

**The Educational Support Services
Trust**

SPONSORSHIP PROPOSAL

**Sebenza Women & Girls Empowerment
Project**

2020/2021



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Introduction

The Educational Support Services Trust (ESST) is a non-profit organisation, registered with the Master of the South African High Court. We render services in multiple fields ranging from **education** (ECD, Primary School), to **poverty alleviation** (through entrepreneurship), **primary healthcare** (including HIV and AIDS and TB, home-based care, social behaviour interventions), **human rights** (women's and children's rights in particular), **service delivery** and **moral regeneration**. ESST operates in a wide variety of settings, from **high-density townships, informal settlements in peri-urban areas** to sparsely populated rural communities.

Each province has a **Provincial Manager** who is from the community and is also supported by a network of community **fieldworkers** that guarantees an in-depth understanding and intimate knowledge of **target communities**. We engage the **whole community** to strengthen existing institutions and to build and **support networks** of all those organizations, members of the public and support systems that work in a given area. In the process we also identify and **strengthen** existing referral systems. ESST is governed by a Board of Trustees. All trustees were chosen on the strength of their intimate knowledge of and services to the target populations served by ESST over many years.

The organisation's mission is "to apply its expertise and experience to create optimal learning opportunities for the socio-economically disadvantaged sectors of society. ESST sees its work with communities as holistic, responding to needs and driven by community leadership".

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Since inception Sebenza women empowerment strategic areas have included the following:

- To promote health education and enhance prevention of diseases and illnesses including response to HIV/AIDS among the infected and affected.
- To empower women and youth economically through equipping them with relevant skills and knowledge in microfinance and resource mobilization
- Improved literacy levels among young girls, adolescent girls and adult women through support and training
- Promote psychosocial support and provide referral services to the needy in the community
- Create awareness and support to vulnerable girls and women.
- Transference of skills and economic and social upliftment of individuals and communities

Summary of the Project

Project Title: Sebenza Arts & Crafts Women & Girls Empowerment Project

Location: Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, Amathole District, Eastern Cape

Duration: 12 Months

Objectives:

- ✓ Promote entrepreneurship among women and girls;
- ✓ Share business acumen and technical know-how;
- ✓ Provide new opportunities to bridge the gaps and increase opportunities for linkages;
- ✓ Avail comprehensive toolkits to facilitate joint venture opportunities for economic empowerments, increased production, job creation and poverty alleviation;
- ✓ Discuss gender-specific constraints faced by women and youth;
- ✓ Share good practices in the promotion of female entrepreneurship;
- ✓ Capacity building of women entrepreneurs for increased competitiveness, technology absorbing capacities and women's control over asset management
- ✓ Provide opportunities for individuals, when at work, to discuss their household issues and concerns, such as domestic violence, substance abuse, HIV and other social ills. We also utilise these sessions to provide them with guidance and support to address these issues and concerns.
- ✓ Provide technical skills (IT, web design, graphic design, photography) to the young girls to enhance their skills for social media use and website designs

Target Group: The primary beneficiaries are adolescent girls, young women, middle-aged women and older women in the villages of the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, Amathole District, Eastern Cape

About the Project

This project focuses on girls and women empowerment in the Amathole District of the Eastern Cape. Sebenza Arts & Crafts is working towards developing the entrepreneurship skills of the community so as to get them out of the cycle of poverty and also offer support to vulnerable girls and women. This way the project shall contribute towards addressing part of the National Development Plan and Eastern Cape vision of 2030. Several activities have been outlined such as beadwork, shampoo and soap making, pottery, graphic designing, photography, capacity development, mentorship and market linkages with relevant institutions. We believe by the end of the project timeline, there shall be significant positive changes in the lives of the beneficiaries which shall cascade to the community and beyond.

Project Summary

The rationale behind *Sebenza* was to create employment for women in rural areas. Since then we have expanded it to add support groups for women and girls by offering them the opportunity to discuss social ills that impinge on them directly. They are empowered, equipped and envisioned for a positive, healthy life reducing their vulnerability to rape, gender violence and unplanned pregnancy. Our support groups focus on challenges faced by the girls/women on a daily basis. Beneficiaries regard support groups as safe spaces where they can discuss issues and challenges affecting their daily existence and that of their communities, and many of them report that this is the first time they have shared their problems with anyone. If the beneficiary is willing, we will link her with the relevant service provider in our existing network. We have to acknowledge their readiness to seek help, and only suggest provision when they are ready to do so. Discussion topics are generated by groups and include the following: reproductive health, gender-based violence, emotional and financial abuse, lack of support system, issues of rejection, societal expectations influenced by patriarchy that continue to suppress women on a daily basis, literacy and lack of knowledge, teenage pregnancies, domestic violence and bullying.



Beneficiaries are divided into **groups of 30** who meet weekly and are granted the opportunity to apply their creative skills in all kinds of needle work, pottery and the production of beautifully crafted objects. These include exquisite girls' and women's dresses, scarves, socks, gloves, jerseys, handbags, shoes, dolls and dolls' clothes, quilts, the stringing of beads, and beautifying existing objects through embroidery/painting. Older women still

know how to make soap, jams and bottled fruit, for example, and all of these skills can be passed onto a younger generation. At the same time, they are encouraged to start their own food gardens, not only for their own consumption, but also to sell. Once the skills of individuals have been identified, they are divided into skills-based groups, to concentrate and co-operate on the production of marketable merchandise.



An integral part of all sessions is teaching the participants the basics of financial know-how, including how to look after your money, how to spend it wisely, savings, insurance, the demands of the market – what sells best, fastest, etc. These forums therefore present opportunities for women to bond with one another – to air their thoughts and share experiences (of hardship), but also, perhaps most importantly, to laugh together, enjoy themselves and to learn. Since the projects implementation the younger girls/women started the initiative to develop a website where their products can be displayed and sold to everyone. We want to approach an experienced graphic designer to mentor and guide the interested beneficiaries in creating the website. Some of them are also interested in photography and is going to be mentored in taking good quality photographs for the website and for marketing and advertisement.

Implementation Area



We work in the towns of Fort Beaufort and Alice and their surrounding villages. These towns are situated in the local municipality of Raymond Mhlaba. Workshops, Support Groups and Skills Development Sessions are held in the following towns:

- Mxhelo village
- Sheshegu village
- Mavuso village
- Gaga village
- Kwa Lloyd village
- Fort Beaufort
- Alice
- Happy Rest Township
- Esikolweni village
- Esiginqini village
- Nxurwebe village



The municipality has **23 wards**; and it is dominated by large populace which is indigent. The majority of the population of Raymond Mhlaba of just **over 70% resides in both villages and farms**, and minorities are located in urban dwellings. Urbanisation is mainly concentrated in Alice, Fort Beaufort, Adelaide and Bedford. Raymond Mhlaba Local municipality experiences high levels of unemployment. According to the official definition of unemployment, there are **132 325 unemployed people** in the municipality.

A key dimension that directly influences the potential **employability of community members** is their **education background** and **levels of skills** that they possess. The level of education and skills within a region impacts on many factors, including: the **productive efficiency of investments** (e.g. health, capital), **employment potential**, the **gender gap** and **productivity and income levels**. In view of the foregoing, education is therefore, acknowledged as being inextricably linked to the economic development of Raymond Mhlaba Municipal area and to a growing society at large.

From our in-field research and needs assessment done in the towns where we operate, we have identified the following concerns from community members:

Unemployment	Poverty	Shortage of housing
Income-generating opportunities are few	Agriculture is expensive	Lack of skills development programmes
Nutrition in schools	HIV/Aids awareness and training	Home-based care

Programme Reach

From previous implementation in the area (2018/2019) we were able to recruit **220 individuals** into the project of which **196 beneficiaries** are now at various levels of **technical development** and acquiring their **entrepreneurial skills**.

We also were invited by local radio station called Radio Forte FM, who focuses on current news and activities happening across the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality. They provided us with an afternoon slot. This provided us with the ideal platform to showcase the programme, its objectives and the impact it has made on not only our beneficiaries but also the community. The interview was also live so listeners could call in and also inbox on the Radio Facebook page. This was an interesting process for us and it opened a window of opportunity for those that were hearing about the project for the first time. Hence, we received many more requests to join the programme.

It is for this reason that our reach is the following:

The beneficiaries meet in the main towns of Alice and Fort Beaufort.

Fort Beaufort and surrounding villages

In Fort Beaufort, there will be **4 groups of 30 women each** amounting to **120 women in total**.

Alice and surrounding villages

In Alice, there will be **3 groups of 30 women each** amounting to **90 women in total**.

Supporting Partners:

- ❖ Mavuso Tribal house
- ❖ Ward councillors council (Fort Beaufort)
- ❖ Special Programs Unit (Raymond Mhlaba Municipality)
- ❖ Tourism office (Raymond Mhlaba Municipality)
- ❖ World Vision (community development unit)
- ❖ Department of Education (Raymond Mhlaba Sub-district offices)
- ❖ Department of Social Development (Raymond Mhlaba Sub-district offices)
- ❖ Forte FM (University of Forte in Alice)
- ❖ Community Works Programme (Raymond Mhlaba Municipality)

Achievements so far

Introductory meetings were held with various community stakeholders, e.g. community leadership, civil organisations with which we share platforms and similar goals, government entities and other interested parties. We introduced the project to the following stakeholders whom we got on board:

- ❖ Arts and Culture MEC offices
- ❖ LED Tourism program managers office
- ❖ Heritage and Tourism program coordinators office
- ❖ Social Development sub-district office
- ❖ Masiphumelele Women Empowerment organisation
- ❖ Department of Education sub-district office
- ❖ Mavuso Tribal House (the project needed to receive their sanction in order for us to engage with the communities. We have received permission from them and their associated ward councillors to proceed with the project).

- ✓ **Twenty support groups** have been formed to offer **support and guidance** to beneficiaries in addressing all kinds of social ills.
- ✓ So far, **220 individuals have been recruited to the Sebenza project**, of which **196 beneficiaries** are now at various levels of technical development and acquiring their entrepreneurial skills.
- ✓ **Municipal Heritage Month events** – this event forms part of our marketing strategy. It allows for the showcasing of not only the project and the beneficiaries' products, but is also a valuable learning experience for its participants. It provides a platform for beneficiaries to share their experience of Sebenza with their community, and community members are granted an opportunity to take part in our workshops and training activities on that day. Following our involvement at the event, our Programme coordinator was invited by the Programme Director of the Municipality to participate in their Entrepreneurship Local Indaba. We had the opportunity to facilitate group discussions and share our experiences.
- ✓ We partnered with the **local Community Work Programme**, a **job safety net programme** offered by government for the unemployed.
- ✓ With the aid of the local **Department of Education**, we are able to **conduct Basic English Communication classes**, in the form of Adult Basic Education Training and lessons (ABET).

Sustainability



We make use of **mentors** in the communities where we work. Mentors live and work in the very communities in which the beneficiaries live – all having experienced their very **dire circumstances**. Hence, mentors will always serve as reference persons when beneficiaries need advice. Participants value their relationship with their mentors. All the mentors are

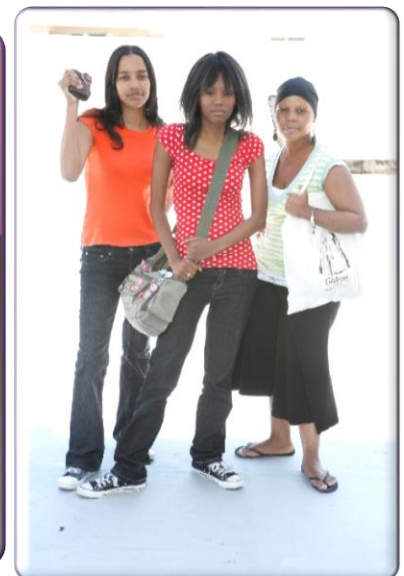
self-taught entrepreneurs, and their **visible success**, albeit to their success, provides tangible proof to the beneficiaries that they can achieve their goals.

The success of such a project depends on the degree to which communities feel that they own the project, how much value is placed on their needs and the expressions of these needs, and the possible sustainability of the project. It was important therefore to generate community buy-in by establishing a network of community leaders, local businesspersons, local government and all interested parties to lend credibility to the project. These individuals act as advocates for the project. Because the networking partners are established in the community, they act as a reference point for the community – a place where they can receive information on the project and assistance if needed. Many of the networking partners also act as distributing sites for the material distribution, and some have started income generation projects based on the content of the end-user publications to supplement their income or that of their respective organisations.



Key Benefits to the Participants

- Starting a business and bringing creativity in life with self-esteem and happiness which have a direct link with each other.
- Transformation of the ideas and creativity of aspiring women into business ventures with high potential and growth.
- Women are increasingly taking up the leadership role in economic activity.
- Website development skills are developed.
- Bigger markets are created with the products being able to be ordered online worldwide.
- Women entrepreneurs are supported to grow from small informal enterprises to formal small and medium enterprises to create sustainable employments, are visible in their national economies, contribute to GDP growth and be relevant in the global market place.
- New opportunities to bridge the gaps and increase opportunities for linkages;
- Comprehensive toolkits available to facilitate joint venture opportunities for economic empowerments, increased production, job creation and poverty alleviation;
- Gender-specific constraints faced by women entrepreneurs are addressed;
- share good practices in the promotion of female entrepreneurship;
- Capacity building of women entrepreneurs for increased competitiveness, technology absorbing capacities and women's control over asset management.
- Support for all kinds of social ills



Needs

We are thankful for all donations, big or small, which contribute greatly to enhance our programme and continue the work we do.

Benefits to the donor:

- Branding opportunity on the materials that support the programme
- Contributing towards the empowerment of women in South Africa
- Contributing towards creating employment and an income for those in need
- Contributing towards your company's BBBEE points (Funder will receive an 18A tax Certificate)

Donations and Funding are used for:

- ❖ Buying raw materials
- ❖ Equipment
- ❖ Sanitary pads and condom distribution
- ❖ Market days
- ❖ Learning materials
- ❖ Seeds and plants for home gardens
- ❖ Workshops
- ❖ Food parcels
- ❖ Support groups



Conclusion

Sebenza creates a **platform** for **disadvantaged**, marginalised **women, youth**, including the **disabled**, to **come together** to **share ideas** and **solutions** not just with regard to **income generation** and related **problem-solving**, but also to **social issues** which **deeply affect** their **communities**. As these women go back into their communities, they **share their new ideas** and **attitudes** with their **families** and **broader circles of influence**. The result is that, gradually, the entire **ethos** of their **community** is **transformed**. It is about transforming an “**I**” **mentality** into a “**we**” **mentality**.

References



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Old Cape College of Education-Private Bag X2051, Fort Beaufort, 5720- REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA -
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RECOMMENDATION LETTER FOR SEBENZA PROJECT

We as Social Development would like to Recommend ESST for the work that they have done in our area under the SEBENZA ARTS AND CRAFT PROJECT.

The Sebenza Arts and Craft project complimented our Community Development Program focusing specifically in developing Unemployed Women based in our DEEP rural Areas. Their educational small business workshops helped our local women to understand the value of their products and how they can best market them. As part of our success stories a number of our crafts were displayed in the Raymond Mhlaba Municipal Heritage month held in Alice.

Based on the above we would like to recommend the SEBENZA project for any possible funding that will greater their work.

Yours Sincerely

N Manene – Community Projects Coordinator

28/02/2020



**RAYMOND
MHLABA
MUNICIPALITY**
UMANYANO KUPHUTHISO

Tel: 046 645 7400/7451 | **Fax:** 046 645 2562

8 Somerset Street | Fort Beaufort, 5720 | P.O.Box 36, Fort Beaufort, 5700

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RECOMMENDATION LETTER FOR SEBENZA PROJECT

This letter serves as a reference and acknowledgement of the relationship and impact that ESST has in our Municipality. Raymond Mhlaba Municipality has worked and recognizes ESST from their Vusokoti program which had a great impact in our rate of unemployment. We have worked with the organization for about 5 Years now and can highly recommend them for any funding that can best promote their work in our area. Their SEBENZA program has changed a lot of lives (specifically those of our unemployed women in the rural areas) together with Sebenza arts and craft we have been able to promote and market our local arts businesses and found platforms for their work to be acknowledged.

As we speak some of our Arts and Culture products are displayed in Marketable spaces because of the SEBENZA ARTS AND CRAFT PROJECT.

As the Municipality representing our ARTS and AGRICULTURAL projects we would highly recommend SEBENZA ARTS AND CRAFT for possible funding.

Yours Sincerely


L. MENZE
INTERIM MUNICIPAL MANAGER

DATE: 

RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY

Budget

ITEMS	COST	NOTES
Production of entrepreneurship publications	R 42 000,00	*Printing of guides @ R150.00 per copy X 280 copies
Introductory Workshops - stakeholders	R 12 000,00	Introductory workshops include refreshments @ R 6,000.00 X 2 sessions
Entrepreneurial Workshops	R 240 000,00	Entrepreneurial workshops include refreshments and venue @ R2,000.00 X 6 sessions X 20 groups
Skills Workshops	R 120 000,00	Skills workshops include refreshments and venue @ R2,000.00 X 3 sessions X 20 groups
Support Groups	R 120 000,00	Support groups include counsellors, refreshments and venue @ R2,000.00 X 3 sessions X 20 groups
Mentors	R 12 000,00	Mentors are selected from industries who will support the groups and paid a gratuity
Development and maintaining of website and domain	R 8 500,00	*Cost include domain name, website maintenance and updating of community activities
Branded Gazebo's and banners for market days	R 32 500,00	*Quoted from supplier as a set for 2 Gazebo's and 4 banners
Menstrual management kits	R 115 920,00	Purchase and distribution of 2 kits X 280 participants(women) @R207.00 per kit
Promotion and marketing of products	R 12 000,00	Creation of online catalogue for e-mail, social media platforms, etc.