

Involving Communities in the Valorisation of Natural Products

Dr Merida Smuts (Pr.Sci.Nat.)



Constraints to Small-Scale Farmer Viability

- Access to finance and capital
- Appropriate agricultural, business and quality management information and skills
- Land
- Infrastructure
- Extension services
- Means of production (inputs, equipment)
- Market access
- Logistical constraints to market
- Scale / quantities
- Organisation / Institutional arrangements

Opportunities for Small-Scale Farmer Viability

- Indigenous resources
- Rural areas
- Family labour
- Indigenous knowledge
- Clustered homesteads / villages (often with access roads)
- Community organisation – stokvels, women and youth groups, church groups, word-of-mouth
- A willingness to remain in these areas
- Unemployed rural graduates and innovators

Previous and Current Rural Development Programmes

- Input provision supply programmes (seed, ploughing and tractor services, pesticides, herbicides (DoA))
- Improvement in Extension Services (Information days, dipping tanks, better equipped and resourced Extension Services (DRD))
- Infrastructure Development (Abattoirs (DEE), Agri-Business Hubs (DRD), Incubation Centres (SEDA))
- Skills Development Programmes (Agri-SETA, TVET Colleges, Industry Training Centres (Citrus, Sugar, Seed))
- Land purchase and re-capitalisation programmes (DRD)

New Interventions have more “intangible”, but very useful angles....

- Often industry led (Coffee, Essential Oils, Sugar, Citrus)
- Includes institutional innovations (“Umbrella branding”, Group Development, Market contracts, Alternative quality requirements)
- Innovative finance arrangements (micro-lending, savings groups) and technology linkages (YES programme with cell phones)

The Playing Field.....

The aforementioned programmes and interventions aim to improve rural livelihoods by addressing the barriers to entry of small-scale rural farmers.....

to.....

..... existing, well-functioning, competitive, skilled, resourced, commercial agricultural industries and agri-processing value-chains operating super efficiently in domestic and international markets.

Really?

An Alternative Approach to Rural Livelihood improvements and small-scale farmer viability

.....Design from scratch

- Leave commercial agriculture and sophisticated agricultural value-chains to get on with what they do best
- “Carve-out” an indigenous and alternative production and processing space that realistically suits small-scale agriculture
- Avoid competition by investing in all the new actors along the entire length of these new value-chains
- Thus creating new, vibrant, alternative value-chains that don’t need to compete with bigger players in existing chains
- As farmers improve their production skills, volumes, resource access, they will naturally migrate towards the traditional commercial sector if they are at the level to realistically compete.

Start with the Entrepreneur – The AgriBioTech Approach

- Rural innovators are encouraged, mentored and trained to develop NEW, innovative, value-added products.....
- Utilising waste, weeds, indigenous plants (or animals) or conventional crops.....
- Which would lend themselves to be supplied to the entrepreneurial enterprise by small-scale farmers.....
- Under relational contract growing arrangements.
- Products must be designed that can easily meet the criteria of safety, efficacy and stability....
- Using natural and/or traditional solutions (IKS – not necessarily African IKS).....
- Whilst offering a contemporary manufactured article to the market
- New product to new or old market; old product to new market
– Removing the competition of old product to old market

Re-writing the Narrative at the Systemic Level

- New products from.....
- New value-chains....
- To clear and achievable quality standards....
- For new markets....
- By rural innovators.....
- Designed from scratch....
- For small-scale farmer involvement specifically....
- Growing easy-to-produce resources (organic by default).....
- From existing small plots of accessible land...
- Manufactured in small, bespoke, manufacturing spaces....
- Embedded within the rural landscape.

Rural Origins precipitates Innovation Talent

- Champions emerge when it's their own idea
- Elements of Product Design
 - Innovation can be guided by “targeting” rural creativity
 - Encourage the use of traditional knowledge and resources (but don't prescribe it and don't create artificial boundaries)
 - What's the problem to be addressed or the benefit of the solution to the user?
 - Is it innovative (new and useful)?
 - Is it high-value?
 - Preconditions:
 - Use a natural resource in the recipe
 - Can a small-scale farmer produce it?

Designing New Value-Chains “From Scratch”

- Elements of equitable value-chain design
 - What’s the true “value” of the ingredients (when they’re in the product)
 - Are you willing to pay your growers this true value for their production?
 - Understand pricing and how costs can be “deferred” equitably along the value-chain (training, input provision, harvesting, logistics, processing, marketing)
 - Seek alternative market linkages (social media, farmer’s markets, door-to-door, on-line, industry-specific (B&B’s, independent restaurants, other entrepreneurs, in-house corporate needs)
 - That require lower volumes and that value CSI/ESG/BBBEE, the distinctiveness and rarity of your product and your “back-story”
 - Seek alternative packaging solutions that “increase” the value-add
 - Be open to price negotiation, but draw a “line in the sand”

Rural does not need to mean “Low Tech”!



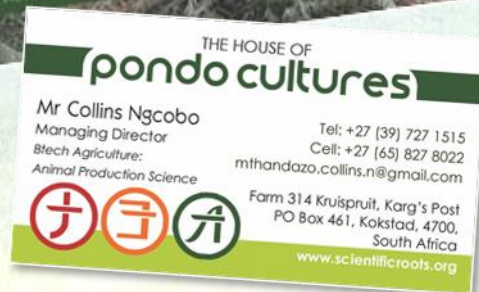
Small is not a swear-word

Relevant Infrastructure Innovation



Re-used, re-furbished, solar powered, rain-water fed

IKS in Action



IKS in Action



New Product - Trendy Market



Welcome to Wanga's Juice
- an AgriBioTech Agripreneur enterprise.

AgriBioTech
INNOVATION INCUBATION

AgriBioTech is a non-profit organisation. We mentor and train Agripreneurs in developing and managing their own commercially viable enterprises by utilising and adding value to South Africa's indigenous and conventional resources. Each enterprise - with an agricultural graduate at the helm - uses resources that are sustainably grown and supplied by small-scale, contract-grower farmers in rural communities. This in turn contributes to the promotion and development of sustainable rural livelihoods in South Africa.

Supporting our Agripreneurs and their initiatives greatly contribute towards social, community and economic upliftment, while supporting ecologically sound farming and production practices.

Enjoy the INCREDIBLE tastes and FANTASTIC health benefits from South Africa's indigenous treasures!!

7 DELICIOUS FLAVOURS TO CHOOSE FROM:

- APPLE
- CARROT
- CUCUMBER
- BEETROOT
- PINEAPPLE
- PEAR
- GREEN JUICE

Our 100% cold-pressed juices include blends of apple, carrot, beetroot, cucumber, celery, spinach, pear, pineapple, lemon and ginger.

**NO ARTIFICIAL ADDITIVES
NO PRESERVATIVES**



Local Product - Import Replacement

VetaFIKS™
NATURAL WOUND HEALING PASTE



Patents are Possible

VektaMORT™
NATURAL PEST-REPELLENT



New Products by Disabled Entrepreneurs!



Recommendations

Encourage and support entrepreneurial development of new products in new value-chains designed from scratch to ensure small-scale production inclusivity, valorisation of indigenous resources and a new playing field.