

## eThekweni Informal Economy Support Programme (IESP) - Jobs Fund and eThekweni Municipality Co-funded

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### Craft Collaboration

#### Enterprise description:

The Udumo Crafters and Khumalo Crafters, located in KwaNgcolosi, and the Ntshongweni area respectively, are co-operatives that were identified and screened by the IESP programme. The groups make beautiful products which are predominantly Zulu themed. The project assisted the informal and micro enterprises with business mentorship and sector skills development to grow, create jobs and meet market demand. During the mentorship processes the craft groups indicated that a critical issue is the lack of access to markets, a lack of understanding of the creative economy value chain, sales skills and lack of product development techniques amongst others. In collaboration with AfricaIgnite the IESP provided sector skills training to improve the quality of products and facilitated access to new markets.



#### Job creation:

Since PPT commenced support for the crafters, 28 new permanent jobs were created.

#### Achievements

- The crafters have begun to organize themselves as a cohesive group and have begun to address challenges as such stagnation in terms of business growth. In this respect there is an apparent shift from individualism to collective action with respect to the approach that is being applied to address challenges. PPT assisted in the facilitation of the Africa Ignite-PPT collaboration *Sector Skills Training* workshops.
- The sector skills training workshops have assisted the crafters to improve product design and quality as well as reduce production time.
- PPT has provided *Isiqalo Basic Business Skills* training to help equip the crafters with the necessary business skills.
- As part of the sector skills workshop, the crafters have produced products which have been placed in new markets in Eshowe. The products were well received by customers.

### Way forward:

- PPT to assist the craft group in accessing national and international markets, including exhibitions.
- Assist the crafters in identifying new local markets to help expand their current customer base and to progress from a survivalist stage to running sustainable craft businesses.
- Local exhibitions for 2016 have been identified. All the crafter products are to be considered for this prospect if they meet the necessary criteria.
- Proceed with the planning and preparation of budgets to introduce the crafters into the new identified flea markets – **complete**

### Learnings:

- The collaboration between PPT and Africa Ignite has been fundamental in equipping the crafters with broad knowledge in understanding and responding to the needs of the creative economy.
- The crafters typically apply a survivalist approach in the way they produce and sell their products. They do not see it as a sustainable business that must have set goals and priorities. The Sector Skills Training workshops have begun to address this approach to business.
- The crafters generally have a narrow view of the craft business and only think at a community or local level in terms of sourcing materials and selling their products. They do not have a global view of the business and the economic space in which they actively participate and compete in - The Sector Skills Training workshops have begun give the crafters a broader view of their economic space.
- Prior to the commencement of the sector skills workshop, the crafters did not understand the importance of the creative economy value chain and how it directly affects their businesses.
- The crafters do not reinvent and differentiate their products in response to changing customer need and global fashion trends. They produce the same products year after year for a customer with continuously changing needs and preferences.



*Image 1: the variety of necklaces produced by the crafters*



*Image 1: The grass baskets produced by Khumalo*

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