

Lead Project Programme

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First year of operation

A generous Poverty Alleviation funding grant from the national Department of Arts and Culture provided the support to undertake a series of lead projects in the Western and Northern Cape provinces. In its first year of operation, the CCDI identified six craft enterprises as lead projects. Four of these are in the Western Cape and two in the Northern Cape. The six enterprises represent a range of operational models and problems, and regional and product spread. The Institute will provide support to these enterprises over a period of 1 to 3 years to help them become sustainable.

The motivation for this programme is that they will provide an opportunity for applied learning for the CCDI to develop tools and resources to support craft enterprise development in the sector as a whole. The projects were identified through a feasibility study process where product, business, and social factors were looked at.

The intervention programmes arising from these studies focuses primarily on product development, marketing, business development, and social facilitation. Product development will be based on market research and identification of product opportunities, as well as linkages with existing hand and formal manufacturing enterprises so that the investment in the process bears fruit as quickly as possible.

Western Cape lead projects

Morgenzon Craft

Crafters working in the historical Morgenzon house in Swellendam make a range of screen-printed products, beadwork, and wooden boxes. The project which provides income for 18 young men and women has received awards from Overberg Tourism and Impumelelo and achieved "Best Practice" status from the Local Economic Development Fund in 2002.

Streetwires

A wide range of wire and beaded wire products are produced for the corporate and retail market, as well as unique Wire Art made by a few gifted artists. Streetwires have a workshop and showroom in Shortmarket street in the centre of Cape Town and provide jobs to over 80 young men and women.

Ubuntu Hand Embroiders Situated in Mossel Bay, Ubuntu employs about 36 women doing hand embroidery onto a range of homeware products and clothing. Owner – Zandra Klapwijk established the business 5 years ago, and has retail outlets in Mossel bay and Knysna.

Simunye Community Centre in Kwanakhotula Township outside Plettenberg Bay. The Centre supports 4 craft projects – fabric painting, sewing, weaving, and carpentry that together provide income for 14 people.

See over/...

The major challenge in some of the projects will be transforming the operational framework from community based co-operatives dependant on outside funding to sustainable businesses. In this context, training and capacity building of participants is critical.

The men from Streetwires, Patrick, Anton, Winston, Toto, and Masakhane have this to say: "The intervention and support we have received from the CCDI, particularly in the last year, has allowed our project to grow considerably. We have opened a new shop, several of our employees received free training in product development and design, exports, and sound business practice. This has proved invaluable."

Northern Cape lead projects

Kamatoka

This project builds on the unique style and art of the local !Xu and Kwe San communities near Kimberley. The 37 artists employed in this project produce a range of screen-printed fabric and ceramic products, craft and artwork.

WHAG Ubuntu

Initiated by the William Humphries Art Gallery, this group of about 17 women embroider their unique artwork onto cushion covers and clothing and sell to the local domestic and tourist market.

Carole Hoch, National Programme Manager for Poverty Alleviation from the national Department of Arts & Culture, and Wendy Arendse, Project Manager of Historical Rural Settlements and Poverty Alleviation for the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs, have this to say: "The Cape Craft and Design Institute, since its inception, has made major and practical in-roads into the lives of crafters within the Western Cape. Not only have crafters been given the opportunity to gain much-needed skills from product development through to marketing through training workshops and courses, but they have also experienced an immediate effect on their income-generation through participation in major events throughout the country and internationally.

"In just over one year the Cape Craft and Design Institute has already begun to be recognized as a front-runner in the arts and craft world. Significant connections have been made both nationally and internationally, which will provide even more significant spin-offs for those who desperately need assistance within the Western Cape."

Present and future ...

Drawing on the lessons learnt from the lead project programme, the CCDI will be establishing an **integrated development service for craft enterprises**. This will have two main components:

A diagnostic service - working in partnership with existing service providers in the craft and SMME sector, the Institute will develop products and services to support the growth of craft businesses. The service will work with craft producers to identify their supply and demand side needs and refer them to a network of service providers where they can get the appropriate support.

A product development service – the Institute will pilot a Product Development Clinic that will inform the long-term development of a design and product development service that is attuned to market demands.

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