



# ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

POVERTY ALLEVIATION THROUGH CREATIVITY



**Ifa Lethu**  
Empowering the Nation's Soul

# TRAINING, INTERNSHIP & EMPLOYMENT

## TRAINING, INTERNSHIP AND EMPLOYMENT

When Ifa Lethu started its very first training workshop in Mamelodi township, near Pretoria, in 2007, the Foundation had been focused almost 100% on fulfilling our initial mandate of the repatriation of the country's lost 'struggle art'. We had launched Ifa Lethu in 2005 by bringing together as many of those original township artists still alive. The reaction to this launch and the showing, for the first time, of our fledgling collection became a game-changer for our future vision.

It became clear, that while there was an important repatriation effort to do – a task still in full operation today – there was also a unique opportunity to find, educate and inspire our young creative talent, train them creatively, add business skills to enable new generations of entrepreneurs, and create employment opportunities for them in the arts sector.

From this initial project in Mamelodi in 2007, with 10 young creative people, we have extended the programme to other township and rural nodes. Our recipe is to send in our Creative Hands mobile workshop, assess

the creativity, output and buy-in of the community, refine the skills to market readiness and global quality, and ultimately open an incubator where the participants can work in a permanent, managed and secure environment. We have recently opened incubators, which are housed in refurbished containers, in Mamelodi, Soweto and Ngove in Limpopo, where our learners use the facilities to produce

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market-ready cultural products. Market-ready products are already available for distribution with fair prices being ploughed back into the communities (See



Page 29 Crafts). In addition, our Fashion Design graduates, having passed through a rigorous series of our workshops in Durban are going on to find lucrative careers in the fashion industry.

There is no doubt that the cultural sector is a key economic driver in the country's tourism industry. The Department of Trade and Industry estimates that South Africa's creative sector alone contributes about R2-billion or 0.14% to South Africa's GDP annually. In addition, the sector provides jobs and income for approximately 38 000 people through an estimated 7 000 small enterprises. But we believe we can do far better than this. The creative sector can also be used as a catalyst for rural economic development and for fostering expanded participation in the economy, especially by women and youth.

Furthermore, as the art of designing and producing cultural products is handed down from generation to generation, members of communities have



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an opportunity to work together and impart knowledge and social values to each other, especially the youth. This contributes towards social cohesion and instills the culture of respect, discipline and Ubuntu. It is for these reasons that we continue to say that cultural heritage represents both an economic activity and a cultural practice. Moreover, tourists are often attracted to a particular area because of its cultural and heritage significance.

As a result of the legacy of apartheid many South Africans are unable to enter the job markets successfully or involve themselves in small business enterprises, thus making it more challenging for South Africa to become a more entrepreneurial society. In the case of those aligned to creative industries such as art, craft, and heritage, they form part of the marginalised majority and without proper skills to ensure that they flourish in their respective fields. The legacy of apartheid still haunts many such individuals today.

Ifa Lethu has thus developed a programme of skills and enterprise development workshops, in partnership with the University of Pretoria School of Entrepreneurship, as well as Incubator Programmes for rural youth and women interested in the creative industries, so

they may become successful entrepreneurs. This has also been done in response to the requirements of transformation and economic growth needs.

“IFA LETHU HAS THUS DEVELOPED A PROGRAMME OF SKILLS AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS...”

This programme is unique in that we aim to translate creative industry growth needs into meaningful capacity. The demand for South African Art, sculpture, art objects, craft and fashion by South Africans themselves, by the tourism industry and by foreign countries, also guides the Ifa Lethu Foundation strategy to sector-lock its training programmes. In the development of its training programmes, Ifa Lethu undertook extensive research in this area to ascertain skills, needs, and market demands and to validate its strategic intent. This programme is also aligned with feedback from various stakeholders including

government ministries such as Trade and Industry, Arts and Culture, and Foreign Affairs, the International Marketing Council, as well as those in the various municipal structures and the creative industry sector.

Ifa Lethu, through its four phased training programme - which includes product development, business entrepreneurship; the development of the Business Incubators and the Distribution models offered in all provinces; enables the indirect empowerment of youth and women who are interested in the creative industries. It also develops entrepreneurs so that they are market ready and finally assists in identifying the markets for these entrepreneurs.

This first project produced such talent as Michael Selekane - a young man with a burning passion to record his own eco system in paintings and drawings. Michael, who is now our official brand and youth ambassador and delivers speeches at our international events, is enjoying a successful entrepreneurial and artistic career. With our help he is currently completing his diploma at TUT; and has exhibited his work at the World Summit on Arts and Culture in Johannesburg; at the National Arts Festival (Grahamstown) in 2009 and 2010; at the prestigious Albany Museum in Grahamstown in 2011; and more recently at a solo exhibition at the Pretoria Art Museum where his works were a sell out. ■



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## FOSSIL CASTING – A WORLD SKILLS SHORTAGE

Our Fossil Casting Project has extended from an initial single project to an ongoing programme that provides skilled fossil casters for World Heritage sites and even self-owned businesses.

In 2009 Ifa Lethu, recognising the world shortage of fossil casting skills, partnered with Professor Lee Berger at Wits University to produce casters who can take their place on the world stage. Several graduates of this programme have been placed at various universities and museums, with two further graduates now engaged in their own business – *Fossils of Africa* – producing fossil castings of the recently discovered *Australopithecus sediba*, under licence from Wits, and being sold at the World Heritage Site of the Cradle of Humankind.



The programme, showcased in 2012 at the American Association of Physical Anthropology, has gone global, and has revolutionised the way fossil casting is now done. This work has featured at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in China, and casts produced have even appeared on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C.

It was highlighted in National Geographic Magazine and the South African Government has funded a further distribution of heritage casts to major partner museums and countries including Italy, France, Mauritius, England, Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia. Professor Berger said “The Ifa Lethu Fossil Casting programme has been so successful it now acts as the core training programme for other institutions, and has revolutionised the way in which casting of these objects is done, and allowed the wide-spread distribution of these important World Heritage objects.”



## BUSINESS SKILLS TRAINING

Ifa Lethu, together with our strong partnership with the University of Pretoria, provides emerging entrepreneurs, crafters and trainees with entrepreneurial skills. We provide this business training to all our learners.



## INTERNSHIPS

Internships are an integral part of our training programme. On the job training gives interns a unique opportunity to gain valuable work experience, and exposure to best practices. All Ifa Lethu interns have been successfully placed in employment.

