

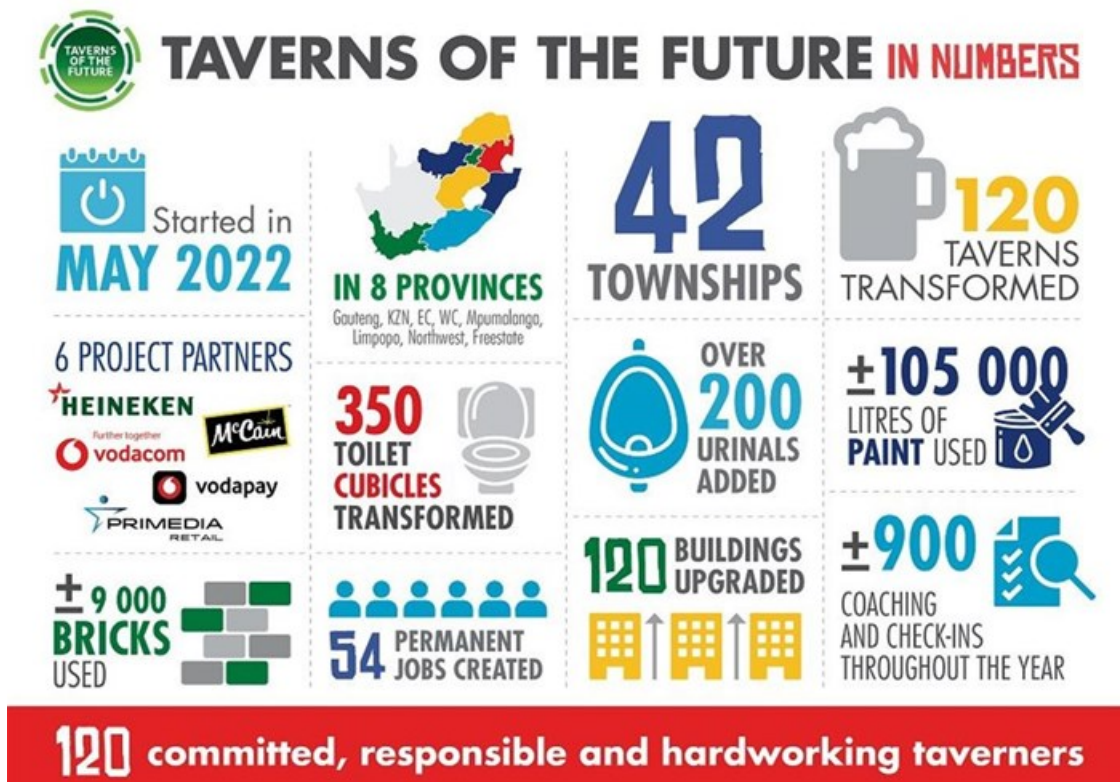
Introducing South Africa's Taverns of the Future

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Through Taverns of the Future, Heineken South Africa together with partners is embracing the transformation of impoverished taverns, many without important basic amenities.

An innovative corporate partnership is changing the tavern landscape – one tavern at a time. *Taverns of the Future* is a project spearheaded by Heineken South Africa, in partnership with McCain Food Services, Primedia Retail, and Vodacom Financial Services. Heineken has already enhanced and transformed over 120 taverns across metropolises and townships in South Africa to date.



Rolling out across eight provinces, this transformation of taverns involved building and construction, business and diversification support, as well as monetary investment in developing these taverns' offerings. Heineken has over the past year invested and significantly improved each tavern's safety, profitability, and general appeal.

Heineken's corporate affairs director, Millicent Maroga, highlighted the need for taverns to be welcoming safe social spaces for both women and men. She added, "Our business would like to support a change from the negative perceptions around taverns, to developing modern *Taverns of the Future*. In moving towards sophisticated gathering places, that are not centered around the need for excessive drinking, but rather that offer quality occasions, with good food, company, and entertainment".

“Taverns have the potential to not only grow their services by serving food and snacks, and offering entertainment and urban events venues, but can create more inclusive social environments, through upgrades such as additional clean toilet facilities.”



#BehindtheSelfie: Millicent Maroga, corporate affairs director at Heineken SA

Emily Stander 18 Jan 2023



Maroga further explained that taverns have the potential to not only grow their services by serving food and snacks, and offering entertainment and urban events venues, but can create more inclusive social environments, through upgrades such as additional clean toilet facilities. This project seeks to position outlets as multi-functional, responsible, hospitality businesses.



According to Burton Swain, general manager for business development at Heineken South Africa; “We are incredibly proud of the work Heineken has completed together with our passionate taverners. However, we know that to grow this offering, we needed unique partnerships and a sustainable support model. That is why we have invited value network partners including McCain with their hospitality food knowledge; Primedia Retail who are offering LCD screens with relevant content including advertising revenue streams; Vodacom Financial Services together with VodaPay who will assist taverners with payment systems, as well as further premiumising the experience in the *Taverns of the Future* with free Wi-Fi powered by Vodacom.

Through these partnerships, which includes our brand sponsor Amstel Lager, we can provide these taverns with the tools for a better future. We are working together to upskill and enhance taverners' offerings to enable more holistic SMME township development”.

To qualify for these upgrades and support, tavern owners needed to commit to and sign agreements showcasing themselves as responsible alcohol resellers. These commitments include not selling alcohol before lunchtime, not selling to those under 18 years of age, and further agreeing to ensure that they do not encourage or support excessive alcohol consumption.



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Through a recognition and rewards programme, taverners are also regularly coached to ensure that they are maintaining their responsibility commitments, following their handy guidebooks, and co-developed business plans. Beyond these checks, Heineken is aiming to reward and encourage responsible taverners and change the narrative regarding illegal 'shebeens' by recognising these legal and responsible taverns.

Taverners can win prizes by showcasing best-in-class behaviours across a wide range of grading criteria including cleanliness, responsible behaviours and adherence to licensing conditions, apt social media usage, and even increased sales of food to accompany alcoholic beverages.

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“For us, supporting thriving communities means co-creating positive change for sustainable livelihoods in the communities where we operate,” says Monako Dibetle, head of sustainability and communications at McCain Foods SA. “The township or informal economy currently contributes approximately 6% to national GDP and accounts for 17% of the country’s employment.

Not only does the *Taverns of the Future* project provide us with an opportunity to drive enterprise development by enhancing kitchen infrastructure, but it also enables us to enhance job creation, skills development, and capacity building through our chef training programme. In addition, patrons will be able to enjoy our delicious planet-friendly products, including fries and our wide range of appetisers – perfect to enjoy amongst friends.”

Primedia Retail’s chief executive officer, JD Henderson, says the partnership aligns with one of Primedia’s core values. He adds, “It is also our principle to invest in the communities we serve and our involvement with the *Taverns of the Future* offers an ideal opportunity to do so. As a whole, Primedia know and understand the challenges entrepreneurs face and how difficult it is to find support to grow one’s business.

I am also a firm believer in the principle of ‘paying it forward’ and I believe that Taverns of the Future provides us with an opportunity to play our part in assisting small business owners to grow and enhance their businesses. Our participation is also a showcase of our commitment to supporting initiatives that contribute towards job creation in our country”.

“We are proud to be a partner in the *Taverns of the Future* initiative, which aims to make a positive contribution to the communities served by Vodacom Financial Services. In collaborating with other like-minded brands and supporting these taverns with transformative digital solutions, such as Wi-Fi connectivity and point of sale devices, we hope to improve the lives of small business owners as well as their customers across South Africa. This reflects our commitment to connecting everyone for a better future,” said Ricardo Platt, managing executive for payment at Vodacom Financial Services.



In conclusion, Maroga of Heineken adds, “Many taverns are the social hubs and the heart of their townships. As the *Taverns of the Future* project continues, we remain focused on developing a sense of pride regarding township-bred businesses and are encouraging a sense of ownership, accountability, and responsibility amongst SMMEs in the hospitality sector, in often impoverished areas”.

The upgrades to taverns include:

- Improved or added bathroom amenities including additional toilet stalls, and more urinals
- Full repaint of interior and exterior of taverns
- Additional furniture or design aesthetics such as mirrors, signboards, or artificial grass
- New safety measures like improved lighting
- New branding and advertising opportunities
- Screens for digital advertising and bathroom stall advertising
- Refitted kitchens/ additional kitchen equipment
- Stock management and payment systems
- CCTV cameras and security
- Training for employees

Tavern regions included:

Gauteng, North West, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, Western Cape, and the Eastern Cape.

Taverner Commitments:

Pledge to trade responsibly by:

- Adhering to my trading conditions and trading hours

- Not serving alcohol to anyone under the legal drinking age of 18
- Not serving alcohol to patrons who have had too much to drink
- Not being a disturbance/nuisance to the community in which I operate
- Discouraging my patrons from walking alone when they have been drinking
- Encouraging respectful behaviour amongst my patrons
- Taking a zero-tolerance approach for any forms of violence or harassment taking place inside my tavern/outlet
- Support of compliance with the liquor inspectors during site visits to my premises

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