

SHIFTING FROM CONVENTIONAL PRACTICES TO A STRUCTURED APPROACH IN THE CAPACITY BUILDING OF MICRO-ENTREPRENEURS FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

Insights from the Acceleration of Women Owned
Micro-Enterprises (AWOME) programme



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The AWOMI Programme is a result of collaborative work between many organizations and stakeholders. UN Women appreciates the contribution of each partner and stakeholder.

In Namibia, the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare is both a strategic stakeholder who represents government's interests and an implementing partner responsible for leading the implementation of outputs on entrepreneurs. The Ministry has played these dual roles with commitment and a long-term perspective on the legacy of the programme.

In South Africa, the Bloubaerg and Murrumbidgee local Municipalities represent government interests and provide insights that are instrumental in responding to Local Economic Development needs as prioritised in their municipalities. Hand in Hand Southern Africa provides valuable service as an implementing partner leading in the implementation of the output on entrepreneurs.

The Ministry of Nationality, Immigration and Gender Affairs (MNIGA) in Botswana has expanded the partnership to other ministries that have a mandate on entrepreneurs. The MNIGA coordinates the trainers who are drawn from the different participating ministries. Adove Little Children serves the communities within Okavango Delta where AWOMI Programme is implemented. Adove is an important partner in addressing challenges that could hinder women from participating in activities that improve their quality of life.

The International Labour Organization's SYB Global Team provides technical guidance and quality assurance on trainer development. ILO has embraced the AWOMI Programme and team in its global SYB family.

Master Trainers impact invaluable skills to the trainers through training of trainers, mentorship and handholding as trainers hone their skills.

Trainers are a core resource for the AWOMI because the programme counts on their skills and passion to impact on entrepreneurs. The trainers collected and drafted the case studies for the production of this document.

UN Women is grateful to De Beers Group for walking the talk on the Company's motto/She commitment by investing in the capacity building of women micro-entrepreneurs through the AWOMI Programme. In addition to financial resources, De Beers contributes to the technical aspects of programme design and implementation.

This document was produced under the overall supervision of Susan Kimathi, AWOMI Programme Manager with coordination by Mamodike Sebati AWOMI Programme Associate, both from UN Women.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AWOME - Acceleration of Women Owned Micro-Enterprises

COP - Community of Practice

CYB - Generate Your Business

ILO - International Labour Organization

IYB - Improve Your Business

SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals

SIYB - Start and Improve Your Business

TNA - Training Needs Assessment

TOE - Training of Entrepreneurs

TOT - Training of Trainers

UN - United Nations

UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment



1

INTRODUCTION: WHY THIS DOCUMENT?

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 44 percent of the world's employed population make their income from the informal economy. In Africa, the percentage increases to 83.8 percent of the employed population.¹ Effectively, several countries in Africa are heavily reliant on the informal sector to create jobs and generate income to cushion a large proportion of the population from poverty. Yet, countries lack systematic approaches and resources for providing enterprise development services to micro-entrepreneurs. Capacity building is often approached as a simple, singular training activity mainly implemented by people that have never been trained to train entrepreneurs. The training materials are not standardized and often lack depth and direct practical relevance to the actual problems micro-entrepreneurs face in their businesses. Micro to very small businesses are the most affected by the dearth of capacity building because they lack the agility and power to access typical programmes and derive meaningful benefits from such programmes.

Against this backdrop, the Acceleration of Women-Owned Micro-Enterprises (AWOME) Programme was designed to bridge the above gaps. AWOME is a customized version of the ILO's Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) Programme which is implemented globally under the coordination of the SIYB coordination office based in Geneva.

The AWOME Programme follows a train-the-trainer approach, where trainers drawn from communities are trained to train and mentor the micro-entrepreneurs supported under the programme. The approach develops the capacity of partner organizations and participating countries whilst sustainably embedding the programme in partner institutions to ensure that participating countries build the requisite capacity to implement similar programmes and scale the reach of the programme to thousands of other entrepreneurs who are not directly reached by the AWOME Programme.

¹ Women and men in the informal economy: A statistical picture, 2012, ILO

The training content targets knowledge and skills in practical areas where entrepreneurs grapple with capacity challenges that are a main barrier to harnessing the full potential of their enterprises. Trainers are equipped to become the change agents in the communities they serve and to implement gender-responsive business development services that empower the low-income entrepreneurs to harness their business potential for growth and profitability. The programme is delivered through an adult learning approach and using methodological approaches that impart soft skills such as self-confidence, self-awareness, negotiation skills, team work and reflective thinking.

Since 2018, the ANCOM Programme has been implemented in South Africa (Masina and Bloubaai Local Municipalities) and Namibia (Erongo and Karas Region). In Botswana, implementation is primarily focused on the Okavango Delta and started in 2019. The programme primarily targets women as it is intended as a women economic empowerment investment. However, the model, the approach and the training materials used are relevant for both male and female entrepreneurs.

The onset of COVID-19 has generated the momentum to search for meaningful approaches that work to support income generation and job creation. This document is compiled to share a model and partnership that has shown promising and sustainable results with immense potential for scale and duplication. ANCOM targets micro to very small businesses - a level where resources are rarely allocated towards promoting knowledge management and scaling up of good practices amongst development practitioners.

The insights shared are intended to assist other organisations in enhancing their own approaches for the benefit of the millions of entrepreneurs and families that draw their livelihood from business activities at the bottom of the economic pyramid. Not all elements shared here will work for every context or organisation - some will work as they are, some require limited customisation while others will work only after substantive customisation aligned to contextual realities.





2

THE PROGRAMME MODEL

AWOME is a customised version of ILO's *Improve Your Business Package*, part of the wider *Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) Programme*. ILO defines SIYB as a "... management training programme with a focus on starting and improving small businesses as a strategy for creating more and better employment for women and men, particularly in developing economies." SIYB composes of interrelated training packages on *Generate Your Business Idea*, *Start Your Business*, and *Improve Your Business*. The *AWOME* programme currently implements the *Improve Your Business Package*, targeting entrepreneurs who already own businesses, to adopt systems and practices that harness their full potential, and subsequently improve the performance of their businesses.

2.1 Training knowledge areas

The programme covers key knowledge areas that are critical for entrepreneurs to succeed in businesses. The training manuals cover a set of interrelated topics.



People and productivity: Business employees are a distinguishing factor in the success of a business, while competitors can easily replicate other factors that contribute to success such as location and pricing. Human resources are unique. The ability to recruit and retain the right people, particularly in micro to small business, where businesses and family responsibilities are intertwined, can make a significant difference in business performance. The *people and productivity* manual describes how to maximise profits by adequately planning and then recruiting, motivating, rewarding and protecting your employees for a win-win outcome.



Record keeping: Keeping proper records does not come naturally to most micro or very small businesses. Even when business records are well kept, their value is limited to compliance and not extended to using them to make informed business decisions. Recording practices commonly ignore indirect costs and therefore affect profitability. The *Record Keeping* manual explains how entrepreneurs can develop a system for maintaining records for their business to boost business performance and facilitate growth.



Costing. Entrepreneurs need to understand the costs involved in producing their products and services so that where possible, they can reduce their expenses and save money. Costing empowers the entrepreneurs with skills to (a) identify the different types of costs for running a business; (b) use the information from their record books to calculate the cost of their goods or services; (c) introduce a product costing form to calculate costs of goods and services, and ultimately (d) make pricing decisions for the produced goods and services.



Buying and stock control. For micro businesses, unstructured stocking introduces unnecessary costs (due to duplication of indirect costs), wastages where stock is perishable, or the avoidable reduction of cash flow that could have been used for other purposes, had stock levels been aligned with demand of specific products. The Buying and Stock Control manual explains business purchasing procedures and inventory management to make business investment efficient.



Marketing. The Marketing manual develops skills to assist the entrepreneurs to identify and implement marketing strategies geared towards the growth of their enterprises, leading to increased income and contribution towards employment creation. Sustaining and growing business relies on satisfying customers and making them loyal to the products and services an enterprise offers. The marketing manual explains what marketing is and how it helps to create customer loyalty.



Planning Your Business. As businesses grow, new needs emerge, and entrepreneurs discover new opportunities, the enterprise will need to organise itself to access these opportunities. The entrepreneur will need to develop new skills and abilities, identify additional staff and access more advanced equipment. The Planning for Your Business manual explains how entrepreneurs can run their business more efficiently by developing plans for the different areas of operation.

2.2 Unique facets of the programme

The AWOME programme structure is unique at two levels - the programme implementation approach and the approach in training of entrepreneurs. These two facets are unpacked in 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 underneath.

2.2.1 Programme implementation approach

Co-designing the programme with partners

The AWOME programme emerged following extensive engagement with partners - ensuring that the objectives and targets of the programme are based on country priorities. UN Women consulted widely with all government partners to co-design the AWOME programme and align it to country priorities in enterprise development.

It was critical that the training of entrepreneurs fits in and contributes to broader national goals encompassing economic growth, poverty alleviation and gender equality. The alignment to national priorities is the cornerstone for a programme that aims to dovetail into broader socio-economic activities to ensure national ownership and sustainability.

The co-designing of AWOME, is premised on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness where partner countries follow a practical, action-orientated roadmap to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development. The declaration revolves around five main principles of Ownership (Developing countries set their own development strategies, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.); Alignment (Donor countries and organisations bring their support in line with these strategies and use local systems); Harmonisation (Donor countries and organisations co-ordinate their actions, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication); Managing for results (Developing countries and donors focus on producing - and measuring - results); and Mutual accountability (Donors and developing countries are accountable for development results).

Customisation of training materials

The AWOME programme uses training materials based on the International Labour Organization (ILO) Improve Your Business (IYB) package which is part of the broader ILO Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) Programme. The IYB package is designed for entrepreneurs who want to improve the management processes of their business. The modular style allows the training content to be tailored to meet the needs of the target group and is based on advanced adult training methodologies.

AWOME is a materials based programme, meaning that the entrepreneurs can engage with the content and make reference to the lessons after the workshops. With the approval of ILO, AWOME Programme customized IYB Manuals to each country's context in consultation with partners. While IYB manuals are of high international standard and did not require any major revisions, customization promotes ownership as it allows for inclusion of examples and contextual nuances that local development practitioners and entrepreneurs can relate to, including the legal and policy environment. The materials are customised for each country context in consultation with national institutional partners and taking contextual nuances into consideration, to ensure relevance and applicability to the target audience as well as ownership by institutional partners.

Training of trainers

In many instances, people who support or train entrepreneurs are not specifically trained beforehand even though huge expectations are placed on them to confer knowledge, to support entrepreneurs and subsequently for those entrepreneurs to gain skills and improve their businesses. Yet these trainers or business advisors often lack both the content and methodology as well as the tools and techniques for facilitation, usually rendering the training ineffective. The AWOME programme therefore invests considerable resources in upskilling trainers so that they know and understand the training content, are able to deliver it effectively to the entrepreneurs, and become a long-term resource for the implementing countries. Currently, trainers have been taken through the IYB package but will subsequently be introduced to the Generate Your Business Idea and Start Your Business packages. Trainers who exhibit excellent competencies and perform well will also have the opportunity to be trained as Master Trainers in partnership with ILO.



"Working with UN Women in furthering the SIYB network has been a pleasure. In addition to all its accomplishments, the AWOME programme has introduced innovations that we treasure as valuable lessons for the global network."

Luana Ayala, Global SIYB Team, ILO Geneva



"I want to better understand the lives of entrepreneurs as they push their businesses to greater heights."

Beatha Muhimba with entrepreneur Hannelore de Oltz. Image © Dr Barry Eugene Ngej

Beatha Muhimba joined the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare in 2011 as a regional trainer with dual responsibilities for activities under the early childhood development programme as well as the income-generating activities support programme. She soon joined the team that was responsible for training the income-generating participants on basic business management, using a single training manual.

In 2018 she was selected to join a team of national trainers that would be trained on a new tool. "This was exciting because it is something I had been enquiring on from the ministry," says Beatha.

However, the training process was far more challenging than she anticipated. "I did not know that being part of the training program would not be a walk in the park; it required full participation and dedication in order to be selected as an IYB (Improve your Business) trainer". After completing the training though, Beatha felt more confident to not only train entrepreneurs but to become more involved in community development broadly.

"I gained so much in terms of capacity building as I was equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to carry out my responsibilities towards uplifting the communities."

For Beatha, in addition to the materials which stand out because of their comprehensive nature, the follow-up on entrepreneur action plans separates AWOME from other training programmes. "The mentorship activities that forms part of the training package indicates that the program was not designed to train business women and leave them but to continuously hold their hands as they struggle through everyday episodes of trying to make it in a competitive business world."

As a result of the AWOME programme, Beatha has developed a passion for training in general and is aiming to develop her career further in this field. She is now pursuing studies in the area of project management. "I want to better understand the lives of entrepreneurs as they push their businesses to greater heights."

Promoting mutual learning

As a capacity building initiative, the AWOEME programme recognises that the training of entrepreneurs must go beyond the presentation of content at a series of workshops to contributing towards providing a holistic and supporting environment where women entrepreneurs can thrive.

In the first instance, it is important to know who you are training, what knowledge and support they lack and how best can they be supported. The training provided is more than theory but rather experiential, tailored to the particular circumstances of the entrepreneurs.

Often development workers have assumptions about women entrepreneurs and impose training content

without knowing the details and nuances of the entrepreneurs and their enterprises. The Master trainers, train the trainers to provide experiential learning, where real, everyday examples are used from the women during group training sessions.

Importantly, the trainers are able to appreciate both the strengths and weaknesses of the entrepreneurs – the trainers also learn more about the operating environment of the entrepreneurs and understand their unique contexts through this process. This knowledge exchange between the trainers and entrepreneurs means that the trainers are not just giving knowledge but acquiring important skills in context analysis and adaptation of their methodology.

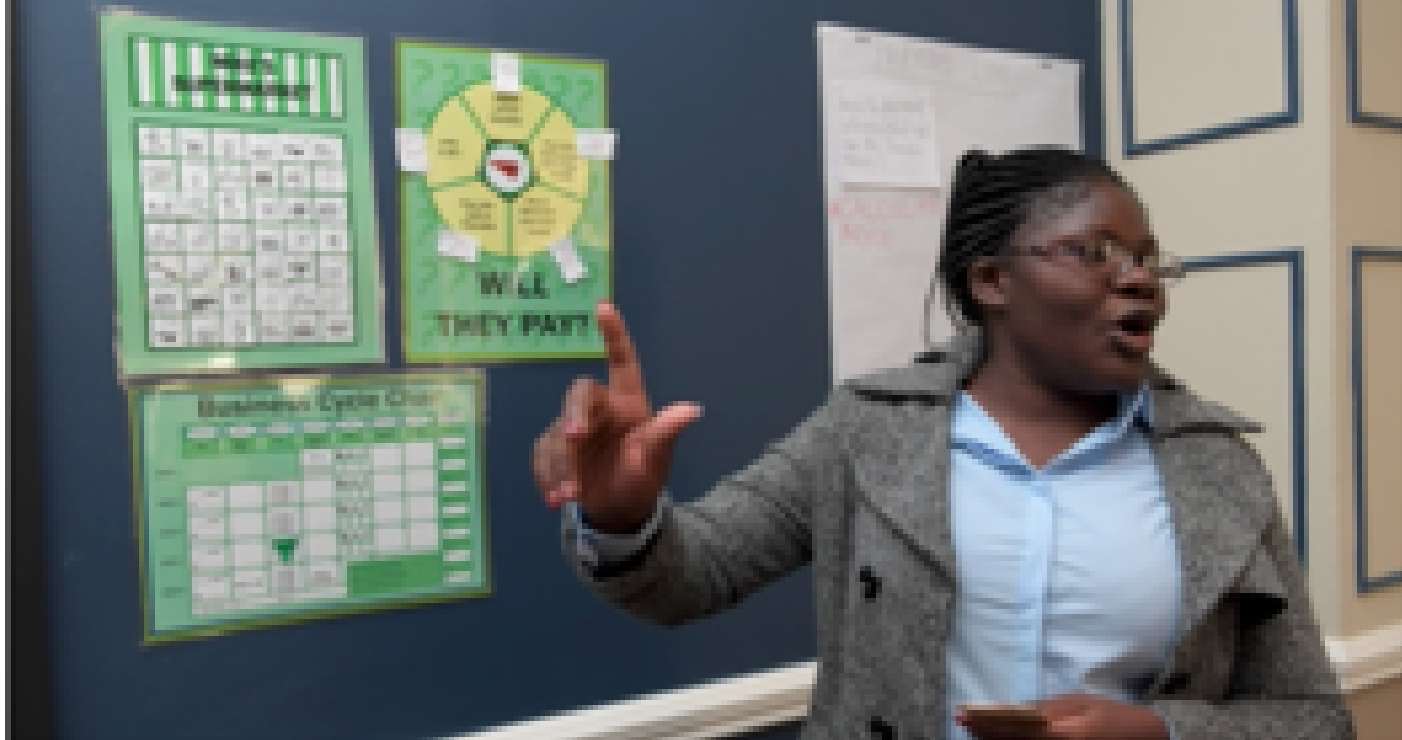
2.2.2 Approach in training entrepreneurs

Training of entrepreneurs applies a structured training cycle with multiple steps which are aimed at understanding the entrepreneurs and their capacity needs to inform the design of the programme, designing a training programme that is aligned with entrepreneurs'

needs, administering the training using experiential learning training approaches, and providing post training follow-up support to assist in application of knowledge and skills gained from the trainings. Figure 1 shows the AWOEME Training of Entrepreneurs cycle.

FIGURE 1: AWOEME TRAINING OF ENTREPRENEURS CYCLE





Training Needs Assessment

Prior to the training of entrepreneurs, a training needs assessment (TNA) is carried out which determines the main sectors in which the entrepreneurs operate and some of the key issues or barriers they face in growing their businesses. The TNA is also useful for gathering baseline data on the entrepreneurs and their enterprises which is captured by the trainers. During the TNA, trainers can also assess language requirements and literacy levels that would require content to be modified.

Conduct training

Working with the certified trainers drawn from communities, *AWOMI* targets entrepreneurs running micro to small businesses who are hard to reach and whose businesses are mostly invisible (some operating their businesses from home or in far-flung rural and peri-urban areas). Testimonials from the micro-entrepreneurs during the implementation, indicated that most of the entrepreneurs had not received any training before. The training sessions are adapted to the language and literacy capacity of the entrepreneurs and the structure of the sessions aim to accommodate the time constraints faced by entrepreneurs.

The training approach is experiential training drawing from actual experiences and practical needs of the entrepreneurs. Training materials also include business games developed by ILO under the *SWB* Programme to complement the content of the manuals. The games stimulate learning by exposing entrepreneurs to multi-layered complex issues that influence business success. The entrepreneurs get insights on how the decisions they make affect their business. As an interactive experiential learning, the entrepreneurs are able to build soft skills such as negotiation, confidence, the ability to reflect and teamwork.

Provide follow-up support and mentorship

Three types of follow-up interventions are available after the *TCI* workshop:

Refresher Training: Based on self-assessment, the entrepreneurs may need to revise some content areas if they are still grappling with some of the key concepts.

Mentorship: At the end of the training, the entrepreneurs create personalised action plans informed by their reflection on the practical management practices they need to adopt or change to improve their businesses. The trainers then support and guide the entrepreneurs to implement their action plans during post-training follow-up visits and mentorship sessions. This means that beyond the formal training, they have a mentor to go to and discuss their daily challenges. The post training mentorship sessions are also used as a mechanism to develop soft skills such as discipline and accountability.

Business Improvement Groups: For those who have critical challenges in their business they need to work through, they may form a Business Improvement Group if they are a sizeable number that have similar problems or operate in a similar sector or geographic location.



"What we have learned from our previous engagements is how important it is not to just walk in, train and walk out, but actually develop a programme where there is mentorship and coaching and hand-holding of these enterprises over a period of time until we are sure that there is some sustainability."

Anne Githuku Shongwe, ILO Women South Africa Multi-Country Office Representative



“The implementation of what they have been taught shows that these entrepreneurs want to see a difference in their business as well as life.”

Phumulani Netshisaulu and entrepreneur Simphiwele Mphahlele | Image: Dr Barry Eugene Meyer

“Businesses located in remote villages are usually unable to access management and business skills - AWOME came as a blessing to them,” reflects Phumulani Netshisaulu an AWOME Trainer based in Limpopo Province. “These skills provide women with the opportunity to grow and expand their businesses. More income is generated, which means job opportunities and developments within the communities.”

Before joining the AWOME programme, Phumulani Netshisaulu says she thought running a business was just about making money, but she has now realised that it is also about learning to take risks to reach your goal and creating job opportunities within the local community. “Entrepreneurship requires a person who is a leader and has good management skills. As much as women entrepreneurs are undermined, they are rising beyond expectations and playing a significant role within their families and community.”

Phumulani also appreciated how comprehensive the content was yet it was simple to communicate to the entrepreneurs. “The AWOME programme differs from other programmes because of the content used, it is more detailed and easier for everyone

to understand, it’s also easier to translate it to any local language and easier for those who are semi-literate.”

The fact that AWOME goes beyond the usual classroom setting to follow-up and mentoring sets it apart says Phumulani, “Many programmes offer training only, but with the AWOME programme, after training, the trainers go back to the entrepreneurs to check on progress and do mentorship.” Phumulani explains that with time the relationship between the trainers and the entrepreneurs has evolved beyond transferring skills to providing advice and support. “Entrepreneurs are allowed to call their trainers at any time with whatever challenges they might have - they are even able to talk about their challenges.”

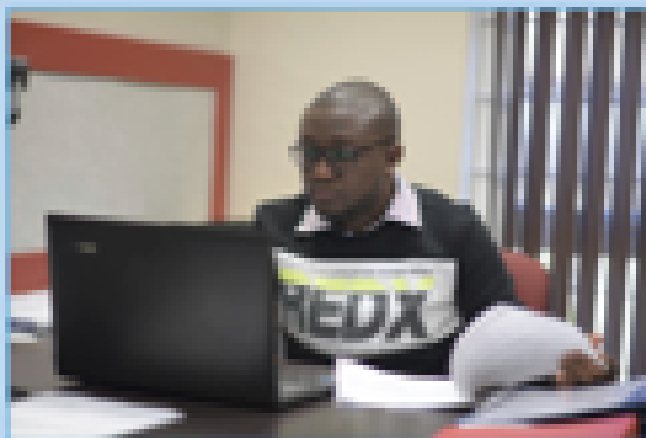
For Phumulani, her most important lesson from the AWOME programme has come from the women entrepreneurs. “The implementation of what they have been taught shows that these entrepreneurs want to see a difference in their business as well as life.” She further explains that many of the women are dealing with personal challenges but manage to rise above these in order to excel in their businesses.

“These women are strong, most of them are breadwinners for their families, and many have endured so much pain and suffering - some are abused daily - but at the end of the day, they do what they have to do to survive. Some could not read or write well, but today they are implementing what they learnt.”

To train the entrepreneurs successfully, Phumulani says she had to build her confidence and work on her facilitation skills. “I worked as a field worker before where I had an opportunity to talk to people, but my confidence was not enough. The facilitation skills gained was intensive. My self-confidence has grown as a trainer as I had the opportunity to engage with different stakeholders of all spheres. I am now able to stand in front of people with no fear.”

Phumulani says qualifying as a trainer has allowed her to do work that has a tangible impact and she hopes AWOME will reach more women eventually. “I was excited to be part of those who qualified to be trainers because the skills I gained have made an impact on these women and their businesses - that brings a lot of joy. It means that more needs to be done for others as well.”

2.2.3 Cross-cutting Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning



Monitoring and Evaluation - Data collection

Monitoring of progress towards intended results is a critical component of the programme and data is collected continuously at the various phases of programme implementation. Specifically, the AWOME Programme collects baseline data before the beneficiaries commence the training to understand their status in relation to the planned results. After training, entrepreneurs develop action plans to document planned activities they will undertake to improve their businesses considering the knowledge and skills gained during the training intervention. Monitoring data is collected to understand progression towards intended results, barriers and challenges to be overcome and opportunities that can be harnessed to increase the possibility of reaching outcome results and to promote sustainability.

Data informs programme decisions such as modifications to the programme where necessary. For instance, the onset of COVID-19 necessitated reviewing the programme interventions to include scope that became critical but was not initially a priority of the programme e.g. supporting business registration since government support was restricted to businesses that are registered.

Since the commencement of the programme in 2018, baseline data has been collected from all micro-entrepreneurs and the enterprises supported under the programme (about 1000 entrepreneurs in South Africa and Namibia to date). Monitoring data will be collected at regular intervals for all entrepreneurs as it is critical to monitor progress in results, to draw patterns and trends, and to measure progress on indicators.

Recruitment of entrepreneurs into the programme is an ongoing exercise and baseline and monitoring data will be collected for new cohorts of entrepreneurs (at entry into the programme for baseline and annually for the monitoring data). At the end of the programme, an independent evaluation will be carried out.

AWOME Community of Practice

Recognizing that the AWOME Programme has a limited lifespan but the needs of the entrepreneurs and economies supported are infinite, the Programme is designed with a deliberate intention to enhance the scale and sustainability of results. The implementation model thrives when there is sufficient knowledge sharing and skills transfer at different levels within and across actors and organizations. UN Women, therefore, established a structured Community of Practice (COP) as the platform that will facilitate learning within and amongst AWOME Programme countries. The AWOME COP is a structure to enhance the capacity of trainers and practitioners involved in the implementation of the AWOME Programme in different skills set that are essential for programme delivery but also contribute to their professional development. A specific objective of the COP is to build skills and expertise in knowledge areas that are relevant in the development sector in terms of designing, planning, executing, and reporting on development programmes and projects and contributing effectively to organizational goals. Such skills include communication, collaboration, teamwork, initiative, accountability, and personal leadership skills.

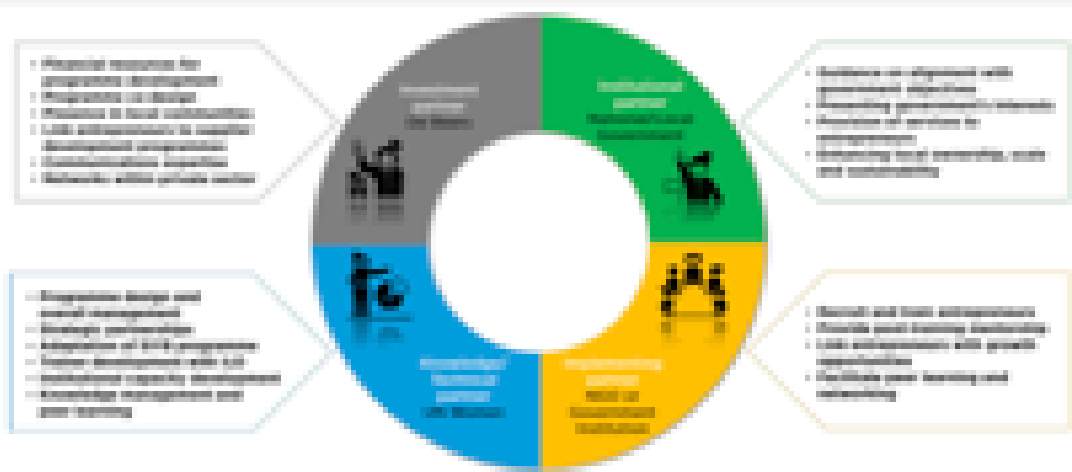


3 THE PARTNERSHIP MODEL

The Acceleration of Women-Owned Micro-Enterprises Programme is part of De Beers Group's global partnership with UN Women that began in 2013. De Beers signed on as a corporate impact champion for HeForShe – UN Women's Global Solidarity movement for gender equality and women's empowerment. As a champion, De Beers committed to achieving gender parity in appointments to senior management within its business, being a positive force for gender equality through its marketing campaigns, and supporting women in its

partner communities. A key part of this was supporting women micro-entrepreneurs in the informal sector in its southern Africa partner countries - Botswana, Namibia and South Africa. The partnership was expanded to institutions in the respective countries, working with government to co-design and co-implement the programme. Where relevant, NGO partners were recruited to support implementation culminating in the partnership model described underneath. Figure 2 outlines the roles and responsibilities in the AWOEME Partnership model.

FIGURE 2: THE AWOEME PARTNERSHIP MODEL



3.1 Why and how are partnerships key to women's enterprise development programmes?

The scale, scope and complexity of economic and social transformation is such that no one sector – government, the private sector, civil society, or development partners – can do it alone. According to the World Economic Forum, we are still 200 years away from gender parity in the global economy.¹ And yet, countries have agreed to end gender equality by 2030 according to the Sustainable Development Goals. With this fast approaching target, cross-sector partnerships are crucial to achieve the scale and sustainable impact that will lead to economic development.

The last of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – Goal 17 is on Partnerships to achieve the Goals with an emphasis on international investment and financing, market access, fair practices and overall cooperation. It specifically calls on government, the private sector and civil society to focus on outcomes that benefit vulnerable and marginalised communities.

A survey by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee of Member countries found that private sector engagements that are part of multi-stakeholder partnerships, heighten impact. There is a development "value-add" when government, private sector, civil society and knowledge partners such as multilateral development agencies, work in partnership and leverage the skills and expertise of others.

For government, the motive is clear – achieving national development outcomes. For the private sector, investing in gender equality can have a direct impact on economic growth.

Research indicates that advancing gender equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth.² Africa alone could add \$26 billion (30%) to GDP by 2025 if each country made advances in women's equality to match the countries in the region that have achieved the most progress towards parity. Conversely without accelerated action, gender disparity could cost the continent \$200 billion by 2025.³

Cross sector partnerships help us to achieve the scale we want but also to sustain the impact created. Partnerships can also unleash innovative ways of working, mobilise expertise and resources and create shared accountability in an increasingly complex world. Innovative partnerships looks beyond philanthropy and corporate social investment to actual shared value, where each partner has a valuable role, through their role, generates value beyond "doing good" and achieves transformation through collaboration. It is about how we all choose to do business and how we organize philanthropic strategy, business, industry and society to reflect principles of equality on an everyday level, so they permeate our cultures, our values, and our performance.

Building partnerships which are long lasting, scalable and transformative and which create shared value is key. In the context of global instability and economic transformation, there are new opportunities and responsibilities for each sector and shared interest in achieving the world envisioned by the SDGs.



"We decided to work in the three countries where De Beers is present and together with De Beers identify a particular community or area that needed this programme most. Working with such a partner makes sense because we wanted to be able to show real impact."

Anne Githuku-Shongwe, UN Women
South Africa Multi-Country Office Representative



"It's been a true partnership to co-design the programme. We have had significant engagement with local stakeholders, and the results of these conversations have been factored into the design with UN Women. Additionally, working with the ministries and the local trainers has proven vital and has resulted in a very strong model."

Katie Ferguson, Senior Vice President,
Sustainable Impact, De Beers

¹ World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report 2020

² McKinsey & Co., Women of Power Report 2019

³ McKinsey & Co., Women of Power Africa Report 2019

3.1.1 Key benefits of cross sector partnerships

Investment

Cross sector partnerships provide access to financial resources that may otherwise be unavailable. Government partners may have articulated plans to invest in certain areas but may be unable to design or fund these programmes. Private sector partners are able to invest significantly in empowerment programmes though longer term investment is required for lasting transformational change.

Designing innovative solutions

The achievement of the ambitious SDGs and particularly gender equality and women's empowerment, requires transformative shifts, integrated approaches, and new solutions. The diversity and complementarity of cross sector partners creates opportunities for new approaches and genuine innovation. With AWCME, the utilisation of trainers who are familiar with the environments the entrepreneurs operate in, the inclusion of local stakeholders such as women's business associations, and the customisation of training materials for each country context has increased the efficiency and effectiveness of women's economic empowerment efforts.

Bringing Expertise

Working in partnership enables a systemic way of approaching complex issues and often brings together essential and complementary, technical expertise from multiple sectors. Having a variety of knowledge bases offers the opportunity to achieve greater efficiency and boosts the shared value for each partner. AWCME brings together a multiplicity of stakeholders across sectors and relies on their expertise for efficient implementation. For example, local government partners provide critical information on the needs of women entrepreneurs, or Master Trainers offer important feedback that leads to adjustments in delivery.

The achievement of the ambitious SDGs and particularly gender equality and women's empowerment, requires transformative shifts, integrated approaches, and new solutions.

Ownership and Accountability

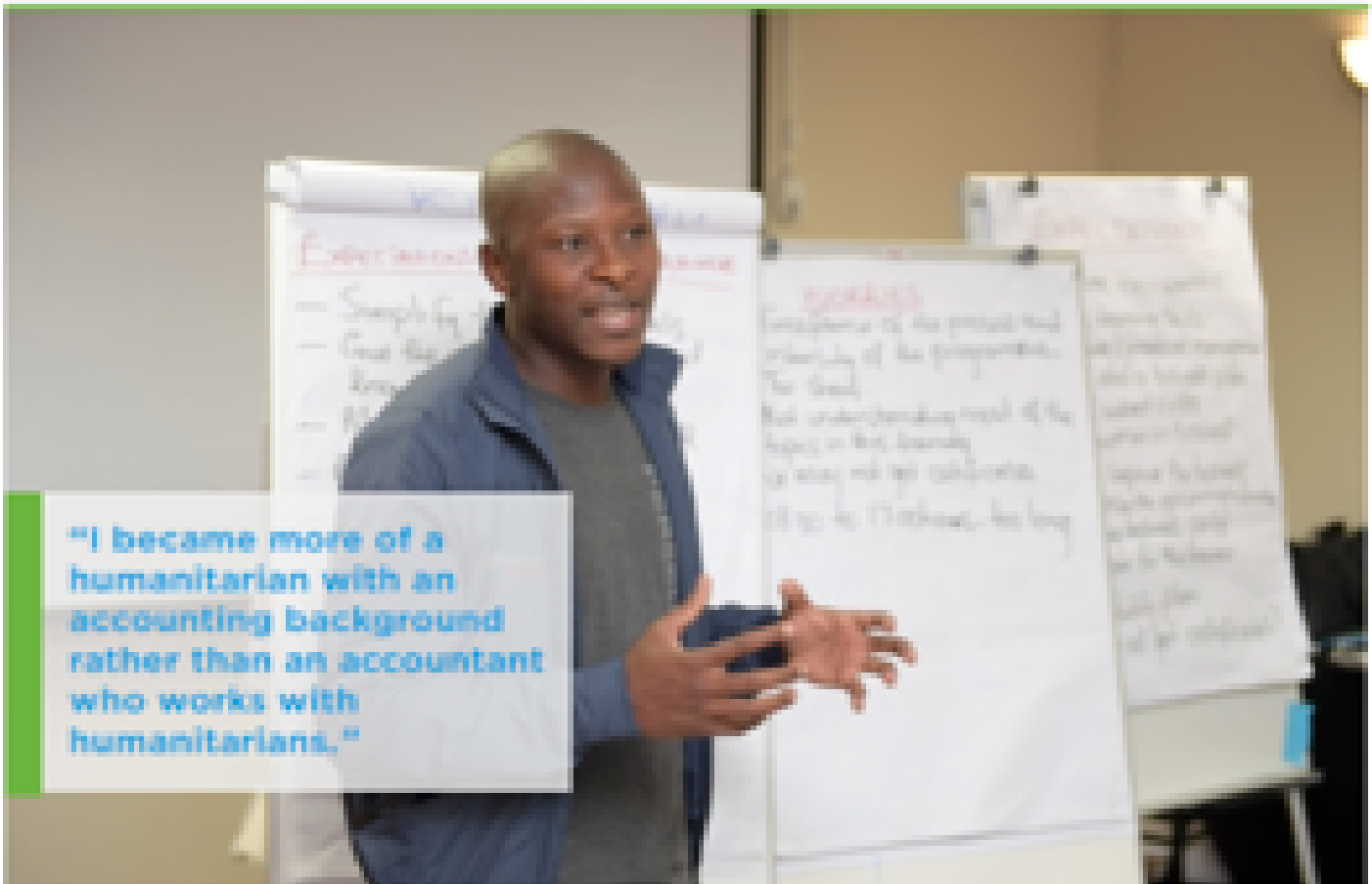
Due to the joint ownership of process and outcomes, partnerships may bolster programme ownership and accountability. From the onset, clarity in partner expectations with regards to working relationship – responsibilities and benefits – are all critical factors. Building trust between partners is particularly important to support the day-to-day working relationship and is usually the result of collaborative decision-making, the distribution of tasks according to expertise and capabilities and the facilitation of space for interaction and feedback, as well as fostering a culture of mutual adjustment.

Building Institutional Capacity

Capacity building is integral to the sustainability of development efforts. It involves equipping both individual and institutions with knowledge, tools and resources needed to reach their goals. It also allows these to be then tailored for national and local economic development. In developing their knowledge and skills, institutions are able to empower themselves and develop programmes and projects based on the knowledge and subsequently lead on the implementation themselves.

This capacity building fits into the bigger picture of development – supporting national plans to achieve national and global development goals. The AWCME programme is tailored specifically to the needs of each country and it is designed to enhance national economic development plans so that its impact goes beyond the initial partnership. Institutional capacity building is therefore an integral part of this process and is central to the both the scalability and sustainability of results. Government partners are a crucial part of the implementation model therefore considerable investment has been made in adequate knowledge sharing and skills transfer at different levels within and across actors and organizations so that the learnings, good practices and benefits of the programme are widely shared.

Institutional capacity development also has the potential to stimulate interest from within the staff of the organizations involved in the partnership as the case study of Keith Chigweta, Finance Manager at Hand-in-Hand Southern Africa demonstrates.



“I became more of a humanitarian with an accounting background rather than an accountant who works with humanitarians.”

Keith Chigutel, the Finance Manager at Hand in Hand Southern Africa says that when the NGO started working on the AWOHE programme, he found himself having to do field work which changed his views on development work. “A paradigm shift happened - I moved from being a typical accountant who sits at the office having coffee to going straight into the field and being hands-on, trying to understand the project, setting up the controls for the project, seeing how the systems would work on the ground and often going to visit entrepreneurs at their business to get a first-hand view.”

Keith says these field visits allowed him to see the difference AWOHE was making in the lives of the participants. “You see that what you are doing has a direct impact on human lives. You see someone who was having one meal a day and after the impact of what we are doing, they can afford to have three meals; they can afford to send their children to school. Then you realise that human as we are, when something really good has happened, you feel satisfied from the inside.”

He also changed the way in which he worked once he understood the dynamics of the programme and the long-term impact that AWOHE provides not just to the women being trained, but also to many more who may derive employment and other benefits from the success of a micro-enterprise. “It makes you change and become more focused, trying to uplift the women and being out there, it changed me drastically. I became more of a humanitarian with an accounting background rather than an accountant who works with humanitarians. It changed a lot of the typical thinking accountants have that I also had. I had to invest myself in the programme, to the point where I can even train if there is a situation beyond our control that requires it!”

Ultimately, Keith says that working on the AWOHE programme has been life-changing. “It is so fulfilling to see someone’s life being uplifted.”

3.1.1 Five key success factors for cross-sector partnerships

1

Work at high-level and community level - global partnerships but should be able to be cascaded down to local/grassroots level - working with communities, local government, etc.

2

Supported by government partners - collaboration with government partners who are able to ensure that the programme fits in with existing national development plans and form synergies with other programmes. Government partners are also crucial to ensure sustainability of the programme using their institutional oversight. Working with government is critical for sustainability because the state has a perpetual mandate for development.

3

Presence in the area where the programme will be implemented - forging a relationship with local/community stakeholders such as local government representatives, associations, traditional leaders are critical to forging a sense of ownership of programmes.

4

Replicable in a variety of contexts - the value of cross sector partnerships lies in the ability to use the same implementation model in varying context. ANCOM has been successfully implemented in three countries with similar socio-economic challenges such as high inequality and unemployment; but with diverse economies, political systems and demographic structures.

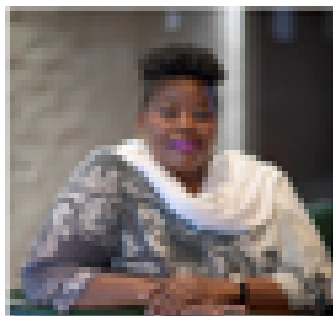
5

Sustainable over time - Partnerships that offer the potential for both scaling and replicating operations in new areas must be based on sustainable implementation. By building national capacity and reducing dependency by finding alternative sources of investment, a holistic and long-term approach to promoting gender equality in socio-economic sectors can be created. The ANCOM programme is tailored specifically to the needs of each country and it is designed to enhance national economic development plans so that its impact goes beyond the initial partnership.

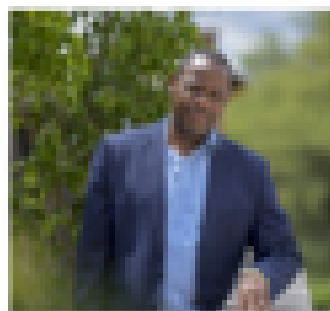
3.2 Country-level partnership models and experience

3.2.1 Model in Botswana (UN Women/De Beers/Ministry/Adore Little Children NGO)

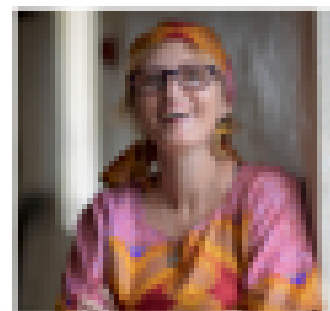
FIGURE 3: THE AWOHE PARTNERSHIP MODEL IN BOTSWANA



Dotsi Sotlumen Deputy Director, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development Botswana
 "Our country's philosophy of *Prosperity for All* means never leaving anyone behind. For this to happen, we need to build strong relationships with partners who can make programmes like this work. One can't do this alone as resources are always a challenge."

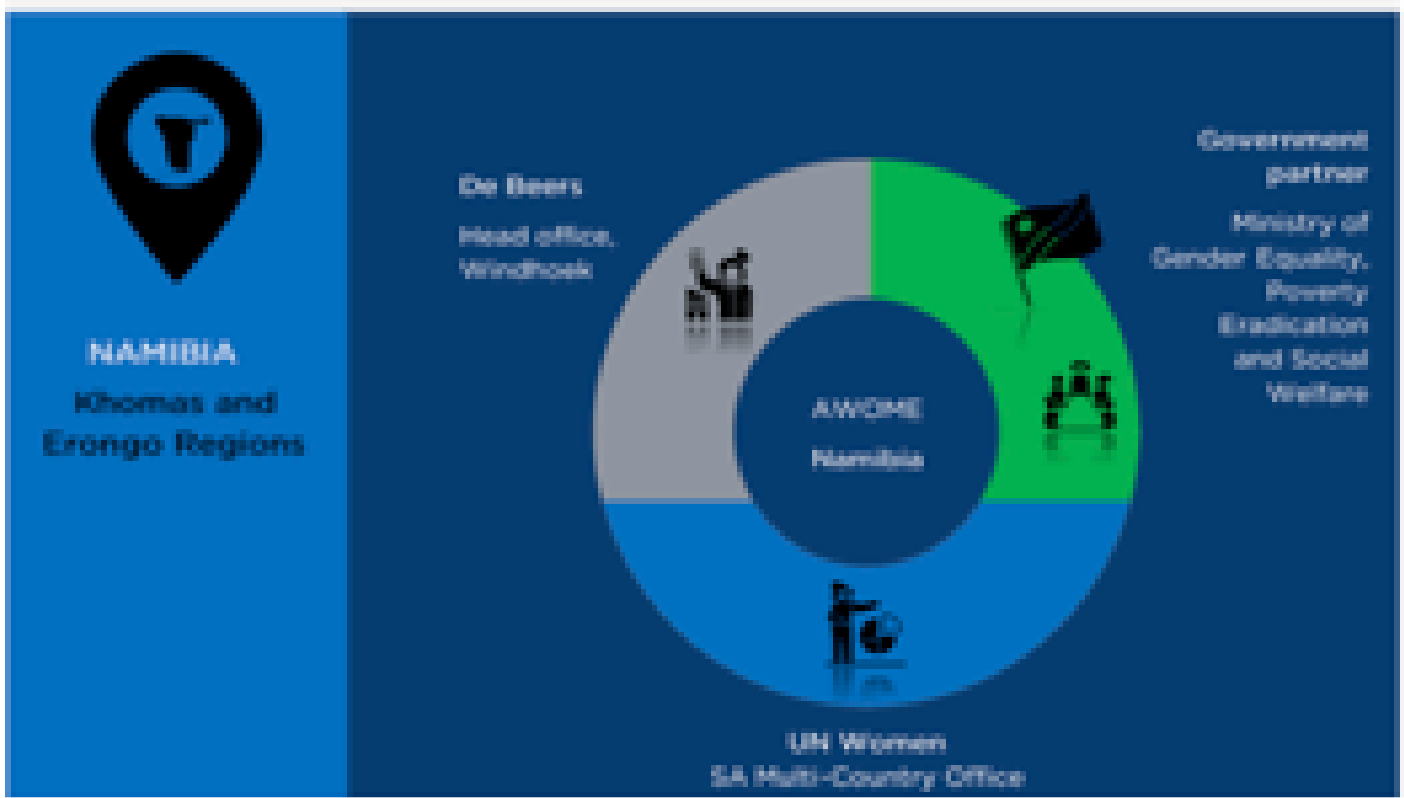


Bakone Bokone, Botswana Government Representative (AWOHE Trainer)
 "The women are really enjoying the courses and learning so much through interactive learning."



Patsy Curtis, Executive Director, Adore Little Children, Botswana
 "We initially started an NGO to help children and we later broadened our projects to help the mothers. Because to help kids you also need to help the moms. The programme has enabled me to spend more time on the ground and less time on admin. They have increased our capacity. When we started here, these women didn't know to dream, but with the help of De Beers and the UN Women, these women have lit up."

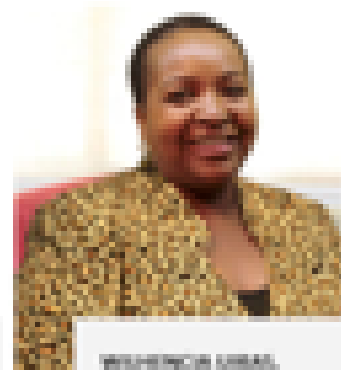
FIGURE 4: THE AWOME PARTNERSHIP MODEL IN NAMIBIA



HON DOREEN NKOMO,
 Minister of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare
 "This partnership with UN Women and De Beers seeks to address challenges that women entrepreneurs face by stimulating income growth through capacity strengthening in business management provided to micro women entrepreneurs, so that their enterprises can grow from micro to small and medium in the long run."

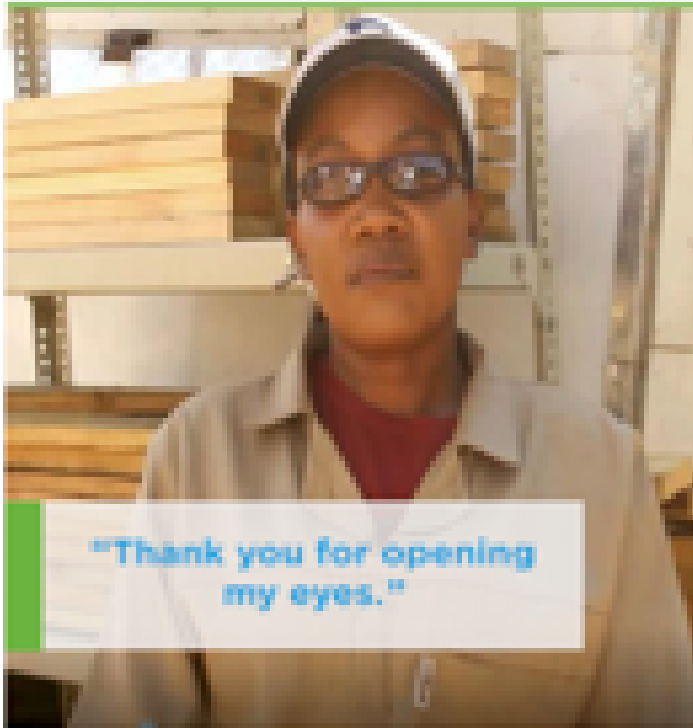


MR DAVID HALL,
 Resident Director, De Beers Group
 "De Beers committed to reaching gender parity in appointment rates into senior leadership so partnerships like this are part of our contribution to broader women empowerment initiatives in Namibia. We stand with women and girls, because it is right for society and makes society better."

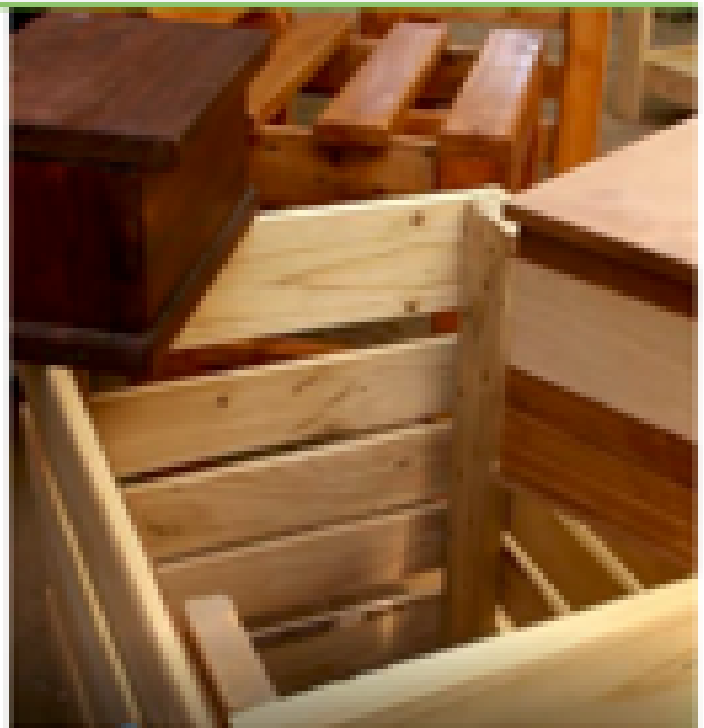


WILHELMINE URRAL,
 former Executive Director, Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare
 "The programme is a bit different from other programmes we have done before because in the first place it is a strategic partnership between the government, a development agency and the private sector so that is unique in itself. Secondly, it provides training on a programme that is aligned to the International Labour Organization so it is really moving beyond a Namibian programme to a programme that is internationally accredited."

CASE STUDY: PENELESIA KAJOVI, ENTREPRENEUR, NAMIBIA



"Thank you for opening my eyes."



14 Penelesia Kajovi at her business. New products for customers at Spring Valley. Images: Penelesia Kajovi/Supplied

Penelesia Kajovi is a resident in Katutura Soweto location. She runs a carpentry and joinery works business. After her graduation from the Windhoek Vocational Training Centre in 2003, she worked for several companies until April 2019 when she decided to start a business in her backyard - manufacturing tables, cupboards, beds, chairs and TV stands from renewable pallet wood.

In August 2019 Penelesia attended the AiWOME training and covered all the six (YB (Improve Your Business) manuals. Before the training, Penelesia did not keep any records or do any proper costing for her products or services. She was also uninformed of effective marketing strategies and tools.

After the training, she started implementing the knowledge she had gained at her business. "The (YB) manuals became the backbone for my business - they guide me daily. Now I can do my costing and keep proper records for the business."

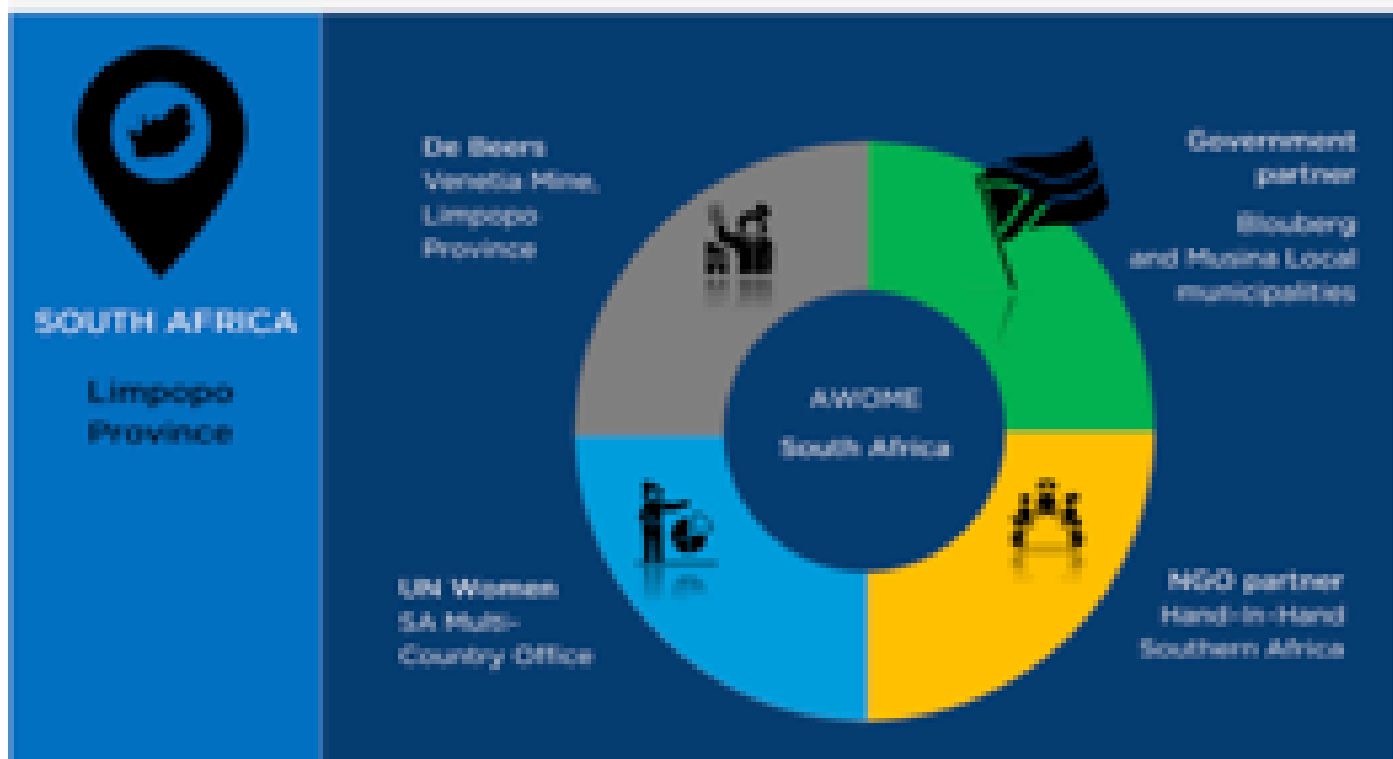
She also hired a film crew that shot a video of her business offering for social media. Additionally, by communicating with her customers and paying more attention to their needs, she realised that she needed to adapt the style of some of her products to increase the value. These changes have increased her productivity and the number of customers she serves.

Today, she has recruited one employee in her business, and she can support her family financially. Penelesia has big dreams for her business; she wants to move to bigger premises, buy more equipment and employ more workers.

Penelesia feels AiWOME should reach as many businesswomen as possible and she would want to be part of encouraging others to attend because she feels many women entrepreneurs are unaware that they lack the skills to run their businesses properly. "Thank you for opening my eyes."

3.2.3 Model in Model in South Africa (UN Women/De Beers/Blouberg and Musina Local Municipalities/NGO Partner)

FIGURE 5: THE AWOME PARTNERSHIP MODEL IN SOUTH AFRICA



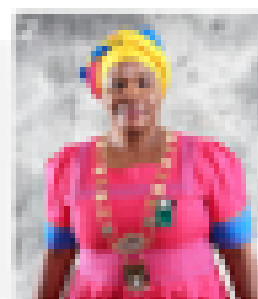
CHE SOLOMON PEEDI
Mayor, Blouberg Local Municipality

"This programme has managed to go to the outskirts of our country and touched the most disadvantaged women. It is not a once-off activity. We need to make sure that we sustain what we have started. In other words our relationship must be kept at all times; we must always be together in planning."¹



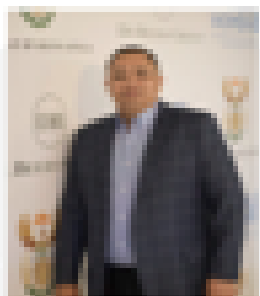
OUR MASHOBI STEEL MASHOPI
Mayor, Musina Local Municipality

"We must make sure that women are organised and ready to access opportunities and empower themselves economically. We have a problem with unemployment and women can be a solution by staying committed to their businesses. It's possible to create sustainable enterprises from the small businesses that exist now."²



GREGORY FLETCHER
Senior Manager for Enterprise and Supplier Development

"UN Women, the Hand-in-Hand team and of course the municipality were absolutely critical because the programme involved mobilising quite a number of women and also putting steps and processes in place to ensure that we could get the women together at a time and place that suited the women and to make a success of the training."³

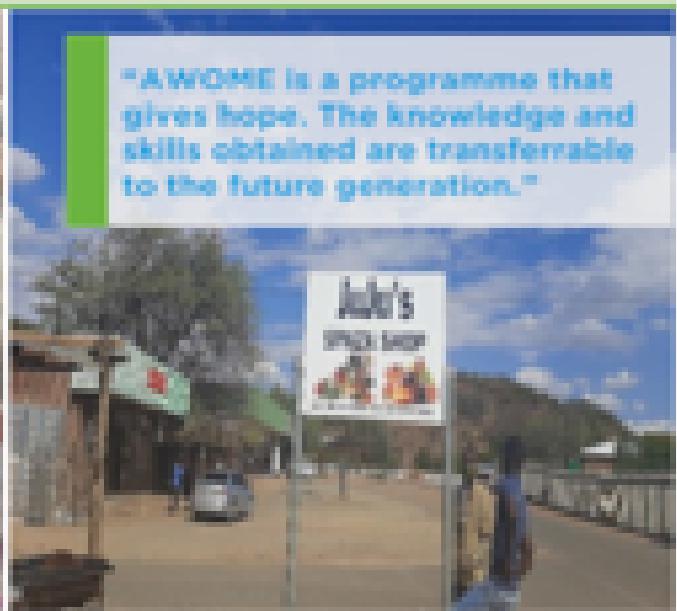


LAWRENCE GADOMWA
Chief Executive Officer,
Hand-in-Hand Southern Africa

"The uniqueness of the partnership is that there is a coordinated effort from all the partners that are involved in planning and operationalising the implementation of the project itself. There is always constant feedback and communication. There is coordination in terms of dealing with any challenges and gaps that we encounter during project implementation."⁴



CASE STUDY: JULIA SIWADA, ENTREPRENEUR, SOUTH AFRICA



1-8 Julia Siwada with tourists at her shop; 4 signboard near Julia's shop. Images: Julia Siwada/Topical

In 2016, Julia Siwada started her retail business with just one case of tomatoes. With the profits made from selling vegetables, the 53-year-old single mother of five opened a small food stall in Masisi, 15 kilometres away from the Kruger National Park, where she sold *gup* (maize flour porridge) and chicken.

Her business, Julia's Spaza Shop, which began as a means of survival to support her children, now sells snacks, clothing and health products in addition to cooked food and vegetables. She caters mostly to tourists, police officers, and soldiers in addition to the local community.

Julia joined the AWOME programme in 2019 when it was introduced in the Masisi area. "I wanted to see my business grow in terms of revenue and job creation."

Before attending the training, Julia's business was not making enough profit - this was due to poor management and insufficient planning. "My business was not registered, and I did not have a bank account. I had no records of daily and monthly sales, or of the stock I bought and I based my prices on what others were charging," says Julia. She also had not conducted any market research and did not advertise her business and its offerings.

Following the AWOME training, Julia now keeps records of her daily and monthly sales that contribute to her knowing how much she makes every month and calculates profit. "I have learnt about the different ways of promoting my business, keeping records and mostly the importance of registering my business."

She saves the profits from her sales to support her children in terms of school fees and other necessities. She is also building a house from the profit made by her business. Though her business was negatively affected by the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020, the business is on the verge of recovery.

Julia's spaza shop has grown from being an informal operation to a fully registered business with the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission, the South Africa Revenue Service, the (government's) Central Supplier Database, and the Local Municipality. "I opened a bank account for the business, and I am now able to apply for grants for my business from different organisations. I was really excited to get my AWOME certificate as everywhere I go to apply for a grant, I display it."

In addition to ongoing mentorship on the different business skills, Julia also attended a digital literacy training - learning fundamental digital skills such as using email and social media. She now has an email address and a Facebook account to advertise her business. "I have an email address now, and I can send an email which I never thought I could do. I never thought I could make it as I am not educated - but the trainers made it easier for us to understand especially the use of the local language."

Julia has taken the initiative to teach others on the business skills she has acquired, and she also assists the less privileged in her community either through her work or donating food whenever necessary. "The training was a blessing so that we also can grow our businesses as well as our selves. AWOME is a programme that gives hope. The knowledge and skills obtained are transferrable to the future generation," she says.



4

LIMITATIONS OF THE AWOME PROGRAMME AND KEY LESSONS LEARNT

1

The programme primary intervention is capacity building. Entrepreneurs often require other forms of support such as technical skills, access to market and access to finances. The AWOME programme contributes to addressing the other gaps by linking entrepreneurs supported to relevant institutions.

3

The programme has limited geographical scope within implementing countries despite marked interest from other geographies. The programme has set up mechanisms to mentor and handhold other organizations to implement in other locations. However, capacity to provide this support is limited to avoid compromising the high standards required of the SIB Programme. Additionally, the programme capacity building strategy of trainers creates sustainability - from training of Trainers to Training of Master Trainers - ensuring that there will be continued capacity building of new trainers long after the programme is phased out.

2

Development programmes do not have to re-invent the wheel. By collaborating with ILO to apply the SIB model, the programme enhanced efficiency and benefitted from the use of manuals and tools that have been tested and applied widely across the globe in addition to improved quality through technical support from ILO.

4

Partnership and collaboration with diverse organizations increases impact. Coordinating such partnerships is complex. Creating a common understanding and a shared goal, with mutual trust, transparency and joint ownership of outcomes contributes to the partnership's success. This requires continuous effort and not a once-off activity.

5

Collaboration with government to provide other services that fall within government's mandate (for instance business registration) is critical. Compliance after the initial support still presents challenges for entrepreneurs for example renewal of registrations and compliance with regulatory bodies such as tax authorities among others.

7

Investing in developing the capacity required to address evolving needs, and building robust monitoring processes are key cannot be overemphasised. Yet they compete for time and resources with activities that are targeted at entrepreneurs who are the ultimate beneficiaries. It is important to scale down the reach of the programme (in terms of number of entrepreneurs reached) and ensure that the investment in capacity and the robust monitoring processes gets embedded in the national approaches for suitability and scale. Ultimately, the impact will be more sustainable and will reach more than a single programme could reach in the usually limited timeframes of the programme.

6

Entrepreneurs' and communities needs and circumstances are always evolving (even without considering the COVID-19 pandemic). Actors need to continually redefine scope and innovate interventions that address emerging contexts in a responsive manner.

8

Considering 6 and 7, the programme performance matrix should not merely focus on the number of entrepreneurs reached. Investment in capacity building (for sustainability) and monitoring processes should all count as equally important results which are intended to enhance scale, duplication and sustainability.

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UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. It works globally to make the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals a reality for women and girls and stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on four strategic priorities: Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems; Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy; All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence; Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience, and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.

UN Women South Africa Multi-Country Office
351 Francis Beard Street
Metro Park Building
Pretoria, 0001, South Africa
Tel: +27(0)5648139

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