

LEARNING IN PRACTICE

Vibrant Solutions

2017 DEVELOPING ENTREPRENEURS PROJECT FINAL REPORT



Developing Entrepreneurs Project: 2017

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1. Purpose of the Developing Entrepreneurs Project

There is worldwide recognition of the need to develop the potential of the youth to take their rightful place in building economies and addressing socio-economic injustices through active citizenship. “We cannot talk about sustainable development without the active involvement of youth. When we give young people decent jobs, political weight, negotiating muscle, and real influence in our world, they will create a better future.” - *United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon*

South Africa is faced with the challenge of poor economic participation of the youth, which inhibits the country’s economic development and imposes a larger burden on the state to provide social assistance. The prominent features of this underdeveloped participation are high persistent youth unemployment and low entrepreneurial activity. The unemployment rate among the youth (15 – 34 years) is 36% or 3.3 million people (Stats SA 2012); and, in terms of entrepreneurial activity, South Africa is lagging behind other African countries: *only 12% of South Africans intend to become entrepreneurs compared with around 70% in Botswana, Angola, Malawi and Uganda* (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2013).

Thus, OneVoice South Africa (OVSA) decided to change their strategy from hosting annual career indabas for Grade 11s to developing a group of 15 learners to start their businesses and demonstrate entrepreneurial competencies in their lives. In this way, deserving youth were allowed to develop skills vitally needed for life after school – whether they study further, take a job or become entrepreneurs. Through hard work, initiative and creativity, the learners positively impact not only their own lives but also act as role models for other learners.

2. Process of the Developing Entrepreneurs Project

2.1 Business Plan Competition

To select 15 deserving young people to be part of the Developing Entrepreneurs Project, OVSA implemented a Business Plan Competition, and all Grade 11s that were participating in the OVSA Enterprise Project (during their Life Orientation classes) had the opportunity to submit a Business Plan to start their own viable small business, for the Business Plan Competition.

On 15 September 2016, the panel of judges (consisting of Dumile Khubone and Sanele Phungula of the Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Marlijn van Berne of OVSA and Bérénice de La Croix of Learning in Practice) met to review the submitted 100 business plans. Selection criteria were discussed and agreed upon by the panel of judges, and 15 top business plans were selected from the top 100 business plans submitted by schools across eThekweni and iLembe Districts. These top 15 learners were then allowed to participate in the Developing Entrepreneurs workshops.

2.1.1 Criteria for business plan selection

- The feasibility of implementing the plan with the learner’s available time, skills and resources
- Evidence of thinking, logic and research
- Evidence of the learner’s work
- Effort and professionalism shown in layout and attachments
- Sustainability of the business

- Learner's potential worth investing in (as evidenced by the plan)
- Learner's academic results

2.2 Developing 15 Entrepreneurs

The 15 Learners who won the Business Plan Competition were awarded the opportunity to participate in the Developing Entrepreneurs Project that started on 5 October 2016 and concluded with the graduation event on 3 July 2017. The learners received seven full days of intensive training and mentoring, as well as telephonic support, to equip them with the necessary entrepreneurial skills to establish a business, enhance their employability and improve their capacity to succeed in tertiary education.

The 15 learners proved their determination to grow as leaders and entrepreneurs by entering the competition, consistently attending the training events, and producing a profit from their small businesses. In developing the entrepreneurial skills of initiative-taking, creative problem-solving, resourcefulness, accountability and time management, the learners are now enabled to succeed as leaders and entrepreneurs in their communities and thus create meaningful and contributing lives.

2.2.1 Key project outcomes

Learners were guided to:

- Channel their energy into making a positive difference in their own lives
- Understand the difference between entitlement and enablement
- Develop a life vision and personal mission statement
- Identify and develop their talents
- Understand the role of entrepreneurial competencies to achieve their life vision
- Develop entrepreneurial competencies:
 - Resourcefulness
 - Creative problem-solving
 - Determination
 - Accountability
 - Time management
 - Emotional intelligence
 - Self-management
- Turn community problems into business opportunities
- Make products from recycled materials
- Develop viable business plans
- Implement their business plans, develop business skills and make a profit
- Foster partnerships with churches, local businesses and community leaders to support their business
- Become leaders and role models in their communities

At the graduation event on 3 July 2017, a panel of judges decided which learners qualified for a completion certificate as well as the 9 bursaries sponsored by Boston City Campus and the Institute of Marketing Management. The judges based their decision on the learners' academic results, final

business plan, final report and final presentation detailing the outcomes they had achieved in developing their small businesses. The learners presented their learning journeys through their own stories, supporting evidence, photos and testimonials while the judges asked clarifying questions.

Of the 15 learners who participated in the project, 14 received completion certificates indicating that they had successfully met the necessary criteria. The nine learners who demonstrated the most growth in developing entrepreneurial competencies during the project, as well as good academic results, were awarded bursaries to study at tertiary institutions.

2.3 Workshop for Life Orientation (LO) teachers

To improve the teaching of career guidance and entrepreneurship in the schools that OVSA works with, a workshop was offered to LO teachers on 13 September 2016 and was attended by 18 teachers. The Central Admissions Office collaborated with OVSA in this initiative by providing useful materials that will help LO teachers to support learners in completing study and bursary applications.

2.3.1 Key workshop outcomes

LO teachers developed the understanding, skills and resources to teach learners:

- Career guidance
- Entrepreneurship
- How to complete study applications
- How to complete bursary applications
- How to develop career portfolios

The participation of the LO teachers was energetic and committed. A Professional Learning Community (PLC) of LO teachers was set up during the workshop to support the teachers in creating effective lesson plans, assessment strategies and extended learning opportunities (such as career days). The PLC has an elected co-ordinator and will continue to meet and stay in touch via WhatsApp in 2017. The PLC is also important in providing support for the 15 learners in the Developing Entrepreneurs Project to succeed in their businesses and in developing career paths.

Participants were given feedback forms to evaluate the workshop and help OVSA plan for further LO workshops in the future. The comment that was repeated most often was the value gained by teachers in learning how to plan an LO lesson. It is recommended that OVSA facilitators plan with the LO teachers at the beginning of each year, as this will improve the impact of LO in the schools where OVSA is active.

2.3.2 Feedback from participants

- *“Overall, it was very informative”*
- *“It was productive, and the teachers’ experience and involvement opened other methods of learning”*
- *“The workshop went very well and made working with young people much easier”*
- *“The workshop was very educational as it was directed to us as educators as to how we should teach and approach our learners in instilling ways and techniques of choosing a career”*

- *"It was quite informative and fruitful; it was also well organised, and important issues were discussed as well as challenges faced by teachers offering LO as a subject"*
- *"The workshop was very productive in a way that it became a guide to assist us when helping learners with subject selection"*
- *"It was a well-planned workshop"*
- *"It was too excellent"*

Participants' most significant learning:

- Entrepreneurship activities to be implemented by the learners
- All lessons should be goal-oriented
- The importance of teamwork
- Planning a career guidance day with learners dressing up in different occupations
- Workplace ethics
- Allow meaningful interaction in the classroom; involve learners
- Engage learners in understanding different careers; let learners research different career paths so that they are clear what is involved before they decide
- Use diverse teaching strategies
- Make use of different learner support materials

Participants' suggestions to improve further workshops:

- Start on time - even when teachers are late
- Give more time to the workshop
- Invite all teachers because career guidance does not only involve LO teachers, but the whole school
- Arrange furniture to enable full communication and participation

3. Impact of the Developing Entrepreneurs Project

The impact of the project was assessed through studying the learners' feedback forms, pre- and post-assessments, final reports and final presentations.



Pre assessment.doc



Post assessment.doc



final report.doc



final
presentation.doc

3.1 Small business development

In response to the question: *What experience have you had as an entrepreneur?* in the Pre-Assessment, only four learners had had any experience. During the Developing Entrepreneurs Project, all 15 participants put the learning acquired in the workshops into practice and developed small businesses. In struggling through all the issues involved in setting up and running a small business, they learned about entrepreneurship through practical experience, and this should stand them in good stead to successfully run a full-time business when they are finished studying.

The learners experimented with different businesses during the project before settling on the businesses below. It was clear, from the final reports and presentations, that the learners had developed confidence and entrepreneurial competencies while running their businesses. Out of the 15

learners who participated in the project, 14 met the necessary criteria to be awarded completion certificates at the graduation ceremony.

In developing their small businesses, the learners decided on a business name, product/service and slogan based on market research; they then calculated their selling price and, through the ups and downs of running a small business, learned valuable lessons and were ultimately successful in making a profit. The learners' businesses in the last chapter of the project were as follows:

Name of business	Product/Service	Slogan
1) Choco Sweet Cakes	Cakes and lollipops	It's Sweet when it pops with Cakes
2) Fumbatha Knit-Wear	Knit wear	Keeping you Warm and Cosy
3) Thumbeza Dishes	Fried chips	Caring for Taste Bud Desires
4) Myeza's Catering and Décor Services	Party planning	Good Food Right on Time
5) FLABBA	Lipstick	Beauty and Confidence are what We Believe In
6) Samela's Bakery	Muffins and cupcakes	Making Yours a Double
7) Colour Splash Project	Traditional jewellery	Adding Colour to Culture
8) Menziwa's Fast Food	Fried chips	Different Taste... Ever Delicious
9) All Washed Up Exterior Maintenance Company	Cleaning and maintaining home exteriors	Spick and Span
10) Aphiwe's Sweet Magic Cupcakes	Cupcakes	I just can't make love without a cupcake, can you?
11) MathsTutorFlex	Tutoring maths to improve maths results	Expect to be an Expert in Maths
12) Shining Crystal	Cards for special occasions to build strong relationships	Glowing for You
13) Grab a Joule	Healthy food especially greens to encourage people to be healthy and lose weight	Improve your Health
14) Sweet Munchies	Cupcakes	Taste the Sweetness
15) GHD's (Going Healthy Diets)	Prepared food	Taste Once, Bite Once, All Gone

The learners' small businesses in action



3.2 Enjoyment in being entrepreneurs

The learners indicated that what they especially enjoyed about being an entrepreneur in practice was making money, being independent and becoming a role model and inspiration for other youth. They also mentioned that they enjoyed networking, working with people of different races and personalities and understanding people's needs. Specific skills were developed, for example "becoming good at numbers so that I don't keep my customers waiting for their change".

The following were typical responses to the question: *What did you enjoy about being an entrepreneur?* and suggest that the project gave learners the opportunity to grow in confidence and social standing:

- *"My highlight is when I get other young upcoming entrepreneurs looking up to me."*
- *"I enjoyed being my own boss, being in charge of everything I do and also being a leader"*
- *"Most exciting thing about being an entrepreneur is to make cash!"*
- *"Now I know how to turn challenges into opportunities"*
- *"What I enjoyed about being an entrepreneur is being a leader and having the opportunity to meet people with different personalities, which challenges me to know how to deal with different people."*
- *"I have enjoyed that when you are an entrepreneur, you work for yourself and don't have to report to anyone. I have also enjoyed making money of my own and feeling independent"*
- *"I enjoyed learning lots of new things as I teach, sharing ideas with people in my classrooms, having money that I worked for and being considered a good role model by learners who also want to be entrepreneurs"*
- *"I enjoyed taking risks and facing challenges"*
- *"My highlight of entrepreneurial life is putting a smile on somebody else's face"*

3.3 Significant take-away learning

Learners developed entrepreneurial competencies in this project that will assist them in life and business in the future. In response to the question, *what are the main things you learned about being an entrepreneur?* learners emphasised perseverance, customer service skills, time management and creativity.

The following responses are typical and provide a snapshot of the most significant take-away learning from the learners' perspective:

- *"It's important to have a vision for my business"*
- *"Be punctual, deliver products to customers on time: "I had to have a delivery schedule"*
- *"The importance of staying in touch with customers to find out if they're satisfied"*
- *"Hard work and perseverance are key to success"*
- *"Treating customers with respect has helped me gain more fans"*
- *"Optimism, enthusiasm, creativity, risk taking – through constant and persistent practice"*
- *"I have learned that you are not too young to follow your dreams, and you should not let your past stop you from being successful"*
- *"How to speak out, have confidence and stand up for myself"*
- *"Being confident about my business so that people can believe in it"*
- *"Be patient and never give up"*
- *"Keep coming up with new creative strategies to improve my product"*
- *"Pay attention to customers' comments"*
- *Dealing with negative people, "people who are like a wet blanket": "I only took what is right and what will help me"*
- *"Being strong and sticking to what I believed: if things didn't go my way I had to be strong and go for option two"*
- *"Not everyone will be honest with you and not everything goes as planned"*
- *"Improvise"*

3.4 Overcoming real-life challenges

In establishing and running small businesses, learners had the opportunity to grapple with real-life challenges, developing entrepreneurial skills as they found solutions. In response to the prompt, *explain the challenges you have had as an entrepreneur and how you overcame these challenges*, learners highlighted the following challenges and solutions that they had experienced as entrepreneurs:

<u>Challenge</u>	<u>Solution</u>
Competitors	Change ways of advertising and introduce new similar products Cut down the cost of my product
Trying to understand what my customers need	Talk to my customers and adjust the product based on customer needs, e.g. by using bright colours
Shortage of materials to meet the high demand	Buy wool in bulk
Need to attract customers	Increase my social circle Design attractive posters and hang them close to many people
Late delivery of cakes	Wake up early to make sure cakes are delivered on time
Understand what customers want	Market research
Need to advertise my business	Find the courage to stand in front of my congregation and advertise my business
Have the correct addresses when delivering products	Ensure that addresses are verified before delivery
Not having customers	Advertising through word of mouth and distributing flyers
Meet my customers' needs at the right time	Plan my time very well
Overloaded with work	Organise a timetable and start using time efficiently
Running out of stock	Find a cheaper supplier so that I can afford more stock
How to build loyal customers	Create positive relationships with customers so that they will support me and buy my products
How to bring ideas to reality	Create an action plan

3.5 Achievements to be proud of

Learners were asked to reflect on their main achievements while participating in the Developing Entrepreneurs Project. From their responses, we can see that as their skills and self-confidence developed, they were able to build more satisfying lives and play a more significant role in their communities:

- *"I am now a young, successful entrepreneur; I have gained a lot both in my life and my business. I have gained things such as determination, confidence, communication skills and leadership skills. I have gained more customers and more opportunities to grow my business."*
- *"I was invited to the VIP section at the Durban Business Fair, and I won tickets to an all-star business concert"*
- *"I received an award for donating to the homeless children through the KFC Programme"*
- *"I have gained so many leadership skills that in my school, I was inaugurated as the RCL president"*
- *"I have basked in the glory of being recognised as one of the role models by some of my fellow youngsters. I have also had the opportunity to deliver motivational talks to youngsters in my community and church"*
- *"My customers write tests every Saturday, and they are improving; this is demonstrated by their results"*
- *"I was able to start my own business"*
- *"My main achievement was receiving more money than expected. I also achieved being optimistic and developed the ability to dream big"*
- *"I get a very good profit for supplying my products, and now I can spend money on my needs. I now have a good reputation in the community, and they also respect me. As a young entrepreneur, I have experience on how to manage a business, so in future it will be normal"*

3.6 Contributing

In this project, the focus was on developing entrepreneurial competencies that the learners can use to create successful lives and businesses as well as contribute to uplifting their communities. Thus, learners were asked to reflect on their contribution as a leader in A. their school community, and B. the community where they live. Their responses were as follows:

- *"I started a group which encourages other children to aim high and also start businesses of their own: I believe that everyone in life needs a chance to reveal themselves to the world, and now that I have some entrepreneurial skills, I am willing to help them succeed"*
- *"I started a craft group where we teach each other how to make different things with our hands, such as knitting and beadwork"*
- *"In my community, I have inspired the youth and proved that you may never be too young for anything. Many are now trying to start businesses"*
- *"I am grooming young upcoming leaders since I was inaugurated as the RCL chairperson"*
- *"I gave some of my business profit towards renovating my school"*
- *"I give motivational talks to young girls about being confident and proud of who they are"*
- *"At school, I have taught my classmates about business, and they have seen the huge change in my life. In my community, children look up to me and respect me because they can see the way my life is going"*
- *"I bought calculators for learners who cannot afford them"*
- *"I started a gym to help people stay healthy and refocus learners during maths lessons"*
- *"I gave my old clothes to children who are needy"*
- *"Many learners at school were inspired by my business and they have started using their talents, skills and creativity to start their businesses like planting"*
- *"I bought seedlings that the women in my community grow and sell vegetables for the survival of their families"*
- *"I bought food for my family"*

- *"I teach Grade 9 and 10 about what it takes to become an entrepreneur. I encouraged the children to be friends with numbers since it is one of the skills that an entrepreneur needs"*
- *"I visited Grade R at Cosmo Primary School and gave them some workbooks, pens and pencils"*
- *"I bought school shoes and books for those children who cannot afford them in my community"*
- *"I've shared with young people in my community the importance of starting a business, no matter how small"*
- *"I joined the community recycling organisation to keep the environment clean and volunteered in cleaning the school church and convent"*
- *"I celebrated Women's Day at an old age home to thank them for their courage"*
- *"I donated clothes to the orphanage"*
- *"I brought hope to the young people"*

3.7 Encouraging green business

To develop the awareness and skills to create green businesses which sustain a healthy environment, learners attended a half-day workshop during the project at the Green Camp in Glenwood, to learn how to make sellable products from recycled materials as well as grow organic produce (see photos below). The learners' eyes were opened to the possibilities of using freely available waste to make beautiful and useful items. They were also given indigenous plants to take home and nurture as the beginning of a healthy lifestyle garden, and the learners' WhatsApp group was witness to the pictures of the plants as they grew. In this way, the Developing Entrepreneurs Project contributes to the development of green business in South Africa and a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.



Learning about recycling and organic gardening at the Green Camp

3.8 Enabling learners' dreams

Participants regularly expressed enthusiasm and appreciation for the opportunity of being part of the project, in feedback forms and thank-you letters. Below is a selection of typical learner comments regarding the impact of the project on their life and dreams:

- *"These workshops made me feel and realise how worthy I am and that the world needs my abilities"*
- *"This project made me see how wonderful the world is and the many opportunities that are out there"*
- *"It's given me the courage to live"*
- *"These workshops have a positive impact on my life because ever since October, I am now an optimistic person who has big dreams, and I also want to make a change not only in my country but in the world"*
- *"These workshops exposed me to the unknown, they gave me more confidence in being an entrepreneur, which I never had"*
- *"I am filled with so many ideas that can change my life for the better"*

Learners expressed how moved they were by the care they were experiencing and how they now wanted to help others:

- *"It has made me realise that there are people who are caring for me"*
- *"I've learned that I should always say thank you when I receive something"*
- *"I now have the heart of wanting to help people"*
- *"I want to encourage young people to start their own business to decrease poverty"*
- *"I want to lead by example"*

4. Recommendations

The project team learned several practical things during this pilot project, which we can use to enhance the implementation of the project and thus build on our success going forward.

- To improve the logistics aspect of the project, especially transport and time management, I recommend that participating schools are in a geographic cluster, as one minibus can then pick up our learners from schools that are all nearby, avoiding time delays in starting workshops in the mornings and returning learners to their homes in the afternoons.
- Community support helps learners to really flourish in this project: with the cluster approach, we can build community as the learners will be located at a convenient distance to visit each other, share ideas and grow together.
- To provide learners with committed support within their schools, we can identify and develop a project champion at each participating school. At the beginning of the year, we can then hold a workshop for project champions to build the project vision together and enlist their support for the learners.
- Enabling project champions in a participating cluster of schools will support regular and efficient communication regarding support of learners and workshop logistics.

- Involving the learners' parents throughout the project, starting with a parent tea at the beginning of the year, will ensure support for the learners' learning process and business development.
- A project workshop for OVSA Facilitators at the beginning of the year will enable their enthusiastic commitment to the project and the learners in the cluster of schools, and allow them to co-facilitate with the project leader.
- A Market Day can be combined with the graduation event after the project to allow learners to sell their goods and services to a wide audience of parents, project champions and judges, and receive advice on how to improve their businesses.