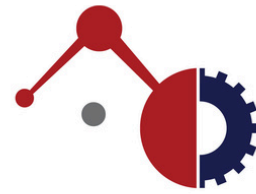


# MKRI MONTHLY

February 2026 Issue



**Moses Kotane  
Research Institute**

Research · Innovation · Excellence



**EDTEA HOD OVERSIGHT VISIT**

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## Top News

- Maritime Training Programme and Beneficiaries' Workshop, Certificate Handover Ceremony
- Tourism Entrepreneurs Careers Expo
- Digital Transformation for the Informal Sectors and Spaza Shops

## "The knowledge hub for economic growth in KZN"

This newsletter highlights the key events and strategic engagements undertaken by the Moses Kotane Research Institute (MKRI) during February 2026.

The activities align with the institute's mission of advancing research-driven solutions, skills development, digital innovation, and socio-economic empowerment in KwaZulu-Natal.



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# Maritime Training Programme and Beneficiaries' Workshop, Certificate Handover Ceremony



MKRI hosted the Maritime Training Programme and Beneficiaries' Workshop, Certificate Handover Ceremony, and Industry Engagement Session.

This initiative was designed to strengthen professional capacity and enhance technical competencies within the maritime sector by equipping beneficiaries with relevant industry knowledge and practical skills. The workshop provided a platform for participants to reflect on their learning experiences, share insights, and explore opportunities for continuous professional development.

The certificate handover ceremony formally recognized the commitment and successful completion of the programme by beneficiaries, underscoring MKRI's dedication to excellence, skills development, and workforce empowerment.

## Ekasi Business Fair Briefing



On the 25th of February, MKRI hosted a media briefing at its Durban offices, where Rev. Musa Zondi, MEC for EDTEA, announced the inaugural Ekasi Business Fair.

The fair is scheduled to take place on 6–7 March 2026 at Hammarisdale Junction Mall. It is a partnership between KZN EDTEA, the Icebolethu Foundation, MKRI and IDFC. It aims to connect 100 township businesses with funding institutions, government programmes and private sector partners, helping them unlock market access, investment and growth opportunities.

MKRI's participation underscores its commitment to research-driven economic development and strengthening township and rural economies across KZN



# Tourism Entrepreneurs Careers Expo



MKRI participated in the Tourism Entrepreneurs Careers Expo held at the Ncome Museum in the uMzinyathi District Municipality (The site of 'The Battle of Blood River').

The expo aimed at connecting tourism, hospitality and consumer studies learners, students and graduates with the industry; highlighting entrepreneurship and employment opportunities, and bridging the gap between employer, educator and learner.

During the expo, MKRI shared insights on how research, innovation and skills development drive growth in the tourism sector across KwaZulu-Natal. Learners were engaged on:

- Tourism-focused research that informs policy and economic planning
- Skills development programmes, including Coastal & Marine Tourism training
- Innovation and enterprise support for young tourism entrepreneurs
- Career pathways in tourism research, digital innovation, and sustainable development

## Digital Transformation for the Informal Sectors and Spaza Shops



on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, MKRI and Wear Your Brand hosted the Digital Transformation for the Informal Sectors and Spaza Shops at the MKRI Conference Centre. The event focused on empowering township and rural businesses through technology, innovation, and financial inclusion. The session covered key topics such as digital payments, POS systems, business formalisation, access to funding, e-commerce solutions, and digital literacy for small businesses. The dialogue also provided a platform for stakeholders, including spaza shop owners and industry partners, to discuss challenges and opportunities for strengthening the informal sector.

# Cellphone Repair Training Programme

MKRI implemented the Cellphone Repair Training Programme on behalf of EDTEA as part of the Township and Rural Economies Revitalisation Strategy. The programme provides MICT SETA-accredited technical training to unemployed youth, women and persons with disabilities. Beneficiaries will receive accredited certification, start-up repair toolkits and post-training business mentorship, enabling them to establish sustainable ICT enterprises and participate meaningfully in the provincial economy.



## EDTEA HOD Oversight Visit

On the 16th of February, MKRI EXCO, led by CEO Dr Thandeka Ellenson, hosted the KZN EDTEA HOD, Dr Nkosenye G. Zulu, and departmental colleagues in the MKRI Boardroom for an official oversight visit.

The engagement focused on our key strategic priorities and performance objectives, as well as current operational, financial and governance matters impacting service delivery. Discussions also addressed the risks and constraints requiring departmental support, along with opportunities to strengthen collaboration, improve efficiency and enhance MKRI's overall impact.



### UPCOMING

16-20 March 2026: Innovation week

17 March 2026: Mpofana Digital Centre Launch

27 March 2026: Enterprise Development Summit

30 March 2026: Maritime Innovation Challenge Pitch and Prize-Giving