

Direct selling could be a key driver of inclusive economic growth - DSA

Direct sellers earned a combined R2.4bn during the 2019 calendar year, revealed Rajesh Parshotam, chairperson of the Direct Selling Association (DSA) of South Africa during the industry's 2020 annual conference.



Rajesh Parshotam

The DSA is an industry self-regulatory body that currently houses 28 local and overseas-based member companies. Among other things, the DSA aims to foster professional and ethical conduct among member companies and their distributors.

Due to government measures taken to contain the coronavirus, this year's conference was held virtually. Guest speakers at this year's event included Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry and Economic Development Nomalungela Gina and entrepreneur Vusi Thembekwayo.

Parshotam said it was essential to invite a senior government official to be a part of the occasion, because with appropriate government support the direct selling industry has the potential to be a key driver of inclusive economic growth.

Parshotam said the direct selling industry has proved to be resilient in times of economic difficulty, adding that the resilience of the business is one of the features that attracts so many South Africans to this route to market for products and services.



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24 Jul 2019



SA home to 760,000 direct sellers

The latest data released at the conference shows that in South Africa, the industry has more than 760,000 direct sellers. As

many as 88% are African and 76% are women.

The industry generates more than R9bn in annual sales in South Africa, and globally, a staggering R2tn. “This figure only accounts for sales generated by DSA member companies, the total industry figure is considerably more than R9bn,” said Parshotam.

He said that direct selling is not just a place where people facing economic difficulty have taken refuge, but a business opportunity providing a full-time career to a significant number of people in South Africa and around the world.

“The direct selling industry provides a full-time career to more than 170,000 people in South Africa. This is a significant figure given our current levels of unemployment,” said Parshotam.



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Surge in interest

Furthermore, Parshotam said that the Direct Selling Association has noticed a surge in interest in direct selling from the members of the public because of the impact Covid-19 has had on livelihoods in the country.

“As household incomes have come under pressure due to job losses and possibly the reduction in incomes, we have been experiencing an increase in enquiries and this ‘new reality’ is moving the market closer to our industry as people look to supplement, protect or boost their incomes,” said Parshotam.

“However, as in many other entrepreneurial ventures, earnings depend entirely on how much effort an individual is willing to put into their business.”

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