



## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS RECEIVE TABLETS



Technology plays a huge part in our everyday lives. The internet has made it possible to share information across the globe and has subsequently become a useful tool even in the agricultural sector.

Many applications (apps) and online services are available today to assist farmers in their everyday activities. Farmers who make use of these apps can increase their knowledge and business acumen and so add value to their business much more than before.

MASDT focuses on uplifting farmers in the rural communities of South Africa to become successful commercial farmers by providing technical and business skills training and support and the company must therefore ensure that the projects have access to the latest technological advances.

Due to financial and internet availability restraints, most rural farmers do not have access to these online services and tools. MASDT have decided to bridge the gap by providing each Business Development Officer with a 10.1 inch tablet to create a platform where the company will be able to offer its services online with the aim of establishing an electronic communication infrastructure which will enable the 142 farmers in the Incubation Programme to receive the following services:

- Mentorship using the GrowthWheelR tool - The clients will receive Screening/Diagnostic tools to ascertain the progress of their business and identify priority focus areas to make decisions, take actions and solve challenges. They will receive action planning tools so that they can improve their enterprise planning processes and activities. The online mentoring tool will also enable the Business Development Officers to share information on business management and articles meant to enhance the client's business acumen.



- Procure production inputs using an online app - The farmers will send their orders through to MASDT's Procurement Office via an online app. MASDT will then purchase the production inputs and deliver to the farmers who in turn will then confirm receipt of goods online. This will reduce the turnaround time as well as the carbon footprint. The farmers will save time by avoiding travelling long distances to either place the orders or to receive the goods.

- WIKWIO online tool - The farmers can get firsthand information on weeds identification and control with this useful app.

The Business Development Officers can furthermore benefit as they can utilise the GreenestOfficeR tool, which allows management to monitor the effectiveness of the services being rendered. It further allows MASDT to retrieve the exact geographical positioning of the farms for effective farm planning purposes.

The tablets are thus a capable aid for mobile information sharing and on the spot training which will enrich the clients' learning experience.





## HARMONIE KUNSMIS INTERNAL WORKSHOP

MASDT believes in improving people's lives and that counts for their staff as well. During 2017, the company is hosting several internal workshops for their staff to improve their knowledge on certain subjects and has roped in experts from companies who is affiliated with MASDT to present capacity building workshops.

The most recent workshop was conducted in July and presented by Mr Joe Niehaus from Harmonie Kunsmis. Mr Niehaus gave a detailed presentation of the manufacturing process used to make their compost and the value of adding the necessary nutrients to the soil. He explained in detail the correct application method to be used for their fertilisers as well as the ration per crop for different fertilisers.

The presentation was welcomed by all staff members and new Business Development Officer – Me Pretty Nkosi – reported that she was intrigued by the information on mobile and immobile nutrients and how they affect soil fertility.

Joe also showed them how to determine if the compost was ready to apply to the soil and revealed to the group the difference between gypsum and lime and their proper applications.

All staff members were very impressed by the informative demonstration delivered by Mr Niehaus and noted that the internal workshops make it possible for them to correctly inform their clients on the products they are using.



## LIMPOPO TOBACCO PROCESSORS GOLF DAY

On August the 10th, MASDT's Managing Director - Mrs Lynette Bezuidenhout - attended the annual Limpopo Tobacco Processors' golf day at Koro Creek in the North West Province.

To most people, the idea of being a MD of an NPC certainly has a nice ring to it with visions of leisurely golf days and luxurious conferences, but Mrs Bezuidenhout will tell you that there is so much more to it than playing golf all day.

It is a great way to meet new potential partners and funders while reconnecting with existing stakeholders. Networking with funders is such an essential part of any non-profit company as they rely solely on funds to empower their projects.

Keeping good relations is key to business and while the glam can seem attractive, Lynette has shown that she remains a humble farmer's daughter that isn't scared of doing the dirty work to get things done - even if it is only to retrieve a team mate's golf ball from a slimy dam!

## Shout out



In 2015 Inocent was promoted to Business Development Manager, overseeing the cluster of Business Development Officers and the Incubation Department at MASDT. Since then he has been hailed as a go-getter who leaves no stone unturned to bolster the company to success.

In July 2017 Mr Makuwaza was registered by the South African Council of the Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) as a Certified Natural Scientist in terms of Section 20(3) of the Natural Science Professions Act of 2003 in the Agricultural Science field of practise.

The SACNASP is the registration and regulation authority for natural science professions in South Africa. This includes practising scientists in fields such as chemistry, biology, food sciences and geology to name but a few. The SACNASP Council is compromised of experts in their specific fields (scientific and non-scientific) and they are appointed by the Minister of Science and Technology.

This is truly a grand accolade for Mr. Makuwaza and proof that this man is going places and taking MASDT with him. Well done Inocent!

MASDT's Business Development Manager – Mr Inocent Makuwaza – has certainly proved his virtue since he joined the company in 2010 as a Business Development Officer.



## FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD 2017

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in Limpopo hosted its annual Female Entrepreneur of the Year Awards ceremony in Sekororo near Tzaneen on the 10th of August 2017. MASDT was invited to attend the event together with their female farmers from the district that is currently in the Incubation Programme. Business Development Officer, Mr Wilson Nkosi, escorted his eight female clients to the affair.

The categories ranged from Best Female Employee to the prestigious Best Female Entrepreneur Award and exciting prizes included pamper vouchers and cash prizes were awarded.

Farming is often regarded as being a male dominated world and the ladies from the projects were even more motivated to succeed by seeing that women are indeed receiving acknowledgement for their efforts in the agricultural sector.



## ERNEST & YOUNG'S ENTREPRENEURIAL WINNING WOMEN PROGRAMME

The company Ernest and Young is an institution who believes in building a better working world for all. The company's South African branch recently announced its selection of 21 women who will take part in its Entrepreneurial Winning Women Programme. The customised executive leadership programme identifies a select group of high-potential women entrepreneurs whose business shows potential to scale up and would like to help reach just that with this unique programme. The 21 women chosen in 2017 is the biggest group that has been selected over the years. It is truly a great opportunity for women to excel in their already flourishing enterprises. The programme consists of numerous workshops that will take place through the course of the year and was specifically designed to:

- Expand their knowledge with the latest information, research and executive dialogues about business strategies and practises.
- Identify potential partners, strategic alliances, customers and suppliers as well as prospective sources of private capital.
- Provide access to informal, one-on-one guidance and support
- Strengthen their executive leadership and business skills and identify opportunities to grow through meetings with senior advisors and seasoned entrepreneurs.
- Increase national and regional visibility for themselves and their company among corporate executives, investors and the media.

MASDT's Managing Director - Mrs Lynette Bezuidenhout - was nominated alongside twenty other successful women to be part of this elite programme. Her diligence and dedication to the company has paid off, and can only mean great things for her future. The other twenty women who join her, are the following:

- Kgobafi Magome - Community Innovations
- Gail Downing - Acorn Products (Pty) Ltd
- Zandile Nzalo - Zanza Holdings
- Candice Roberts - Call Force
- Stacey Brewer - Spark Schools
- Dikeledi Mosime - TIN-PAC Promotional Packaging
- Tara Turkington - Flow Communications (Pty) Ltd
- Tania Reid - Ithemba Office Solutions
- Lauren Gamsu - Black Sheep Designs
- Jodi Fittinghoff - Jodam Manufacturers
- Viloshnee Singh - Thembane Chemicals (Pty) Ltd
- Najmah Mallick - Meezan Building Services
- Nonkululeko Ntshona - Nonku Ntshona & Assoc. Quantity Surveyors (Pty) Ltd
- Jennifer Claasen - Ngaphaya Y2K10 Trading cc
- Jutta Berns-Mumbi - Ecocentric ccv
- Jean Chawapiwa - Win Win Solutions 4 Africa
- Judy Sunasky - Blendwell Chemicals
- Dineo Lerutla - Alula Water (Pty) Ltd
- Vito Govender - LA Consulting Engineers
- Toni Glass - Toni Glass Collection

Azim Omar, Africa Growth Markets leader at Ernst & Young said: "The size of the 2017 class is evidence of the great business women we have in South Africa. We are proud to work alongside these women in expanding and strengthening their enterprises. Unlike many other programmes, which are focused on supporting women in their growth journey beyond start-up businesses. A critical part of the programme is providing women with access to successful role models and building business-networks".