

KZN Liquor Industry Symposium empowers women in micro-manufacturing

In recognition of Women's month, a Liquor Industry Symposium for Women working in KwaZulu-Natal's micro-manufacturing sector was held recently with the aim to promote the development of a responsible, inclusive and sustainable liquor industry by facilitating new and diversified entrants into the sector.



Beer Association of South Africa CEO Patricia Fillay. Source: Supplied

The event was hosted by the Beer Association of South Africa (Basa) in partnership with the KwaZulu-Natal Liquor Authority, and took place at the Amanzimtoti Civic Centre on 18 August.

Insights sharing and industry support

The symposium provided women entrepreneurs with industry-specific information that would help them grow their businesses. Topics that were covered included how to obtain a micro-manufacturing licence and other regulatory requirements such as obtaining police clearance certificates and excise.

Women business owners face a number of challenges in what is still a predominantly male-dominated industry. Some of these include barriers to entry include high capital investments required towards the purchasing of equipment and materials, and a struggle to secure leadership positions. These and other concerns were discussed with invaluable insights shared from women running successful business in the sector.

Representatives from South African Breweries (SAB) and Distell also shared information on women empowerment initiatives being offered by their companies, while Absa shared resources regarding access to funding.

“ Women taking center stage at the [@KZN_LQA](#) Women's Liquor Industry Symposium today 🎉🎉🎉
pic.twitter.com/MCHxPJg3Zz— Beer Association of South Africa (@BeerSA_org) [August 18, 2022](#) ”

The symposium was attended by a number of key stakeholders including the Mayor of EtheKwini, Mxolisi Kaunda, acting

CEO of the KZNLA Bheki Mbanjwa and officials from the department of Agriculture and South African Revenue Service.

Attendees were also addressed by female trailblazers in the local beer industry, including [Apiwe Nxusani-Mawela](#), who is the first Black woman to open a micro-brewery in South Africa, alongside Megan Gemmel, brewer and owner of Clockwork Brewhouse.



Source: Supplied

Economic empowerment through beer businesses

Basa CEO Patricia Pillay also addressed participants on opportunities available to women in the liquor industry. “Women operating businesses within our local beer industry make significant contributions towards the growth of our local economy – which is mirrored by the growth we see within their own enterprises. We need to continue making resources available to further develop the skills and abilities of women in our sector if we want to see true and lasting economic empowerment through businesses in beer,” Pillay said.

The symposium attracted over 100 female entrepreneurs. Basa will also be partnering with the KZNLA to host a second symposium later in August for women-owned small enterprises in the alcohol industry.



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Basa stated that it hopes to partner with other provincial liquor authorities on similar industry events going forward in order to support and assist women to access economic opportunities within the local beer value chain, which already supports over 450,000 livelihoods in the country.

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