

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**Victoria Falls honours small entrepreneurs for World Tourism Month**  
**EMBARGOED UNTIL 1800 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

**Victoria Falls, 20<sup>th</sup> October**

Industry and government came together to celebrate 20 of the most promising small companies in Victoria Falls, and pledge further support.

The informal ceremony at Pure Africa Waterfront was organised by the Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry (MECHTI), and the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA). Dr Douglas Runyowa, Chief Director of MECHTI announced the winners of a competition that was organised by the government, and supported by IFC under the Zimbabwe Destination Development Program.

‘These entrepreneurs have shown remarkable courage and resilience during the last 18 months’ said Runyowa. ‘They play a vital role in Victoria Falls - enriching our destination and providing jobs. They are key for achieving the 2030 UNDP Sustainable Goals’.

The event was well received. ‘It has been a challenging time and we are thrilled to be a winner of this competition, to have won the marketing material that we are already putting to good use’ said Prince Ngwenya, Victoria Falls Canoeing Company. ‘We want to grow and show the world what we can do’

Winners of the competition include canoeing expedition providers, horse safaris, boutique accommodation, off-the-beaten track guides, astronomers, village and community tours.

The competition was run in partnership with Boundless Southern Africa and , and coordinated by We Are Victoria Falls. It was open to all small businesses and entrepreneurs in Victoria Falls to find 20 winners with a diversity of products, strong market appeal and growth potential. Winners were provided with bespoke professional marketing material and a year’s complimentary listing on B2B itinerary building platform ”.

Paul de Waal, CEO of Wetu says ‘we have the vision to transform the trade with technology that empowers our users. We are delighted to support these 20 SMEs in Victoria Falls to better access new markets.’

The celebratory event also marked the beginning of an international media tour of Victoria Falls, with local and regional travel journalists spending 5 days with the winning SMEs exploring grassroots itineraries and getting to know the entrepreneurs behind them. The tour was sponsored by Fastjet and Boundless Southern Africa – supported by SADC and GIZ.

Fastjet’s Digital Content and Media Officer, Nunurai Ndawana said ‘As a relatively small business ourselves, in the air travel sector, fastjet is a passionate supporter of all ventures in the tourism industry. There are many gems that make Victoria Falls a memorable and rewarding place to visit. It is a pleasure for fastjet to fly to one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World with regular flights within Zimbabwe and from South Africa.’



In a following statement, the government unveiled plans to invest in SMEs over the next few years. ‘We are responding directly to requests from the SME community’ said Dr Runyowa. The plan, executed through the Zimbabwe Destination Development Program, will focus on providing world-class marketing training and mentoring to SMEs in Victoria Falls, as well as regulatory reform of the licensing and permitting system. ‘We recognise that the burden of regulatory compliance can be disproportionately heavy for small enterprise’ said the Chief Director. Analysis has already begun, and work is being carried out in partnership with the Tourism Business Council of Zimbabwe. Preliminary findings will be published in January 2022.

List of winning\* SMEs

Routes Through Africa; Yvonne Jandles
Exclusive Tough Africa; Sid Hayes
DK Tours & Safaris; Webster Musaidzi
Africa Travel & Tours; Lovemore Machipisa
Rukoko Safaris; Sam Mushandu
Umdingi Safaris; Clint Robertson
Excellence Trails; Sisassenkosi
Tsowa Island; Francie Sherren
Discover Safaris; Charles Brightman
Victoria Falls Canoeing Company; Prince Ngwenya
WildSpoor Safaris; Lewis Mangaba
Nguni Lodge; Christine Reeves
Intondolo Safaris; Nkulukeko Mthunzi Moyo
Signature Africa; Travolta Chatyoka
Dzimbahwe House; Judith Dzimbanhete
Phezulu ; Farai Maburutse
Tatenda Safaris; Dr Gunda
Premier Guest Lodge; Tendayi Nemaungwe
Zambezi Horse Safaris; Alison Baker

\*20 winners were selected and one voluntarily dropped out.

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