African youth in a post Covid environment. Namibia is proud to host the Africa Youth in Tourism Summit and Challenge from 2022 until 2024. Emphasising the aims of the Summit; namely to address the challenges that youth face in entering the tourism industry. It was hoped that the youth would through participation in the Summit, build on new skills to avail themselves of the limitless opportunities that exist in the tourism industry

Namibia wants to make stepping stones to establish a future in tourism. As a result of COVID 19, the lives of ordinary people have been affected, not only businesses. Hence, he was hopeful that during the Summit, the roles of women and youth in tourism will be addressed. The country wants to find a pathway to invent tourism that thrives. Ensuring reforms and networks that will result in a better future for the youth in tourism post COVID 19, is an important imperative.

## 3.2 NAMIBIA SME DIGITAL/SOCIAL MEDIA AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MASTERCLASS

Comprised of TED type talks, expert presentations and panel discussion, the Namibia SME Digital/Social Media and Business Development Masterclass focused empowering the youth in using technology to develop and grow sustainable businesses. Core to the Master class programme was the critical role played by technology in driving successful businesses, and ensuring youth businesses and start-ups effectively and successfully harness this medium in developing and growing their businesses.

Focused on digital marketing from an SME perspective, the session highlighted how a country like Estonia, with a population of 1,3 million citizens, is considered to be the best digital country.

Digital marketing trends are used in Europe, but not as much in Africa. Every enterprise is involved in marketing and everyone can be a marketer.

***“Marketing is too important to be left to the marketing people”.***



Eighty one percent (81%) of shoppers conduct online research before buying. They trust other people in forums more than they trust official websites, which highlights the fact that people trust the reviews of others. An example in point for tourism is that the pictures advertised by hotels are often far from reality, which makes it hard to trust. We therefore need to rebuild trust by speaking in human language!



The key messages emanating from the session were the following:

- Ratings and reviews are very important. Customers trust the experiences others share of hotels they visited. Get people to rate your hotels!
- Customers use ten (10) or more channels to interact with other companies.
- Reply to those who need a reply, even after hours. Namibia is an international tourist country – use platforms that work.
- People will always use their mobiles first! Is your website mobile friendly? Avoid PDFS. Primary channel to a website is a mobile. Make sure all the features on your website works properly on a device.
- Social media is for people. Brands are not welcome on social media platforms. People want to talk to people, not corporations. For example, Instagram and TikTok do not want corporations.
- Quality over quantity: Focus on a small number of channels that you can handle and delete the channels that you don't need.
- Find the balance between long term and short-term marketing on a 50/50 split. Promotion markets 50%, while brand markets 50%.
- Beware of the dark tunnel; for example the customer journey, which you may not have sight of ; for example the customer experience to Namibia from Europe.
- Good advertising: Content marketing provides services to your customers not paid advertisements. Content marketing is neither a sprint nor a marathon. It's an ultra-marathon. Its long term. It takes time. Build content marketing for 18 months.
- Build trust by answering every single question your client might have, including price, competition, etc.
- Think of your target market.
- Don't avoid talking about price. Be open and gain trust
- Create once, distribute forever. Reuse your content.



The session highlighted the importance of digital and social media marketing, emphasizing that it is very important to recognise that everything was now all online and on cell phones. This trend has been accelerated by the Covid 19 pandemic and the consequent lockdowns, when everyone was at home and online was the primary mode of engagement. It was noted that FACEBOOK has three billion and INSTAGRAM one billion users every month, which creates a huge marketing opportunity for businesses. Practical steps were shared for ensuring search engine optimization and effective digital marketing, to build a profitable and sustainable business and clientele. The sessions provided insightful and practical examples on digital marketing initiatives; such as search engine optimization on google to appeal to target audiences; the use of Google Keyword Planner, social media content management and social media advertising. In addition, some practical suggestions and ideas were shared for upcoming youth who wish to enter the tourism industry on high impact ways to start on social media.

#### 1. SEO: Website optimization on Google to appeal to your audience

- Start with key words.
- Use Google Keyword Planner to help you find the best key words.

#### 2. Google Ads/PPC

- Add Google keywords and pay when people click on your ad.
- Build a bridge with a quality advertisement and a quality website.
- Have a package ready on your website with prices.
- Do it well with your package with the same budget.
- More people on your website means more bookings!

#### 3. Social Media content management

- Work on content management at least two (2) hours a day
- Build relationships with clients organically rather than using paid advertisements.
- Have an Instagram account.
- Quality logo – Professional English that appeals to customers.
- Have a link to your website.
- Have more than one link on Instagram. Use Linktree to give you more access.
- Reels, stories and posts allow your content to be seen for a longer time.
- Engage with people and use competitions. Get people to post pictures.
- Use fun ideas to get people involved.
- Users can generate content.

#### 4. Social Media Advertising

- Don't use too much content
- Budget for your paid ads

- “Call to action” button on social media is very powerful.
- You could see a 30% increase in bookings.
- Keep building your brand like KFC!

### 3.3 CONCEPTUALISING AND DEVELOPING NEW BUSINESS MODELS IN COMMERCIALY VIABLE SMALL ENTERPRISES

Tourism Innovation Trends were the main subject of this masterclass session, honing in on the following trends:

- *Gamification*: Secret destination. Creating and collecting points for certain destinations.
- *Immerse Travel*: Treading toward experience-based travel. Bring in to an affordable audience.
- *Maintaining local economy*: Empower local businesses in growing industry monopolisation.
- *Location based*: Discounts, promotions for nearby, local attractions.

The session also reiterated that 300 million start-ups are created every year and 90% of start-ups fail within 2-5 years. However entrepreneurs should be resilient and prepared to face the challenges that come with entrepreneurship.

Also shared with the delegates were key insights on what makes a strong business model, with the following attributes cited as critical: Desirability, feasibility and viability.

Desirability	Feasibility	Viability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value proposition</li> <li>• Customer relationships</li> <li>• Customer segments</li> <li>• Customer channels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could we even deliver this?</li> <li>• Key partners</li> <li>• Key activities</li> <li>• Key resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What customer problems have you identified?</li> <li>• How does your solution fix the customer’s problem?</li> <li>• What positives can customers expect from your solution?</li> <li>• What is the solution you are offering?</li> <li>• Are there any competitors offering a similar solution?</li> </ul>

(Source: AYTIS Presentation, BDO, South Africa)

In concluding, the following were highlighted as benefits of exploring multiple new business models:

- Build new revenue streams.
- Meet shifting customers’ expectations.
- Protect against industry disruption.
- Increase organisational adaptability.
- Attract and retain top talent.

***“First they will ignore you, then they will laugh at you, then they will fight you, then you win, and then they will copy you.”***

### **3.4 UNPACKING THE BUSINESS OF MICE (MEETINGS, INCENTIVES, CONFERENCES AND EXHIBITIONS)**

This session explored the **Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions** (MICE) markets segment as an untapped opportunity for African youth. The presenter highlighted that the MICE Platform was created to share knowledge and to create a medium for the message to change the world. The importance for Start Ups and Entrepreneurs of always learning from each other, networking and knowing one’s business objectives, was a central theme and learning point for this session. It was further highlighted how technology, social media, is changing the perceptions about countries. Critically, because of the pandemic and technology diffusion new jobs have emerged in the MICE sector since the COVID 19 pandemic. Career opportunities and new jobs identified in the session are detailed in the table below:

<b>Career Opportunities</b>	<b>New Event Jobs since COVID 19 pandemic</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate</li> <li>• Sports</li> <li>• Congresses</li> <li>• Exhibitions</li> <li>• Cultural</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Festivals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event tech expert</li> <li>• Social media coordinator</li> <li>• Digital Concierge</li> <li>• Meeting Designer</li> <li>• Conference architect</li> <li>• Digital analytics</li> <li>• Event Videographer</li> <li>• Customer experience manager</li> <li>• Manager of event security</li> <li>• Event sustainability coordinator</li> <li>• Event reporter</li> <li>• Creative director</li> <li>• Sponsorship qualities’</li> <li>• Diversity coordinator</li> <li>• Caterer or florist</li> <li>• Virtual event Planner</li> </ul>

### **3.5 PURSUING A CAREER IN MICE IN CONFIDENCE**

Exploring the MICE industry career path through learning, professionalism and high-performance culture was the theme of this session, which shared motivational ideas and suggestions with the youth about building a career in the MICE sector.

The session highlighted that professionals can be involved in development or implementation of elements of Strategic planning for events namely, Discovering, Analyses and Planning. The importance of investing in learning and education for the African youth and defining learning paths for each area of specialization within the MICE sector was also underlined.



### 3.6 JUMPSTARTING SMES & START-UPS

The session was centered on sharing how tourism Startups and SMEs can maximize new opportunities to accelerate business recovery and enhance growth. Some practical guidelines on building resilience and growing one's business in a post pandemic business environment, emphasized in the presentation, include the following considerations:

- Understand Data and Business systems and processes that work
- Component of trust and have partners to work with
- Look for opportunities' simple opportunities
- Identifying, Improving and Capitalising
- Rethinking tourism in Africa, Overseas, Domestic, and Inter-Africa
- Doing research and ensuring financial viability of opportunities pursued.

Regarding growing a business after COVID, avenues and approaches that entrepreneurs in the tourism industry could explore were shared; including amongst others: lowering rates to meet demand, reducing costs in all avenues, creating new ventures, improving what you do,

accelerating recovery, leveraging partnerships, identifying new creative ways to address market needs and tapping into grants relief and other funds.

### 3.7 STAYING IN BUSINESS: TRANSITIONING FROM TOURISM START UP TO MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE IN TOURISM

The session on transitioning from tourism start-up to micro, small and medium enterprise in the tourism industry emphasized the importance of “clarifying your own business for a startup” as a business model. Given the changing business environment, speed of development is critical in the various stages of development of a startup. Critical success factors which startups must be mindful were noted as: *collaboration*, *support networks* within their ecosystems and *digital transformation*.

### 3.8 KEY LEARNING POINTS

Key learning points which emerged from the Youth MICE Masterclass class were the importance of communication in business and being able to sell yourself, your services or product. Youth need to understand what events are about, what opportunities exist in the sector as well as the critical importance of digital marketing for any enterprise. Collaboration was a resounding theme throughout the sessions, with emphasis being placed on the importance of what others, be it funders or partners, think of you as an entrepreneur. Credibility, reliability, and intimacy as well as networking, are the currencies for successful entrepreneurs.

**“Network Network Network”**

## 4.OFFICIAL OPENING

### 4.1 SYNOPSIS OF THE WELCOME MESSAGE



The Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism of Namibia, Mr. Pohamba Shifeta, (MP) opened the day's proceedings with an expression of appreciation for all the ministers who had worked hard and in partnership with all the stakeholders to make the Africa Youth In Tourism Innovation Summit and Challenge a success. He noted that this was the first summit in Namibia and second and third series of the event will be hosted by Namibia too.

Tourism is dynamic and going digital is a way we can empower the youth on the African continent. The youth need to get involved and with the help of the government, they can ensure the recovery of tourism in Namibia. This summit has been arranged for the youth and includes all the stakeholders; SMMEs, tour operators, hoteliers, and business owners. All can become active players in growing the business of tourism.

Through taxpayers, government pays for ministers to represent Namibia all around the world, so the youth are encouraged to play their part. The Minister concluded by expressing Namibia's appreciation for everyone coming to Namibia for the event and invited delegates to enjoy the Namibian hospitality.

### 4.2 MESSAGE FROM THE UNWTO

The message from the UNWTO delivered by the Director, Africa Department, Ms. Elcia Grandcourt focused on leveraging the power of Innovation and Youth entrepreneurship as the key to building sustainable tourism ecosystems in Africa. She noted that after the Covid 19 pandemic, everyone has been much more positive and happier because things have opened again. We need to build a new vision while recovering from the Covid 19 pandemic.



In this regard, tourism can play an important role in contributing to towards inclusive economic development as it creates one out of ten jobs. For young people especially, this is important because the young people are the future of tourism. Innovation, technology, and digitalisation are all part of the evolution of tourism industry. Training will therefore empower them to play a meaningful role in the sector.

We need to integrate digitally because of the Covid 19 pandemic; with new ideas emerging amongst the youth. It was noted that 60% of the African population is under sixteen (16) years of age – making it the youngest population in the world. We must harness the power of this young population. The UNWTO was committed to elevating the role and participation of youth in tourism on the Continent and, to this end, had various initiatives focused specifically on the youth in tourism on the Continent, such as: development of digital tours.

Youth were encouraged to use every opportunity that comes along to get involved as they are the ones who have good ideas for the future. Youth were also urged to use the initiatives that are made available by UNWTO.

### 4.3 MESSAGE FROM AFRICA TOURISM PARTNERS

In his message for the delegates, Mr. Kwakye Donkor, CEO of Africa Tourism Partners noted that in the past tourism was not emphasized or stressed enough. Today, “tourism is everything and everything is tourism”.

Tourism connects people together, but its value has been understated for a long time. It is now time that the value of tourism is recognized. To achieve this, we need to work with the youth to ensure development and growth of entrepreneurship in tourism. Today technology and innovation are important enablers for entrepreneurship and inclusive economic development.

Technology ensures quick market access for young people to connect with others in the world. There are huge opportunities for careers, employment, and business startups in tourism for young people. Also, because tourism is a sector that is very interactive, it is a great way to make friends.



### 4.4 MESSAGE FROM UN NAMIBIA

Delivering a message on behalf of the UN in Namibia, Mr. Sen Pang, UN Resident Coordinator, Namibia, reiterated that the pandemic has negatively affected tourism, exacerbating poverty and inequality.



The way we do business was reassessed after the pandemic. African partners hosted a summit to discuss approaching tourism in a different way. After the pandemic, restrictions were removed so that tourism could start up again. This has allowed for freedom of movement.

Tourism needs to be more resilient, and we need to invest in the youth. Africa has a higher opportunity to invest in its youth capital and reap the benefits.

He echoed the UNWTO message that quality education is essential to drive transformative change in tourism, especially considering the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The UNWTO is in partnership with Namibia to empower the youth, to learn, to share and to inspire a better future.

#### **4.5 NAMIBIA'S TOURISM RECOVERY PLAN 2022 TO 2024**

A presentation focused on Namibia's Tourism Recovery Plan 2022 to 2024, whose vision is to “rearrange, reboot, and rebuild” the tourism sector, formed the basis of this session. The plan aims to ensure a mature, sustainable, and responsible tourism industry contributing significantly to the economic development of Namibia and the quality of life of all people, primarily through job creation and economic growth.



It was noted that the COVID 19 pandemic had impacted the tourism sector severely in Namibia, with a significant decrease in tourist arrivals, bringing the industry to a standstill since March 2020. About one hundred (100) tourism businesses closed temporarily or permanently, while about 4300 direct jobs in travel, tourism, hospitality, and catering were lost in 2021. While a restart of the industry was seen from July 2021, more than 1000 companies had to apply for applied for financial assistance because of the devastating financial impact of the pandemic.

Also highlighted were the main objectives and programmes underpinning Namibia's recovery plan, as well as the key *strategic interventions and planned activities*, namely:

- Restoring international traveler confidence by improving emergency response, monitoring and health systems to over quick results
- Extension of financial support to the business sector and creation of Tourism project fund and support destination marketing campaigns
- Build a strong Namibian brand using multiple platforms and increase Namibia's visibility on search engine marketing platforms
- Create strategy with key stakeholders by establishing regional tourism forums in all 14 regions of the country
- Promote and digitalize tourism investment opportunities
- Develop domestic and AFRICA travel market
- Embark on aggressive marketing campaigns in international source markets
- Create new tourism routes and expand tourism product offering
- Develop national spatial tourism master plan
- Collection of domestic traveler statistics
- Digitalize international arrival and exit processes
- Application of big data in tourism
- Easing and expanding VISA upon arrival regime for tourism and business travellers
- Improve air access of tourism flagships

Funding for the interventions and initiatives detailed in the plan would come from Government budget allocations, co-funding from ministries and other institutions, development partners, sponsorships as well as smart partnerships with the private sector.

## **4.6 KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

The Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism of Namibia, Mr. Pohamba Shifeta, (MP) delivered the keynote address, expressing Namibia's gratitude towards all those who had made the event successful and memorable as it is an important part of recovery after Covid19. Namibia

has hosted events before and are grateful for the opportunity to host more major events and conferences. The country has unique customs and cultures and is a preferred tourist destination. The sector is one of the socio-economic pillars in Namibia. However, with a current economic contribution of about NMD15.8 billion tourism's contribution has declined from NMD 28 billion in 2019.

Tourism must benefit African youth and equip youth with skills to empower them. Acknowledging the critical role of youth in tourism, the Minister noted that the youth play an important part in changing tourism digitally and that they are patient and have a love for tourism and should be supported in participating meaningfully in the sector given its contribution to the GDP of the country.

Minister Shifeta expressed the view that he hoped that the AYTIS 2022 would contribute towards the promotion of Intra Africa Travel, the attainment of the UNDP Development Goals, the strengthening of Brand Africa and the positioning of Namibia as a destination for business and leisure travel. Ensuring and supporting talent and skills availability was a major focus of the government. In his closing message to the youth, the Minister echoed the importance of *partnerships*.

#### 4.7 VOTE OF THANKS

The Deputy Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism of Namibia, Honourable Heather Sibungo delivered the vote of thanks, expressing the Ministry's gratitude to all stakeholders, Africa Tourism Partners, Namibia Tourism Board, Ministers, Master class trainers, Sponsors, Media, Friends in tourism and the UNWTO. Acknowledging the importance of the event for the youth, Deputy Minister Sibungo expressed confidence that the youth in the room will come up with "solutions-based ideas" and that:



***"...smart partnerships are the way to go".***

## 4.8 THOUGHT LEADERSHIP AND MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE

Mainstreaming the role of youth, start-ups and SMES as future change-makers across Africa's Tourism ecosystem was a panel discussion focused on the inclusion of youth in tourism.



Key points made by the panelists centred on the importance of giving the youth voice, participation and inclusion in decision-making and the need to recognize the importance of Youth, SMEs, and Startups for the economic development of countries.

In discussions of the current situation around the world regarding youth in tourism, the panelists shared experiences and perspectives from other countries, highlighting amongst others the following initiatives and interventions:

### ITALY

An example was made of the “Sorrento Youth Initiative” which seeks to focus on youth involvement through areas such as sport, culture, and gastronomy. The key theme of the initiative is also that youth need to be active in decision making processes and structures.

### ALGERIA

Algeria invests in startups due to their strategic role in economic growth and development. Youth startups benefit the economy. Noting the importance of tourism for young people, emphasis was drawn to the need to use social networking to introduce and promote Algeria through social media. Innovation in the tourism sector is key to moving forward after the pandemic. Examples were cited of how during the pandemic new ideas were created and virtual promotions were done which remain relevant today. This highlights the need to shift from traditional to digital approaches, and in this regard the youth were best placed to contribute.

## ZIMBABWE

Tourism is second highest sector in terms of economic contribution and the youth need access to funding to enter the sector. The country has over the past four years established “innovation hubs in every university” because of the belief that the “solutions for a bigger and better economy lie with the youth”. Another focus was on industrial parks which created an ecosystem within which young people could generate business ideas for funding. Regarding funding, it was noted that in the past Zimbabwe had experimented with loan guarantees for startups however, but this did not work. What is important is to unleash the young people. Hence there is currently a “Youth Empowerment Fund” which aims to assist and support Youth startups and entrepreneurs with establishing successful businesses.

## NAMIBIA

In Namibia the government is focusing on young people, However, it is important for the private sector and the banks to play their part. A suggestion was made that the next Summit should try to create an opportunity for discussion of private participation by bringing policy makers and financial institutions together on one platform to debate the view that Banks are unwilling to support youth development initiatives or to fund youth start-ups and SMEs.



## **DR CONGO**

For the DR Congo it was important to take learnings from this platform and make proposals to the policy makers on interventions that can be implemented to support youth in tourism in the DRC as well. The DR Congo government had supported the participation of youth from the DRC to attend the AYTIS 2022. Stakeholders and tourism role-players need to “start now and take advantage of resources that are available to help with entrepreneurship”.

## **UNDP**

Suggestions from the UNDP were to look “beyond financial resources” and consider innovation, skill development and entrepreneurship as other means of supporting youth involvement in the tourism sector. Experimenting with blended financial models had seen rewards in some areas and examples of programmes centred on innovation and skills were cited such as for example – “Youth connect programme” and “Youth Labs”. With Namibia’s youth unemployment at around 50%, it was reiterated that tourism stakeholders and government need to work together to “reimagine, rejig and reboot tourism”. An innovative way in which you can avail resources to youth is through support for “innovation and digital transformation”.

## **4.9 AFRICA TOURISM INNOVATION HUB**

Namibia is considering the establishment of an African Tourism Innovation Hub effective 2024 and panelists were asked for their views on the concept and whether it was something they would be willing to support. Windhoek as the capital city of Namibia was announced as the city to host the first Africa Tourism Innovation Hub (ATIH).

Youth development and innovative entrepreneurship solutions are crucial in designing and sustaining inclusive tourism recovery in Africa. It is for this very purpose that Africa Tourism Partners have entered discussions with partners and key stakeholders to set in motion the establishment of the Africa Tourism Innovation Hub in Windhoek, Namibia.

The aim is to incubate young and innovative entrepreneurs across the tourism ecosystem and related industries, while accelerating youth enterprises across the continent, starting with young innovators who entered this year’s Innovation Challenge.

The Innovation Hubs’ objective is to create a platform that will connect young innovators to industry experts and mentors, and facilitate possible funding and investment opportunities, and career guidance. This pan-African platform is to ensure that young people are competent, skilful, and knowledgeable enough to partake and compete in the horizontal value chain of the industry. The idea received support from all the panelists, with Zimbabwe giving their assurance that they will be “fully on board for the programme”. Algeria also supported the idea, stressing the importance of promoting open borders, while the DRC indicated that the “land of minerals gives support to be a part of the initiative”.



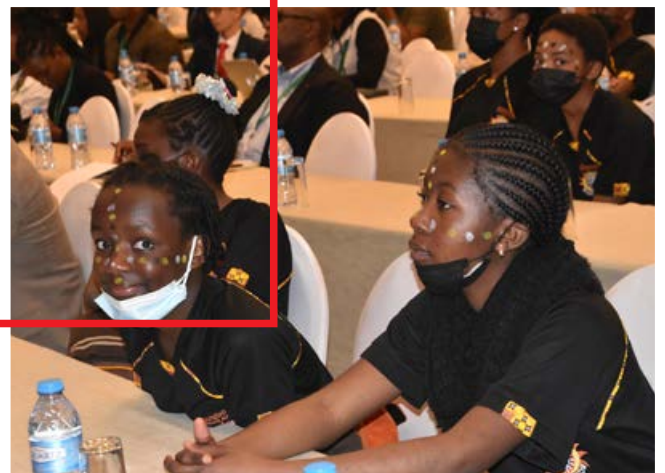
The session noted that there is work to be done to include youth in the development and growth of tourism on the Continent. Youth need to be kept informed and involved. Funding sources are not only not the banks, but governments must also look at other ways and means of supporting youth Startups and SMEs. Collaboration and supportive innovation is key in this regard. Language is not a barrier to collaboration. We must find a way to communicate, for example using available technology to translate.

***“Language cannot be used as an excuse to stay in your corner. Look for ways to make it work”***

#### **4.10 DEFINING YOUR OWN PATH OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP THROUGH CRITICAL THINKING, DESIGN, AND INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP**

A key theme of this session was the importance of entrepreneurship to economic development and the consequent need to encourage people to start their own businesses. As part of the discussions, the advantages and disadvantages of entrepreneurship and the critical success factors thereof were explored. It was noted that tourism touches everyone and it is important to assist the youth in liberating others. There are many opportunities in Africa and there are also highs and lows. Becoming an entrepreneur often shows a gap in the market. A problem that needs to be solved. Being an entrepreneur and a businessman is not the same. It takes more time and dedication to be an entrepreneur. The sessions included a personal case study of one of the panelists who started as a dishwasher to being the owner of her own tourism business.

***“There are always going to be good times and bad times in business”.***



Other practical advice and considerations for young people wishing to become entrepreneurs is listed below:

Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a never say die attitude, do not give up! Make it happen. Even when you face adversity, just keep going.</li> </ul>
Education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invest in education.</li> <li>• Training is so important.</li> </ul>
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It takes innovation to improve a product.</li> <li>• Do things consistently.</li> <li>• You need to be better and different</li> <li>• Start small and don't give up.</li> <li>• Prepare ahead.</li> <li>• Do a few projects.</li> <li>• Keep planting, keep watering.</li> <li>• Restart, recreate, refresh!</li> <li>• Look for new opportunities.</li> </ul>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will need financial support, and, in most cases, there is an abundance of resources. For example, in Estonia, money comes from investors. Banks don't invest in startups.</li> <li>• Look beyond the borders of your country.</li> <li>• Money isn't the issue when you want to be an entrepreneur.</li> <li>• You can raise money from FRIENDS – FOOLS and FAMILY</li> </ul>
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The people are the company.</li> <li>• Say we, not I.</li> </ul>
Product/Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right price, right time.</li> </ul>
Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check out your competition.</li> </ul>
Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember that customers' needs change so have things in place to be ready for that</li> </ul>
Benefits of being an entrepreneur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being an entrepreneur gives you freedom. You decide what you want to do and when. You are your own boss. It's a chance to create something. Marketing agency – social media; Facebook and Instagram.</li> </ul>

***“Follow your passion. Try harder. The hungrier you are, the better you will do”***

#### 4.11 FUTURE CHANGE-MAKERS CASE STUDY

This session sought to provide participants with insights into transitioning from innovation to becoming an economic changemaker. Based on the case of the Afrochella event, which is held annually in Ghana, the session highlighted the following key learnings:

- Innovation is a key determinant of competitiveness
- Be good at execution

- Do it quickly, fail quickly
- Communication is important, so make it easy
- Make your service and product customer centred
- Partnerships are key.
- Social media is the best way to reach your target audiences.

The youth were encouraged to be confident and to find innovative ways of getting their concepts across or selling their products or services.

#### **4.12 THE “ARTS AND SCIENCE” OF QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Creating competitive and quality standards for enhanced revenue growth for the global marketplace is a critical success factor for the tourism industry, due to the nature of the value chain. Quality is a tool that measures whether your product or service meets the customer’s needs and wants. It is important to meet clients’ expectations and offer value for money. A clear balance between price and quality exists and as an entrepreneur it is important to strike the right balance. The importance on delivering on your brand promise, was highlighted, noting that quality is defined from the perspective of the consumer. Attract customers with good service delivery. In summary the following points were mentioned as regards the subject or quality and quality standards:

- Pictures are not enough to prove what you really are. If people are dissatisfied, trust is broken for life.
- Set standards for your own staff members.
- Grading should be done to improve services and to ensure standards are met.
- Grading should also help and guide you to get better results.
- Lack of money is just an excuse.
- Communication is important.
- People are not afraid to spend!
- If you fail the first time, try again.
- Authentic culture will attract the right people.
- Convey objective standards to your consumers.
- Share knowledge with others who have made a success of their businesses.



## 5. DAY 2: 28 August 2022

### 5.1 SPEED MARKETING SESSIONS

Day two of the Summit commenced with speed marketing sessions, with the participation of amongst others, the following organisations, and businesses:

- Namibia Tourism Board
- Namibia Media Holdings
- Federation of Namibian Tourism Associations (FENATA).
- Destination Swakopmund
- Adventure Travel Media
- City of Windhoek
- Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology
- Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism

### 5.2 BUSINESS ADVISORY EXPERT PERSPECTIVE

Understanding critical steps in financial modelling for SMME funding in a post-Covid era presented an opportunity for sharing ideas and insights on financial models and funding sources. Issues and themes covered in this session included:

- Ensuring business concept viability and justifiable financial projections.
- Financial management and in particular cashflow and cost management.
- Managing cash constraints faced by SMMEs.



- Record keeping in business.
- Market research, marketing and customer service.
- Funding sources and selling business ideas to investors.
- Differentiation of businesses in tourism.
- Management of risk and mitigating business risk.
- Small businesses that go to the bank for loans must take responsibility.
- 60% of banks where SME assumptions are very important.
- Entrepreneurs have cash constraints.

While the panelists reiterated that Government support is important, it was also noted that banks do not take responsibility to plough back into the community. Startups and entrepreneurs faced significant challenges with funding and consideration should be given to other sources of financing or support such as angel funding markets, credit guarantees, training, mentorship as well as capital fund markets.

In conclusion it was noted that revenues derive from customers, so it is critical to keep customers interested so that they can keep coming. Entrepreneurs must have the ability to learn from their mistakes and come back stronger. They must look for what others can do for them rather than ask for money. Entrepreneurs must think outside the box and approach organisations and get funding from what is around them.

***“Entrepreneurship is hard, it humbles you. Be resilient... learn from your mistakes. Be willing to work hard. If you fail, don’t ask for money on emotion”***

***“Entrepreneurship is a marathon, not a sprint”***

### 5.3 PROFESSIONALS INSIGHTS INTO FINTECH AND TRAVEL TECH

Bringing clarity on the nexus between fintech and travel tech, this session explored ways and means through which tourism entrepreneurs can leverage the linkages between tourism and travel tech and fintech as an enabler and entrepreneurial opportunity. It was noted that there is no digitalisation without fintech and both present huge opportunities for job creation for the youth in tourism. For Online Travel Agencies, such as Travel Start, fintech is the backbone of their operations. Some of the travel tech innovations include travel tech businesses such as Travel Wallet, which seek to enable travel, change the notion of travel by availing pre and post payment options. The UNWTO highlighted that they working on identifying projects that can make travel accessible to everyone. Their focus in this regard is more than just travel, but also ed-tech and agri-tech. Also key to the UNWTO was support for green and sustainable investments. Wakanawa, an ATO with an fintech enabler Calabash, indicated that they were intent on expanding the market for more Africans to travel and experience Africa and the world.

A critical issue raised was the need for localisation of the technology by creating Continental platforms owned by Africans. In this regard the importance of partnerships in localisation of travel tech for SMEs was highlighted. Finally the important role that can be played by governments in supporting the spread of innovation and development of sustainable SMEs in travel tech was noted. African governments need to make it easy to transact with their economies. Governments need to open data and network with other countries to facilitate online shopping and business.

Trust in online transactions was mentioned as a critical success factor for travel and other technologies aimed at facilitation consumer access to products and services through digital means. Businesses online need to be safer for customers to transact. People fear fraud so companies need to have security measures in place to ensure that the use of credit cards is safe. On the issues of trust and lapses in online transactions, the view was expressed that when such lapses happened, acknowledge your mistakes. When you fail, learn from it and look for ways to retain your customers.



## 5.4 FOSTERING TRANSFORMATION AND INNOVATION

Given the summit focus and theme, it was quite befitting that Digital Transformation and Innovation were recurrent themes in the AYTIS 2022. Considering digital transformation and innovation as growth imperatives for tourism SMEs and Start-ups in Africa, the panellists brought attention to the central role of literacy and education in enabling people to use technologies, innovation and digital transformation to empower women and youth while helping people to travel. Another key issue highlighted was the disconnect between the education systems and the real world of work. Universities and other institutions of higher learning must teach what is happening in the real world, to prepare the youth for the real world of work.

It was noted that in the past a career in tourism was not so innovative, now tourism is technological and innovative. Tourism is being digitalized and better understood. An imperative is to bring the young people on board because much can be learned from them about digital technologies and innovations that can advance the sector.

***“Learn, learn, be on top and you’ll be ready for change”***

***“Youth are the greatest asset because young people are the future. Educate young ones. Life is a journey. Look for opportunities and don’t put yourself in a box. Networking is very important. Follow up with people. Don’t be too disappointed if you fail. See it as an opportunity to learn. Work hard, be committed and passionate. Young ones are ambassadors for a brighter future. There are many opportunities for young ones in different sectors. Find your sector, find your passion” (Kevin Hin – Secretary General – Junior Chamber International)***



## 5.5 DEALS' PROS AND INVESTMENT ANGELS PERSPECTIVE

Investment proposals and the funding pitches that accompany such proposals were the main topics of this session. The session which aimed to present delegates with insights on the investment proposal pitch honed in on both the attributes and practical steps start-ups and SMEs can use to make winning “pitches”. Some of the main points mentioned by the experts on the panel included:

- Investors are looking for people to invest in people.
- Make a great pitch.
- Identify a problem and look for a solution - show a solution.
- Soothe the investor and provide realistic numbers in year 1 and 2. Show return on investment, not charity. What is in it for the investor?
- Be reasonable. Understand the local needs. Quality over quantity.
- Team skills. Personality is important. Get feedback.
- Offer services and experience rather than being direct.
- You and your team are more important. Stand out by yourself.
- Think and plan. Expand the business. Have professionals on your team to back you up.
- Be resilient. Have a plan. Think of how your business can bounce back after Covid.
- Solve the problem of how much to pay for or the minimum amount to pay for what you offer.
- Market size is important
- Differentiation- what you do from other’s solutions to problems.

The point was emphasised that the “non-negotiables” in a good investment proposal include correct and realistic numbers especially in year one and two, a future oriented outlook and the people (team) involved.

## 5.6 TED TALK - FOSTERING CREATIVITY IN DOMESTIC TOURISM - THE CASE OF AFRICA’S CONNECT

This TED Talk Style presentation focused on the case study of Africa’s Connect; a tourism company based in Zimbabwe which was started in 2011. According to the founder, Rumbidzai Mudzengerere, her passion for tourism started when she went to business seminars and conferences for Zimbabwean tourism. Since 2016 she has been promoting travel to Zimbabwe from other countries. Offering local and bush experiences for locals and international travellers, the company is comprised of two businesses.

Acknowledging that funding is important, she emphasised however that entrepreneurs must have “ideas before funding”. Some of the key points from the talk are as follows:

- Invest in yourself by learning everything you need to know, what you need to do, even with tax .
- Treat your business as a baby. Look after it.
- Engage a lawyer to help with legal issues.
- Not everyone with money is an investor – many people will approach you to do business, but keep in mind the importance of having the right people.
- Expand your horizons and grow your business online.
- Have a vision, goals and a backup plan.
- Youth need to create opportunities .



## 5.7 THINK TANK SESSION – MICE MARKET

The Business Events / MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions ) sector is a lucrative and growing segment of the travel market. A distinction was drawn that the MICE sector and Tourism are not the same, and MICE is not tourism although it can lead to tourism and utilises tourism assets and services.

It is widely recognised that the sector can serve as a catalyst for innovative entrepreneurship and human capital development. The industry is a multi-billion dollar industry. There are short and long term benefits. An example is the AYTIS 2022, through which airlines, staging, hotels, food and beverages sectors, retail and other services are reaping the benefits deriving from the hosting of the Summit. The conference would contribute to the local economy directly and indirectly. From a career perspective it was noted that the industry has huge potential for creating employment opportunities; with the point being made that it takes 237 professions to put together a meeting, for example.

Service standards are highly important in the sector as the MICE clients are very demanding, discerning and competitive. Education and training are therefore key in developing good MICE businesses or destinations. Destinations wishing to develop their MICE sectors must take training and on-the-job training seriously. They can use the talent of young ones to get people trained. Another key imperative is product development to ensure the infrastructure required by the MICE sector is in place

## **5.8 LESSONS FROM THE FUTURE: REIMAGINING THE “FUTURE OF WORK” AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM, TRAVEL, HOSPITALITY AND AVIATION**

Consideration and exploration of the ways in which technology has revolutionised the world of work and consequently the skills required by the travel, tourism and aviation industry was the theme of this session. Technology has taken over as an enabler in many areas and education at schools has also changed. Opportunities and possibilities should exist for students to switch from one field of education to another with ease.

In looking at what interventions some destinations were introducing to prepare their students for the new world of work, it was noted that in Namibia greater focus was being placed on tourism education and training. For example, the country has a five (5) year plan for the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector which provides for each of the fourteen (14) regions to have vocational training in tourism and travel. The plan includes instructor training incorporating technical and holistic skills sets development.

Future skills that will be required by the travel and tourism industry include: agility, confidence and self-esteem as well as entrepreneurial skills. The industry will need to develop candidates with skills that can best service the new travellers and ensure new ways of hosting and inspiring guests.

Instructors are a key component to guiding learners and should all be well rounded in tourism industry and be versatile. They should be confidence building, multifunctional, entrepreneurs who can ensure development of self-esteem within their charges and ensure they achieve. Higher education institutions should start implementing more of these concepts. The purpose is to enhance life, fulfil dreams and train critical thinkers who are adaptable. Training must ensure the right competencies, skills and attitude. The future world of work will require lifelong learning and a healthy balance between theory and practice. Banks for instance are now incubating and developing the skills they need internally. Students can therefore use skills from their education to serve the industry.

Governments can ensure policy implementation in training curricula by providing for alignment between the training and education institutions and the industry.

Criteria used to invest in hospitality ventures include sustainability of business plans and agility. However it was noted that there is a huge knowledge gap in funding submissions; the competencies required to fund are lacking.

## **5.9 AFRICA YOUTH IN TOURISM INNOVATION CHALLENGE DEMOS AND PITCH BATTLES**

Africa Tourism Partners, the Namibia Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, BDO, and UNWTO once again hosted an impactful and inspiring 4th and 2022 edition of the Africa Youth in Tourism Innovation Summit in the capital Windhoek, Namibia. The participants are the core drivers of the success of the event every single year and this year was no different.

### ***Highlights***

Among the key highlights of this year's summit were the SME Masterclass, Business-to-Business Engagements, Career Guidance, and Youth Development Clinic.

The week kicked off to a great start with over 250 delegates attending the Tourism Start-up and SMME Training Day in the form of masterclasses. This was delivered by nine (9) international experts and professionals in an interactive fashion with compelling insights. Key focus areas included digital and social media marketing, how to pursue a career in MICE, how to conceptualize and develop new business models in commercially viable Small Enterprises, how to stay in Business in the Covid-19 era.

The 4th edition of the Innovation Summit received a staggering 100 competition entries in total from all over the continent which is over 50% of the previous year's challenge. These are young

people who have dared to redefine travel, tourism, and related industries on the only pan-African tourism start-up platform on the continent. The entries cut across the broader tourism value chain.

The Top 6 Innovators are;

1. Goodness Mashala, BookABus (BAB), South Africa,
2. Jean Confident Nyizibose, QuickARProject, Rwanda,
3. Daniel Mkhululi Nkuzuwalela, Flexie, Zimbabwe,
4. Nkululeko Nkosi, Etela Africa, South Africa,
5. Scott Blount, TripClip, South Africa,
6. Jeffrey Takunda Murungweni, Trafiki Africa, a 19-year-old from Zimbabwe won the Mystery

Judges Choice award.

The Top 3 Innovators in Namibia were Maria Shipapo, Eino Kayoko, Paulina Alfeus who also took home the Namibian Youth in Tourism Innovation Award.



## AFRICA YOUTH IN TOURISM Innovation Summit and Challenge



### 6. DAY 3: 29 August 2022

#### 6.1 KEYNOTE MESSAGE

A keynote message was delivered by the UNWTO Director for Innovation, Education and Investment, Natalia Bayona. Stressing the importance of technology across various areas of the tourism value chain, youth were encouraged to use, amongst others, the bio-diversity economy for development.

Youth should use connections and networks to develop and grow in the industry. Change has to be led by the Youth. Central points in the UNWTO message was that the youth must: keep innovating, open their senses to be receptive to opportunities and lead a new change in this challenging world.

#### 6.2 TED TALK: PIONEERING CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION: THE CASE OF CREATIVE SWITZERLAND

The TED style talk by Iwona Fluda, Founder, Creative Switzerland, drew on the founder's value of adding creativity to intercultural communication, co-creating a world centred on creativity and entrepreneurship and innovation. Some of the themes touched in this session were that post Covid 19 we cannot continue maintaining the idea of the past being "normal." In many ways, it was not. The travel industry was responsible for 8% of global greenhouse emissions. It caused air and noise pollution and also damaged natural and cultural resources. Coming back to "normal" after Covid19 is not a possibility. We need to reimagine everything if we want to start recreating the world.

***"Don't do everything online"***

### 6.3 EMPLOYABILITY INSIGHTS: EMBARKING ON FUTURE-PROOFING EDUCATION TODAY FOR COMMERCIAL REALITIES IN AVIATION, TRAVEL, TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

Looking at ways in which education can be made more relevant and adaptable to changing realities in the entire tourism value chain, the session highlighted how the face of tourism as we used to know it has changed. New careers are emerging across the travel and tourism industry value chains. Aviation industries have changed. New technology has been developed, even in the security systems. New skills have been acquired and new development for hybrid planes have emerged due to technology and the development of new skills. Over the last two years, almost everything has changed.

Let us use new technology through computer engineering. Let us upskill and reskill the youth in Namibia. Give space for young ones to be curious and learn new things. Don't limit the youth. Move forward with technology. Education was cited as the glue between students and the Industry and it has very critical role to play in preparing the youth for future employment. Due to the pervasive nature of tourism there are myriad opportunities in the tourism value chain.

Panellist messages of encouragements and motivation to the youth were as follows:

- Youth were assured that they are in the right sector. They need to keep abreast of developments and evolving skills requirements in the tourism industry.
- Future proofing education will require reskilling, upskilling and retooling.
- Important attributes and skills include agility, adaptability and nimbleness.
- Educators need to create an environment for students to be relevant.
- Youth must embrace technology

***“Just be the best person you can be. Stop comparing yourselves to others.  
You are unique”***

***“You are in the best industry ever”***

***“The moment you are comfortable where you are, is the moment you are signing your death sentence”***

***“Go to school”***

Message to society: Youth are a unique component in our society, give them their own tomorrow.

Message to educators: Keep up with the times in terms of curriculum.



Message to travel industry: Technology makes us work smarter.

Message to youth: make yourself employable by having the right attitude, character, ethos and be a problem solver.

***“All women dream, but not only equally. Those who dream at night, in the dusty recesses of their mind wake up to find it was vanity. But the dreamers of the day are dangerous women, for they may act their dream with open eyes to make it possible.”***

#### **6.4 FUTURE OUTLOOK & OPPORTUNITIES : MAXIMISING AFRICA CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM.**

The session addressed youth employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and how the agreement and its potential trade and other benefits can be leveraged to advance youth development. Panellists agreed that to unlock value, governments must at a practical level address barriers to doing business, free movement of goods and services, tariff removals, and visa requirements.

Drawing attention to the fact that African states only have about 8% trade just among themselves, and 88% with others, panellists argued that Africans must learn to start trading with one another. Youth need to trade, not only by selling but also by being employees. Cultural open markets create employment.

***“We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools”  
(Martin Luther King)***

#### **6.5 IN CONVERSATION WITH AVIATION EXPERTS: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY IN AFRICA’S AVIATION INDUSTRY**

Central to this session was the question of career development and progression within the aviation sector and how the youth can access career opportunities in the aviation sector. A starting point was identified as finding out what you can be best at.

In Namibia there is a bursary programme for skills development in the sector and the Namibian Civil Aviation Authority is making investments in aviation skills development. In terms of careers,



it was mentioned that there are many hidden career opportunities in the industry, including “behind the face of aviation careers” such as supply chain, procurement and logistics, aero-political and many others.

## **CLOSING COMMENTS**

- Youth interested in aviation should reach out to the Namibian Civil Aviation Authority and the Airline Professionals.
- No need to focus on being previously disadvantaged.
- Assist the sector to look for young ones who can come up with ideas; for example better fuel consumption which is sustainable and not damaging to the earth.
- The government can provide funding to previously disadvantaged people. However, they must meet the requirements such as being medically fit.
- Career guidance for previously disadvantaged is needed.
- Provide on the job training at airlines.

## **6.6 FUTURE HORIZON & CHANGE-MAKING: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN AFRICAN TOURISM CHANGE- MAKERS, FUTURE LEADERS AND ESTABLISHED INDUSTRY PLAYERS**

This session delved into the question of transitioning change makers to established enterprises in the tourism sector. Critically, start-ups must believe in themselves and take learnings from those who have gone before, and put into practice what they learn. The importance of starting young and ensuring that the change makers and future leaders implement rather than just talk, was also pointed out.





Another key theme emerging from the discussion was the importance of rethinking business as usual and turning challenges into opportunities, giving due consideration to sustainability considerations around people, planet and profit.

## **6.7 SOCIAL INNOVATION CONVERSATIONS: EMPOWERING AFRICAN YOUTH THROUGH SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE ERA OF “SUSTAINABILITY”**

Exploration of social entrepreneurship in the era of sustainability was at the centre of this panel discussion, with participants exploring the nature of social entrepreneurship and how it can empower young people.

A social entrepreneur is a person who explores business opportunities that have a positive impact on their community, society and the world. It was noted that a successful social entrepreneur has deep empathy, innovation, a systematic view, a sustainable approach and involves change makers. The five Ps of social entrepreneurship are 1) Persistence, 2)Patience, 3) Purpose, 4) People and 5) Profits.

In Namibia there is a fund from which youth could apply for N\$200 000 to set up businesses. The fund, comprised of pooled funds, is however only available to Namibians. Credit facilities and grants could also allow youth to become part of the tourism hub. Non-financial forms of support and intervention, such as collaboration, can also assist startups and SMEs.

Community based individuals don't have the infrastructure to gain access to funding. However, Government can – for example - set up trust funds for the community for capacity building for

production and installation of solar panels, thereby creating jobs. Tourism can also be further developed, and rural communities involved to create tourism experiences using local people to tell stories from their perspective.

## **6.8 CAREER GUIDANCE AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CLINIC: ONE-ON-ONE EXPERT CONSULTATIONS**

This was a highly interactive session which allowed the delegates one-on-one consultations with experts to obtain advice and guidance on career options or their business concepts. Industry experts and panellists availed themselves to interact with the youth on various topics that the youth wished to ask questions on.

## **6.9 CONCLUSION**

The 2022 edition of the Africa Youth in Tourism Innovation Summit and Challenge was a resounding success, with the number of delegates exceeding expectations, and content that generated the interest across many countries on the Continent, judging by the virtual attendees.

Support received from the Namibian government through the participation of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, other Ministries which participated in the Summit, the Namibia Tourism Board and the private sector entities went a long way towards making the event a successful one.

A key outcome of the Summit is the support pledged towards the Tourism Innovation Hub to be set up in Namibia in 2024. Another, important outcome is the assurance of support by Namibia and other participants to assist Start-up and SME enterprises. This bodes well not only for the destination, but also for other countries on the Continent. Such support is a prerequisite for creating an ecosystem of innovation, entrepreneurship and enterprise development focused on youth.

Inclusion of the youth in tourism development initiatives and supporting them through financial and other means as they seek to set up innovations and enterprises that will contribute to employment creation and economic growth will no doubt contribute towards more sustainable and inclusive economic growth on the Continent.

Lastly, the demonstrated commitment to partnerships, and the expressed view that tourism must benefit African youth and equip them with skills to empower them and their communities is another significant outcome from the 2022 Summit.







**NAMIBIA**

Mr. Fillon !Gao!gaseb • Chief Tourism Officer  
Ministry of Environment • Forestry and Tourism  
Directorate of Tourism and Gaming  
Tel: 061 28422262 • Mobile: +264-81-2729542

