

Company Profile

*Power of the Collective - Creating Wealth Together*

2011

## Background

### The organization

Lillian Masebenza, Founding Director of Mhani Gingi Entrepreneurial Network, is a living embodiment and agent of her vision for an empowered Africa. She sees her Social Entrepreneurial Organization becoming a renowned leader in providing **innovative solutions and business opportunities** aimed at alleviating poverty within the global society. Literally meaning an industrious woman, who creates innovative solutions to solve social problems, **Mhani Gingi** was established in 2006 in Cape Town, South Africa by Lillian Masebenza. The Mhani Gingi Model adapts a conventional way of saving and sharing based on an indigenous practice in South Africa called *Stokvel*. The approach comprises two elements: an investment component that multiplies members' chances of profit through a structured savings scheme; and a skills development aspect that equips members' to operate sustainable business operations. The model leverages **the power of the collective** and encourages individuals to become creators of wealth and shareholders in their own businesses – rather than being consumers of goods and services and suppliers of labour. At the heart of what the Mhani Gingi model stands for are two concepts that truly distinguishes the pioneering nature of the work:

- Marrying indigenous knowledge with business concepts
- Promoting ownership for people to empower themselves.



*Founding Director, Lillian Masebenza*

The Mhani Gingi model is multi-faceted. It provides the network members with both business savvy and the technical skills necessary for them to produce high quality products and services. It also opens new markets and opportunities for trade, as well as linking Mhani Gingi members to relevant business networks and funding prospects. As her goal, Lillian pictures individuals moving away from being providers of labour and consumers of goods and services, to being creators of wealth and innovation. A true visionary, Lillian sees Mhani Gingi as a force of nature – making a difference to the collective by aligning itself with most of the Millennium Goals; catering to the holistic need of the individual and constantly examining and correctly aligning its stance as proponent for the weak and powerless.

The ideas worked into the model challenge current thinking practices, such as the myth that income comes from employment rather than employing one self and others.

**Vision:** To be a renowned leader in providing innovative solutions towards alleviating poverty, within the global society, aligned to millennium development goals

**Mission:** Empowering individuals to make informed business decisions and maximize their collective power in wealth creation

## Target Groups

Mhani Gingi's target groups are marginalized women, youth who are unskilled, under-skilled and/or unemployed and vulnerable children.



*Mhani Gingi's target group and network members*

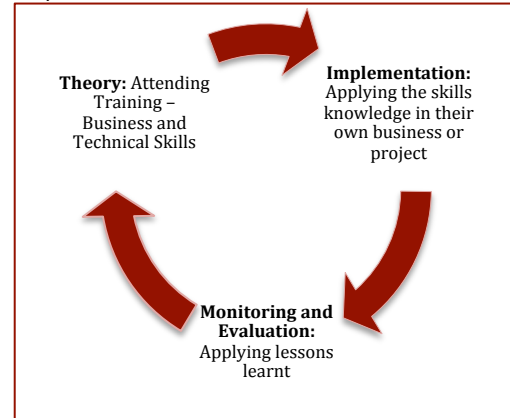
## Objectives

Empowering women to be wealth creators and to take ownership for their future. Mhani Gingi strives to eradicate poverty, through the linkage of markets and funding that create sustainable business partnerships. We actively promote the products and services offered by Mhani Gingi Network Members, to relevant institutions, both nationally and internationally.

## Methodology

Network members pay a non-refundable annual registration fee (R300) so that they can enjoy the benefits provided both socially and in the business arena provided by Mhani Gingi. Tailor-made training modules are aimed at providing relevant commercial and technical skills for network members to enhance their business operations. The model is unique as those who attend training workshops are given the opportunity to immediately apply the knowledge back into the day-to-day running of their emerging businesses. Training programmes are

delivered to attendees in their home language and every workshop is customised to their requirements.



*Mhani Gingi's Unique Learning Cycle*

## Services Rendered

Promoting forums with strategic groups and organizations, Mhani Gingi allows its members access to a vast network. In addition, platforms for network members are created to market their products and services.



*Lillian giving a workshop*

## The Power of The Collective

The Mhani Gingi model relies on **the power of the collective**. Through savings and investment, members achieve more as a group and are able to create opportunities as they gain influence and form powerful consortia.

## Mhani Gingi's Projects

### Health Style and Environment

- Indigenous plants including orchids, fynbos etc.
- Organically propagated vegetable nursery;
- Community gardening leading to tunnel farming;

### Entrepreneurship

- Sewing and garment design;
- Crafts and beadwork;
- Hand and Machine embroidered articles;

### Tourism

- Tour groups linking to tourism projects;
- Bed and Breakfast linking with big hotels and tourism opportunities;
- Cultural Experiences - including traditional music, food and attire;

### Social responsibility

- Caring for vulnerable groups, especially children.



*Gardening workshop at the nursery*



*Children at a crèche*



*Women working with seedlings at the nursery*



*Vuyelwa working at the embroidery machine*

### Activities

Mhani Gingi offers a wide range of activities, such as:

- Mentorship, meetings and workshops;
- Opportunities for exhibitions locally and internationally;
- Collaboration with corporate and government institutions for recognized members' achievements;
- Volunteer opportunities for local and international interns with entrepreneurship degrees;
- Conferences with specific themes;
- Seminars and breakfast sessions addressed by high-powered speakers



## The Backbone of Mhani Gingi

As a business entity on its own, Mhani Gingi has a dedicated team of people supporting all the initiatives that Lillian Masebenza designs and implements.

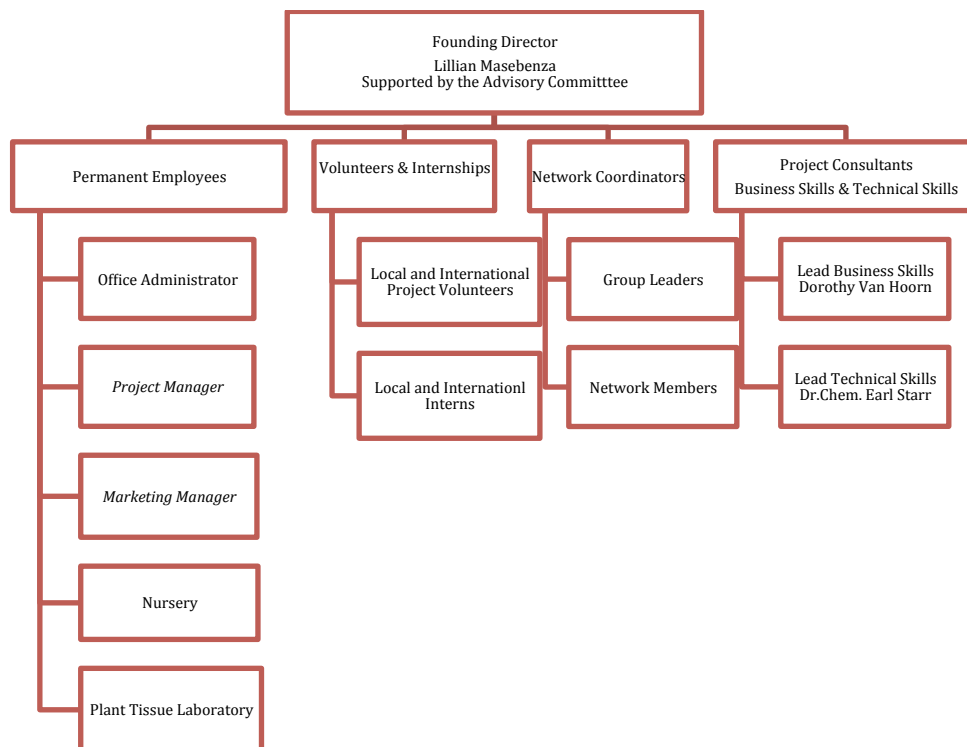
### Staff

Lillian Masebenza works closely with two main network co-ordinators who in turn connect with each of the group leaders. There is also an advisory committee which advises on the organizational strategy. In performing her daily tasks Lillian leverages her own network from Ashoka Fellows, locally and internationally. Her network also includes professionals and business individuals and organizations in England, the United States, Norway, Sweden, France, Australia and some African countries. On a continuous basis there are both South African and international

volunteers with senior degrees in entrepreneurship, who engage in many of the Mhani Gingi projects.

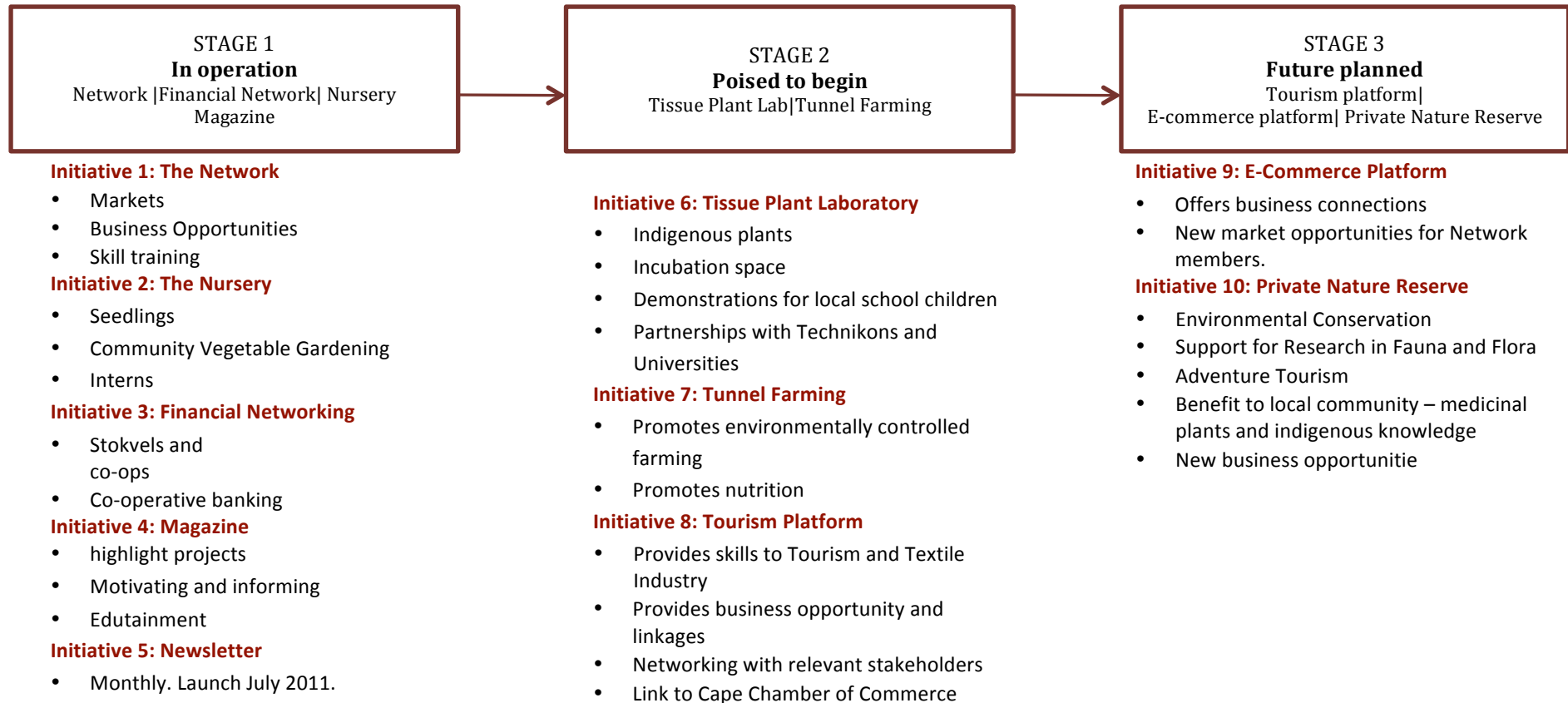
The philosophy of the organisation centres around networking, connecting people and creating relevant linkages. This does not only apply to the Mhani Gingi projects, but includes the entire organization's way of working. The organization has achieved a lot with a limited amount of resources.

Today Mhani Gingi looks forward to future expansion that will enable it to radically increase its current impact.



The Organizational Structure of Mhani Gingi, 2011

## Stages in Mhani Gingi's Organizational Development



## Mhani Gingi's Work – Aligned to the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

The core of Mhani Gingi's activities reflects the empowerment of women and youth - working together to achieve more. This work is aligned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> MDG: **Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women**. At the heart of the Mhani Gingi model lies the empowerment of women to develop small enterprises through a variety of income-generating activities. With this financial independence, women are better equipped to support and nourish their children and contribute to the well being of their greater community.

One of the bigger projects Mhani Gingi has established is the Nursery. At the Nursery women and children are trained in the technicalities of propagation and the growing of plants and vegetables. In the near future, Mhani Gingi plans to establish a Tissue Plant Laboratory – with the intention of contributing to the preservation of indigenous plants and species, which are in danger of extinction. This, and the fact that Mhani Gingi promotes organic production, aligns the organisation to the 7<sup>th</sup> MDG, **Ensure Environmental Sustainability**.

Mhani Gingi is also involved in the establishment of community gardens and the support of several soup kitchens. These areas of influence contribute towards reaching the 1<sup>st</sup> MDG, **Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger**.

As an investment in MDG no.8, **Develop a Global Partnership for Development** Mhani Gingi is actively networking to help its members reach new customers,

suppliers, strategic partnerships, potential investors, marketing exposure and export opportunities. All this is an attempt to grow local and international support for new South African businesses and increase employment opportunities through expansion and contribution to GDP.



*Network Members doing bead work*



*Vegetable Garden in Nyanga, Cape Town*



*Supporting Tomorrow's Generation*



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