



SEED Initiative

supporting entrepreneurs for sustainable development

Founding Partners



SOUTH AFRICA WINNER 2013

Muthi Futhi is a community enterprise that cultivates and processes indigenous medicinal plants for sale as primary raw materials and in the form of finished herbal products. The pioneering business is designed both to protect the endangered biodiversity of KwaZulu-Natal and to create jobs.



Muthi Futhi, South Africa

BUSINESS MODEL

Muthi Futhi is a pioneering business engaged in the commercial cultivation and processing of selected threatened indigenous medicinal plants. It aims to become a replicable model for other communities and growers, creating new, sustainable rural jobs for marginalised women.

The enterprise is jointly owned by the Edakeni community and the consultancy Enzangakho, ensuring long-term partnership. Its customers are commercial companies manufacturing herbal products locally or exporting raw materials to Europe, the US and elsewhere.

ENTERPRISE FAST FACTS

Location	Pinetown, KwaZulu-Natal
Year founded	2010
Sector	Biodiversity, natural resource management
Product/Service	Medicinal plant products

CONTACT

Ms. Gill Whittington Banda

 gill@muthifuthi.co.za

 www.muthifuthi.co.za

Social impacts:

- The team cultivating the plants is made up exclusively of community members.
- Most team-members are women, since agriculture is traditionally a female activity in KwaZulu-Natal.
- The Dakeni community made the 25-hectare site available to Muthi Futhi and continues to support the enterprise.

Environmental impacts:

- Protecting indigenous medicinal plants in the wild through substitution with cultivated material.
- Using organic cultivation methods and educating the community about sustainable cultivation.
- Training the team on the importance of conservation, and educating other members of the community.

Economic impacts:

- The community will receive 50 % of future profits.
- Creating paid permanent jobs for 30 women in the 300-person community.
- Serving as a replicable model of sustainable business for other rural communities.

” Muthi Futhi is a pioneering enterprise: the species selected for scaling up have never been cultivated before on a commercial scale by a community-run business.

Scaling up activities:

- Scale up cultivation to include the whole site: the enterprise has 25 hectares of fenced, irrigated land, 5 hectares of which are currently under cultivation.
- Expand to create a total of 30 permanent jobs for rural women on site.
- Increase profit and make 50 % of this profit – if not reinvested in the business – available to the community for investment in other community initiatives.
- Replicate the cultivation programme in other locations and for other medicinal plants.



” Muthi Futhi is already engaging with other community and government entities with a view to replicating its cultivation programme in other locations and for other medicinal plants.



Partnership

- **Edakeni Muthi Futhi Trust**, co-owned by the Edakeni community and the consultancy Enzangakho, runs the enterprise.
- **Zululand Nurseries** provide technical support and supplies for propagating and cultivating medicinal plant products.
- **Esse Organics** is a customer and also provides technical support and advice on industry-related issues.
- The **Agricultural Research Council** provides expertise on medicinal plant cultivation and processing, as well as accrediting the Muthi Futhi nursery so it can supply other growers.
- The **University of Pretoria** has a research partnership with Muthi Futhi; Muthi Futhi will share in any potential commercialisation of its medicinal formulas.

With the support of
the Flemish authorities



The 2013 SEED Awards in 2 South African provinces are supported by the Government of Flanders through Flanders International Cooperation Agency (FICA), which is active in Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa.

About the SEED Initiative

The SEED Initiative identifies and supports promising small scale social and environmental entrepreneurs around the globe, entrepreneurs who while working towards a greener economy also tackle poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion. SEED provides these entrepreneurs with know-how and networks, taking the lessons learnt at local level up to decision-makers to promote evidence-based policy making. For more information please write to info@seedinit.org or visit:

www.seedinit.org

Partners

CONSERVATION
INTERNATIONAL



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



With the support of
the Flemish authorities



Federal Ministry for the
Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety



Corporate Partner

Hisense

Hosting Partner

adelphi

Founding Partners



Supporter

