A Focus on South Africa

RUFORUM Top Eight
African Young Entrepreneurs from South Africa

2016
Introduction

The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM, see www.ruforum.org) is a Network of 66 Universities in 26 African countries. RUFORUM was created by African Vice Chancellors with the vision for a vibrant agricultural sector linked to African universities that can produce high performing graduates and high-quality research, responsive to the demands of Africa’s farmers for innovations, and able to generate sustainable livelihoods and national economic development.

RUFORUM recognizes the need for greater youth participation in enterprise development and business incubation and through its member universities and partners has supported training and skills development in this respect.

It has also supported start-ups through innovative financing mechanism of the revolving fund implemented in some member universities.

RUFORUM believes in youth entrepreneurship as the game changer in ensuring greater youth participation and integration into the economic growth at national and regional levels and for youth employment.

During the Fifth Higher Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference 17th - 21st October, 2016 in Cape Town, South Africa that focused on ‘Linking Agricultural Universities with Private Sector, Governments and other Stakeholders in support of Agricultural Development in Africa’, RUFORUM launched the African Young Entrepreneurs Competition Series, 2016.

This competition invited applications from young African innovators, entrepreneurs and incubatees (<40 years) with innovative business ideas, enterprises, and innovations.

The purpose was to provide the Young Entrepreneurs and Innovators a platform to be heard, exposed, and supported to increase their social capital, networking horizon and opportunity to showcase their ideas and innovations to potential venture capital financiers that would attend the conference.

African Young Entrepreneurs

Brief on Eight Young Innovators and Entrepreneurs from South Africa in the Top 139 of the 756 Applicants
While the focus of the competition was on innovations in agribusiness, other innovations, incubations, business enterprises and business concepts along ICTs, health, engineering, natural resources, meteorology, urbanization, green economy, and transport and communication, among others were eligible. Over a period of 2 months, a total of 756 applications from 38 African countries were received.

The selection process involved the following stages:

I. All 756 applications were screened for compliance to the set guidelines and application rules.

II. A total of 663 applications were compliant. Each of these applications were evaluated by three independent reviewers (Round one).

III. A shortlist of 139 (20.9%) applicants were selected for Round two evaluation. Each of these applications was once again evaluated by 3 independent evaluators.

IV. A shortlist of 20 (13.6%) applicants were evaluated by a panel of six reviewers to select the final list (Round 3).

Owing to the competitiveness of the enterprises and innovations in Round 3, the panel made a decision to select 15 Young African Entrepreneurs instead of 10 that were originally planned. Among the 15 top winners were two young innovators and entrepreneurs from South Africa:

(i) Phethile Nkosi (LANDFIRST LTD),

(ii) Brian Mwakaiba (Cibio FoodLab).

The two young Entrepreneurs from South Africa had the opportunity to present their innovations at the main plenary session at the Biennial Conference before an audience of 850 participants that included: HE Dr. Nkosazana Zuma (Chairperson African Union Commission) and Development partners.

In this brief, a summary description of Eight (8) Young Entrepreneurs and Innovators from South Africa that emerged among the Top 139 from the 756 submissions to the competition is profiled. A profile of the overall 15 winners from the 756 submissions is available at the following link https://blog.ruforum.org/
LANDFIRST LTD is championed by Phethile Nkosi and Thando Kubheka as a South African Company created in 2015. LANDFIRST is working to commercialize solar-powered mobile, aquaculture vegetable growing units installable in any backyard and can be operated by all ages, and physically disabled individuals. This system was invented to address the challenges of power outages and water management in the traditional aquaponics farming system.

The company offers a range of products and services such as aquaponics systems sales, aquaponics system water-testing services, aquaponics technology transfer (learnership), up scaled aquaponics farming design and consulting services, agri-processing services, high value fresh produce, and agri-tourism. The company’s target market includes Hobbyists, physically challenged individuals, small-scale farming enthusiasts, co-operatives, organic fresh produce markets, restaurants, and processed fresh food markets. The management consist of two individuals with experience in running similar projects. The total capital investment is estimated at ZAR 3,000,000 for taking this innovation to scale.
Cibio FoodLab

Led by Brian Mwakaiba, Oscar Monama and Gary Burgess

Cibio (www.cibioap.com) a firm led by a team of multi-talented youth, Brian Mwakaiba, Oscar Monama and Gary Burgess, is a South African company founded in 2014. Cibio has created a product known as “FoodLab”. The FoodLab is a container food production system that makes use of state-of-the-art aquaponics systems combined with renewable energies in one system that produces record food yields and offers a window into some of the more complex principles of the sciences (https://youtu.be/IUulOFpItOo). FoodLab was created to inspire young learners (secondary school students) into the Sciences and STEM subjects by seeing science work in nature. Through aquaponics, it provides quality organic food for learners grown by learners and it offers a platform to inspire youth entrepreneurship.

Cibio has a team of experts that facilitate the installation on site, train the teachers to deliver the curriculum in a fun and exciting way while keeping quality, and offer 24/7 support for system maintenance and customer care. The initiative allows corporate clients the opportunity to track and monitor the impact of the FoodLab over an extended period of time, walking a path with learners and potential entrepreneurs, and creating a track record of measurable corporate social investment. The company revenue streams include sale of our units to corporate clients, equipment hire and maintenance, short trainings and client backstopping, among others. The company has so far invested $25,000 in FoodLab and requires an estimated USD 50,000 over the next year.
Phalane Farms

Led by Rebotile Matsimela and Paul Matsimela

Phalane Farms championed by two young innovative youth, Rebotile Matsimela and Paul Matsimela, is an integrated farm involved in chicken and egg production, duck rearing as well as herds cattle, sheep and goats. Phalane Farms also produces peaches, nectarines, spinach, butternut and onions.

The farm is operated on the business of sell clean, ready-to-use and packaged vegetables direct to customers to eliminate the burden of middlemen and increase the share of the farm profits. Phalane Farms seeks to be a leading innovative, hydroponic fruit and vegetable producing company in South Africa, for the local and export markets with a focus to become the largest urban farming enterprise in Africa.

The farm works harmoniously with nature and technology to produce high quality specialty vegetables and livestock products through an integrated approach. Through the vertical hydroponic system, the farm is willing and committed to facilitate urban farming enterprise and demonstrate to the urban dwellers the limitless possibilities and benefits of agriculture within the city environs and within the limited space phenomenon. Phalane Farms seeks about R2.5 million to take this innovation to scale.
AUTO ENHANCE OUTLET Pty (Ltd)

Led by Justin Zaid Namutamba, Lebohang Moses Mosia and Neo Thebe

The AUTO ENHANCE OUTLET Pty (Ltd) managed by Justin Zaid Namutamba, Lebohang Moses Mosia and Neo Thebe is a well-structured company that offers complete domestic and foreign mobile car and truck repair services as well as a full featured retail parts store that serves the market with accessible and convenient locations 24 hours a day and throughout the year.

AUTO ENHANCE OUTLET has differentiated itself from the competitive sector themselves by bridging the gap through providing the hustle-free mobile mechanics repair services for both motor vehicles and trucks as well as provide a fully featured stocked parts store to cater for every market segment.

AUTO ENHANCE OUTLET focuses on personalised services to its clients by offering computerized monitoring of all parts inventory so as to ensure that parts are always in stock while keeping a balanced level of inventory to maximize inventory turn-over. With the vision to be the premier and preferred top leading provider of auto repairs and maintenance services as well as business outsourcing in motor vehicle industry, the company is guided by its inherent core values and ethics. To take this enterprise to scale through competitive investment, AUTO ENHANCE OUTLET seeks investment of ZAR1,000,000 over the next year.
The Diepslot Kasi Hive started by a team of innovative youth, Hazel Mahlaba, Lesiba Setumu, Refilwe Mokomane, Sipho Ngobeni, and Johannes Nkale, is a Digital Market place platform (http://diepslot.kasihive.com/) for Small Holder Farmers in the Rural and Peri-Urban areas. The platform allows farmers to sell their produce online and can facilitate purchases from other farmers as well as sharing farming experiences and tips.

Farmers will also be able to access other services such as storage facilities (Cold rooms) and transport to move their crops from the farms to the market. Through this system the company is encouraging smallholder framers to grow, expand and increase production and create more job opportunities while giving them exposure and access to the large market opportunities. The team has so far finalised with the Mobile App development and the App website: www.emarketcommunity.com and have mapped a growing database of 150 smallholder farmers and 100 standby transportation service (www.diepslootcbd.co.za/wp) providers.

The team’s mission is to develop a cutting edge Digital Solution that brings convenience in a Farmer’s day to day life and transactions with a focus to making smallholder farmers run profitable production enterprises. Diepsloot Kasi Hive distinguishes itself as a creative and innovative technology developer providing solutions to rural and peri-urban communities. A requisite investment of ZAR1,000,000 is required to further take this innovation to scale.
Good Grub Pronto

Led by SC Hlangu

The Good Grub Pronto enterprise is an initiative of Mr. SC Hlangu. The West has seen a steep uptake in convenience Food Delivery products. Good Grub Pronto (GGP) is Africa’s answer to the current gap in the convenience Food Delivery.

The GGP is a Food Ordering App Innovation with a unique offering where it provides a seamless food ordering service while simultaneously offering space for marketing and integrating in to the in-store Point of Sale, managing the administration of the store through stock taking, cash and order management.

The GGP provides consumers with a unique experience of high quality service and the ability to earn ‘Peas’ for further Sales, Donations and Gifting for the Customer’s network. These attributes of the GGP also serve as the foundational basis of the enterprise innovativeness and help distinguish GGP from other market leaders already in operation.

The potential for the GGP innovation to be patented to sustain the competitive advantage for half a decade, entrenching the business and assuring success is very high.

An investment of ZAR 5 million is required to facilitate further operationalisation of the business-IP Security, Revamping App, Testing, Premises, Working Capital and Advertising among others.
Cici’s Mopani Worm Market (CMWM)

Led by Sepuru Cindy Chokoe and Serole Angela Chokoe

Cici’s Mopani Worm Market is an innovative business enterprise being championed by Sepuru Cindy Chokoe and Serole Angela Chokoe. The enterprise will explore the unique possibilities of harvesting, supplying and processing of Mopani worm.

Cici Mopani Warm enterprise will make available high quality Mopani worm dried from solar and canned with different ingredients recipes, delicacies and dishes. The company will also ensure availability of Mopani Worm across the year arising from strategic purchases and preservation. This enterprise was motivated by the need to inspire young people and draw them to innovate for agricultural transformation as well as improving the country’s economy, food security and livelihoods.

The enterprise has a strong potential to transform rural livelihoods and move smallholder households out of poverty through participating in the Mopani Worm value chain. Cici seeks to be the most outstanding company in the supply of high quality and nutritious Mopani worms in Southern Africa.

The company will have a product range of value added products including: dried snack based Mopani worms, canned worms, Mopani worm salads, and powder soup among others. To take this investment to scale, Cici Mopani Worms Ltd seeks a requisite investment of ZAR 5 million.
Organic Avenew

Led by Busisiwe Ntuli

Organic Avenew is owned by Busisiwe Ntuli and is a newly established company that focuses on producing 100 percent unique vegetable cocktail juices made from locally grown vegetables and fruits supplied by smallholder farmers. The juices are organic and nutritious with a high dietary fiber content. They provide a healthy boost of vitamins and minerals which are uniquely different from conventional juices.

The juice consists of two flavors which are carrot and cucumber; the team has selected vegetables and fruits that complement the flavors and nutrients that aim to improve the taste. Organic Avenew juices have been tested by the South African Bureau Standards and the packaging and design is developed by SABS Design Institute. Organic Avenew is open to working with other prospective partners towards continuous product development, delivery and expansion of the product line.

Organic Avenew product innovativeness lies on its cost-model that is developed from competitor analysis, high quality and 100 percent fresh fruits and vegetables product base, and involvement of smallholder farmers in supply of raw materials, and geographic positioning of the enterprise around Tshwane and Johannesburg Metro area where there is a relatively affluent population concerned about healthy living.

Organic Avenew will make its products available to school children, the military and dieticians/hospitals/clinics; coffee bars, craft markets, and restaurants and corporate catering companies, among others. Taking this innovation to scale will cost Organic Avenew an investment of ZAR 580,000 in the short run.
66 Member Universities

26 Countries