

Success Stories of the



**Featuring Empowered and Equipped Entrepreneurs from
the 2022 and 2023 Abigail Enterprise Programme**

2022 Abigail Enterprise Programme Entrepreneur Graduates

Rebecca Nhlapo - Botle Ba Matsoho (Pty) Ltd



My company was registered in 2019 and I design and make shoes, scarves, hats, blankets and traditional clothing for ladies and children. I am so happy with the Abigail Training I received. Before I attended the training, I used my business money for my personal use today I know how to manage my money and keep the business money separate. I know I am moving onwards and will one day be a millionaire. I thank Arcelor Mittal and Lusa Community Chest so much for the knowledge you gave us.



Matsie Mahele – Director of The Habitus Group of Businesses



The Abigail Enterprise training has taught me a lot around costing, quoting, exceptional service, good practise and governance of my business.

My first business that I started and continue doing is a Cleaning Services for office and households and Garden and Paving Services. I have also opened a little fast-food

shop and am about to open a car wash on the same premises. I have lay-byed the cleaning materials and equipment for the car wash and am busy paying it off. We have our own offices that we work from too. The challenge we experience though is that although we have all the equipment when we quote, we do not always get the job. Many companies are not registered and do not have the legal requirements and the equipment that we have and yet they get the job. It may be that the competition comes in a lot cheaper than we do yet we see the “Big Picture” and realise that we cannot compete on price alone as there needs to be a margin for profit.

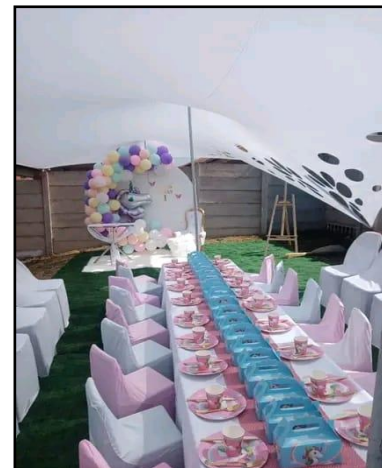
I am sure that I am giving a high-quality full service and that my business is well-governed and will be sustainable for the long-term though. I am going to make sure that my car wash will have the best quality vacuum cleaners, upholstery cleaning machines, high pressure cleaners and cleaning materials so that we do excellent deep cleaning; upholstery cleaning, engine cleaning and exterior cleaning so that we stand out from the competition. We are going to open the car wash on the property of my fast-food shop so that people can relax and be comfortable, have a coffee while waiting for their vehicle to be cleaned. I want my car wash to be so different to the rest. I am going to ensure that the covered structure of the car wash is solidly built and that the area is paved immaculately so that people will be drawn to bring their cars for a car wash and relax with us on a Sunday too. Future sponsorship for the infrastructure of the car wash and hot water extraction cleaning machines for carpets and upholstery would be most welcome.

Matsie Cesiki – Immaculate Event Planning, Catering and Décor Services



Before attending the training, I struggled with a lot of things. Since I joined the Abigail Programme, I gained much knowledge about how to do things the right way. I now draft contracts for my employees and for my customers in black and white. I learned how to do bookkeeping and keep record of my business' finances, how to do a SWOT analysis and to market my company. Marketing is so important! I make use of the radio and internet to advertise because of what I learned during the Abigail Training. I thank ArcelorMittal and Lusa Community Chest for this invaluable training as it has enabled my company to grow day by day. I now have four employees and am creating jobs for others. I invite sponsors to invest in my company with more equipment, new tables and chairs as the competition is great in our business and I want to remain competitive.

Now I do things right.



Elizabeth Musi - Lesego LS Trading



I have run a registered laundry business since 2021. The most important learning I received from The Abigail Enterprise Programme was around customer care, which I was previously totally unaware of the importance thereof. My target market is large companies such as ArcelorMittal, Sasol, Cape Gate. At the moment my laundry equipment needs to be replaced and I have put in a proposal to the GDP for more equipment as I wish to employ another 3 ladies.



2023 Abigail Enterprise Programme Entrepreneur Graduates

Audrey Gule – Audrey's Home Bakes



Launched in 2020 Audrey's Home Bakes started as a passion she discovered when she attended Midrand Baking School where I honed my baking skills.

I bake any kind of Midland occasional cakes for birthdays, anniversaries and weddings. I bake cupcakes, biscuits and scones. I also incorporated party packs and dessert cups.

Through the Abigail Programme I learned to run my business professionally meaning that I file all my documents, receipts, information of my customer so that I can continuously communicate with them. I

remind them of their upcoming birthdays and events, especially my loyal customers who have been with me since the beginning of my business. I learned the importance of financial records so should I have to produce my information for funding all the documents are in order and aligned. To be able to see how much my income and expenses are and what is also important is to market yourself and put your brand out there and let people know about you. Since I have upgraded my WhatsApp to Business WhatsApp and a Facebook Business Account, I have more enquiries from potential customers around what my products and orders they would like to place. These are the important things that have turned my business around, I feel I am moving into the right direction.

I am very grateful for this programme and would like to thank ArcelorMittal and Lusa for sponsoring us as woman, sometimes we lack confidence, but I know we are strong. "Siyizi Mbokodo" (we are the Rocks).



Nteboheng Mmono -Thyme 2 Delight



Chilli Sauces

Mild Lemon & Herb Sauce
Hot Chilli Sauce
X-Hot Chilli Sauce
Creamy Jalapeño Sauce
Pineapple Habanero Sauce
Sweet Chilli Sauce

Nteboheng's Company is in Vanderbijlpark and was established in 2018 with the aim of offering catering and décor services. She has a passion for creating food and started manufacturing chilli sauces to serve along with the food at the events she catered for and the feedback she received from customers made her aware that there was a demand for the sauces.

What makes her product unique is that she sources her ingredients fresh from small, local, woman farmers which also helps to uplift them and create employment. Her products are fresh with no artificial colouring or preservatives for clients who are health conscious and desire the best quality. She creates, packages and sells different chilli sauces such as sweet chilli, lemon and herb, creamy jalapeno, pineapple, habanero and extra hot.

One of her dreams is to see her factories manufacturing the sauces, supplying to the big retailers nationally and to see sauces on the shelves of Pick 'n Pay, Woolworths and Checkers as well on the shelves of bakeries and butcheries. At present her products are to be found on the shelves of TV Take Aways in Vereeniging, Ola's Pick n Pay in Bophelong, Sibanyoni Butchery in Duncanville and De Deur Rivers Basket.

She says "I love being in my kitchen and being creative! Food brings people together, so one of my other dreams is to have my own restaurant.

I am so honoured and glad to have been part of the Abigail Enterprise Programme. I have learned a lot, especially around financial management, I have learned the difference between personal and business finance;

compliance, record keeping and not using the business money for my personal needs. Compliance and record keeping are important in the light of future applications for funding. What I like about the program was that they did not only focus on business but also on me as a person, so that I know who I am, where I am and where I am going so that also helped me to grow my business. The support we got from the facilitators and mentors was so awesome! The ladies that attended the programme became a family and we learned from each other, supported each other and hopefully going forward we will be there for each other.

Thank you to ArcelorMittal and Lusa for this opportunity. The knowledge that I have now I will practise and go forward."



Neo Manyane – IC Mastas



My husband and I own a property company and a photo shoot company.

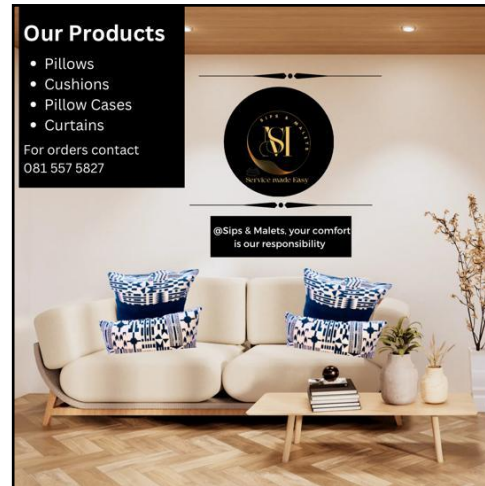
We started taking pictures and then realised we have a passion for it. We did it for free until we realised how many people were requesting us to do photo shoots and suggested we start a business and do it professionally. We are unique in that we capture the memory, the moment! We also own two properties which we rent out and are in the process of purchasing a third.

This programme has most importantly brought about a lot of personal change within me. I have become more self-aware; it has made me take action on what I have dreamed about and make it happen. I have also grown in my handling of hurdles and growing in persistence and perseverance and moving forward. The financial training has made me realise having a business is not a game, it is serious.

I have a lot of dreams within the property market to buy and sell. I would love to own a plot and a large lodge and having a passion for food I would love to be the head chef. I would love to own mobile homes with entertainment facility such as a pub, in other words "bringing the entertainment home to you"

I am so grateful to be part of this group and gaining all the information, knowledge and wisdom that I can apply to my businesses.

Ellen Masipa – Sips and Malets



Ellen started her company in 2022. She manufactures, pillows, pillow cases, curtains in all sizes.

Our pillows are made to order, are incredibly soft and unique. They provide support for the back, shoulders and neck. Mostly our pillows are two sided, printed on the front and pain on the back.

When I started on this programme I knew nothing about finances, costing, branding. Lusa has taught me a lot of things about finances, I was under costing my product. I know now to include the costs of my fabric, stuffing, time, transport etc. Self-awareness! I never loved myself

actually, I never cared about myself. When I started on the Abigail Programme, I did not care how I dressed, I looked like a boy, I am sure. Now I truly love myself, I'm happy. I wear lipstick and dresses as well. Whatever I do now comes from my heart, my energy, I love everything I do. I now wear dresses and groom myself. I look different, pretty and like a woman now.

I never even cared about my business. When I started this business, it was all about making money to pay debt. But now I know a business is not about making money to pay debt or do your nails it's about saving the money in a business account and keep it separately to run your business if you want it to grow in the future. It's about checking my costs and profits on a weekly basis. Our manufacturing and sales have grown from 5 pillows a week to 25 pillows a week.

In the future I want to have my own textile business so that I do not have to purchase textiles from another shop but produce my own. I also want to buy my own vehicle as now I use public transport to do that.

Dinah Ramaisa – Tholo Ka Mohau Trading & Projects (Pty) Ltd



My company was started in 2016. We do events such as weddings, funerals, birthday parties , tomb stone unveiling and coporate events.

I am a mother of two, a wife and my journey started in the business field while I was in school as my father is a person who had his own business. So I went from province to

province selling with him which I really enjoyed. We started Thloko Kamarau in 2016 with construction; building houses, RDP houses in Gauteng and Northwest.

I applied to RFQ's and then I encountered a problem with one of the RFQ's where I couldn't continue with the project so failing that project, I decided to take a break for a few years. But because we had equipment we hired the equipment out as a business.

After Covid, because I have a passion for the disabled and the elderly, as one of mychildren are disabled and my parents are older I registered an NPO Bathusi Community Organisation Centre which assists the elderly to assist the disabled people. Our centre is whereeveryone experiences happiness peace and relaxation We go on trips with the elderly because the elderly enjoy going out! The centre runs from Monday to Thursday, from Friday to Sunday.

I found the inspiration of my previous business returned. I then rose up again, where I fell I picked myself up and started my events company again and selling food at the flea market at De Deur on weekends!

Through the journey I met with the Abigail Programme. I was so excited and this was one of the greatest achievements I have ever achieved because I knew Lusa from 2010 while they were hosting Vaal SMME Conferences so I just knew what I was going to gain from The Abigail Enterprise Programme.

I have learned a lot, gained a lot and changed a lot while attending this programme. I have learned Professionalism, Discipline, Time Management, Quality Control and the filing and office administration especially, one's Finances and Budget that you need to know what your cash flow is. Strategic Planning is very important. For the events I do, I never knew I had to do Strategic Planning for each event and then evaluate the results thereafter in order to do better next time.. restructure again, do swot analysis and the Networking and Marketing is very important. Most important for me was the Leadership and Emotional Intelligence, the Transformer Programs have catalysed and developed me.

My dream for 5 years from now is to own a stand where we can host events. I am working on this with a ward Councillor as I have not got enough capital to buy a stand so we are requesting a temporary stand to host kiddies events for the community. I have been able to buy material while I was doing this programme. Mr Phill Zwane said I should have working capital so one of my friends is assisting me with jumping castles and so from this December we will have an event with jumping castles, catering for them and taking them on trips. Next we will be hosting events for the ladies.

I really want to thank ArcelorMittal and Lusa Community Chest, all the facilitators that did an outstanding job! I want to thank God for that. I believe in 1 Corinthians 14:14 stating "Let all be done decently and in order". So I thank Lusa Community chest for helping me achieve that, I thank you.

Thuli Tau – Community Life and Market



I worked in the largest law firm in the country for four years as a legal secretary and para-legal with no university degree. I worked as a receptionist as well and during that time I worked in every department of that firm to gain knowledge and experience. Even while I was formally employed and earned a very good salary I always had a passion for selling and entrepreneurship. I sold handbags and accessories which the lawyers purchased from me. Still today I get calls from people who tell me how much they enjoy my handbags! I always found a “gap”. It was not that my expenses were over my head, it’s because I always saw opportunities that exist for entrepreneurs and that is something that I have always loved.

After I left that employment I sold make-up, food, whatever I saw I need for in the space that I walked into. I had no formal education but really operated from instinct.

I started this business informally in 2019, working on the ground charging for my fees and at times not charging, it was more a work of passion from the heart. Until I realised the question kept coming up “How do you make money?”. I also could not make use of certain opportunities because there were no formal documents and proof of me doing business so I could not back up my business record. It took me years to realise that registering a business only took a day or two and that one need not be “Degree Qualified Businessperson”, it bothered me that I spent so many years “not knowing” what other means there are to become better at what you do, get more clients, how to formalise or grow my business! This background of my own is the value I have now bring and create for my clients today.

So, in 2022 I registered my business, got my CIPC documents and started operating in a more formal way through consultations in the office and meetings in boardrooms

The Big Picture of why I started this business was because I realised that the economy of townships is mostly in the hands of informal traders, men, women and youth selling tomatoes on the street corners, automotive companies employing a couple of people, tuckshops etc. However, they were running without any formal education or training and no compliance. This meant that they were either harassed by authorities or not able to get access to any form of assistance that could grow their businesses. In addition, there were many youth in the streets committing crime not because they instinctively wanted to do crime but because it was a means to survival.

I puzzled over what the solution to this dilemma could be and identified the gap and solution lay in equipping these informal business owners who were bringing in a lot of money into their homes to create and operate sustainable businesses. These businesses could then employ others and grow their own businesses, because two hands are better than one. This would then bring down unemployment, social ills and crime on the streets within the townships and raise self respect.



From then on I endeavoured to educate informal traders about their value, their opportunities and the brighter future they could be facing if they could improve their hand to mouth status. That's when we decided to register our business to educate

informal traders on compliance, to facilitate development training, including coaching and mentorship, inviting any stakeholder who is willing to bring financial or knowledge assistance. We then started an Association to assist with facilitating funding by gathering other SMME's together and show them the possibility of a township that is self-sufficient that can sustain itself and grow it's own people.



Our major focus is Development Training, Business Management and Financial Literacy Training in particular for SMME's so that they can ascertain whether they are making profit or not and Public Relations which is getting your very own consumers in your very own location knowing you. We partner with various stakeholders who bring in their own expertise and subjects which enrich the clients knowledge base.

We have branches in townships where we have footprint such as Daveyton where we have an office which covers the whole of Benoni, Orange Farms, Tshepiso which covers Boipetong, Evaton, Sebokeng, Sharpeville and other areas in the Vaal.

The Impact the Abigail Enterprise Training has had on me:

When I joined the Abigail Enterprise Programme, wow! That's when everything changed. If I could speak from my heart, it just materialised everything that I was praying about and longing to achieve and not knowing where to knock. I just did not know how to go about it. I wanted to strengthen my knowledge of business because I did not have a prior education myself. When you want to speak to entrepreneurs who are starting up as I did many years ago who do not have a clue, you need to be the clue.

I no longer struggle with Imposter Syndrome.

At the Abigail Programme I managed to grasp onto a lot of things that I can use in my own business and share with other entrepreneurs. This programme added so much value to my business, 'I always was the value but I did not have the "food and value" inside of me to be able to pour into someone else. Now I feel like a "Valuable Commodity" within business. I can now alert other entrepreneurs to things that I became aware of during this training such as contracts, taking on a client and explaining your services, what your value add is, what is binding, your refund terms and the legal terms. I don't sign any contract before I read it and understand it now. I can share how you don't employ someone out of pity because then you accrue a lot of other issues and problems and how to consider the pitfalls and benefits of partnerships and how that could impact upon your reputation. I would not have been aware of these dangers before or taken such care to consider the implications as I do now. I am a better business person now and more confident in my abilities.

I can now run a Dignified Business

During the programme we had to submit things on time, now I can put into place process I have learnt and run a dignified business.

I am enrolling in Lusa's Neuro Coaching Level 1 course in February 2024 as I want to equip myself and certify with a Professional Qualification in Coaching instead of outsourcing to outside Coaches. People have always come to me for guidance and this is an opportunity to add exponential value to those who come to me for guidance and support and boost my business even more!

My Business Dream is Huge for Township Development

Our Dream is to have an office space in the Vaal Triangle as this is where we have the greatest demand for our services right now. I lie awake at night and see township is thriving and no longer lagging behind the suburbs,

people are passionate about their dreams and possibilities, no longer in a mindset of being a dump. I see positive people building and owning huge businesses and leaving legacies. People are no longer invested in travelling to big cities to buy, people want to buy close to home. I dream of waking up one day and seeing entrepreneurs running serious businesses that are making a living and employing people. I envision a township that sustains itself and enjoys its own produce. I see a generation that rises up and grows up being inspired by their own people and growing their own. I want a continuous impact in townships, I do want the millions and the billions but I also want other SMME's who have grown and developed through our influence to thrive. I see the township no longer being what we have known it to be, such that even criminals will not know what to do with themselves as they are thinking "no man, can I not be better than this?". That exchange would be beautiful!

Support that would make a huge difference

Support we would really appreciate to make our dreams a reality is office space in the Vaal as we are working from home since our office has been burgled and cannot accommodate more employees. We would appreciate laptops and cellphones as ours are in dire need of replacement, a vehicle as we make use of public transport to travel to our clients and transport interns whom NYDA has sponsored to train with us.



