

BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP 2024

The Bridging the Gender Gap (BTGG) programme was designed to **support women and youth entrepreneurs from marginalised communities through a holistic and participatory approach**. By combining needs assessments, learning and financial diaries, and targeted micro-grants, the programme captured **both quantitative data and lived experiences**, enabling participants to actively engage in their development. The **integration of financial support** with reflective tools provided valuable insights into operational challenges, emotional resilience, and mindset shifts, informing Oribi's programme design.

BTGG has emerged as a **replicable model** that integrates financial literacy, wellbeing considerations, and adaptive support to address systemic barriers faced by women entrepreneurs.



PARTICIPANTS PROFILES

YOUNG WOMEN FROM MARGINALIZED TOWNSHIP AND RURAL COMMUNITIES WHO HAVE STARTED MICRO-BUSINESSES OR SHOWN STRONG ENTREPRENEURIAL POTENTIAL

AGE RANGE: 21–30 YEARS

EDUCATION: GRADE 10 TO BA HONOURS

HOUSEHOLD INCOME: R6,000–R13,000

LOCATIONS: GUGULETHU, MITCHELLS PLAIN, DUNOON, KHAYELITSHA, TOWNSHIP



BARRIERS FACED

- Lack of funding and mentorship
- Limited market access
- Social/cultural pressures
- Fear of failure
- Emotional strain and mental health challenges
- Family responsibilities
- Limited financial literacy
- Electricity and transport issues

SECTORS WHERE THEY OPERATE

Hairstyling, wig installation, Seamoss production, nail salons, and ideation-stage ventures.

KEY FIGURES

COMPLETION OF NEEDS ANALYSIS

Offers insights into their demographics, entrepreneurial exposure, capacity gaps, internal barriers, and holistic support needs

PROVISION OF MICRO-GRANTS

Total grants disbursed: R63,000
Participants used the grants to initiate real-world activities, launching products, establishing brand identities, and overcoming logistical hurdles

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IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNING AND FINANCIAL DIARIES

Documentes emotional states, financial decisions, and operational challenges

FOCUS AREAS

- Financial literacy
- Emotional intelligence
- Understanding “black tax” and household responsibilities
- Money behaviors and attitudes
- Basic business and project management skills

KEY TRAINING SESSIONS

- 24 February - **Breaking Barriers to Funding** : Women shared ideas around bridging the funding gap as a collective, create a women hub
- 4 March – **Budgeting & Costing** : Topics included units, costing methods, pricing strategies, financial planning, and exercises
- 29 March – **Behavior Drives Results** : Covered integrity, trust-building, behavior impact, and practical application in business

KEY TAKEAWAYS & IMPACT

The BTGG programme successfully empowered a cohort of aspiring women entrepreneurs through a **combination of financial support, skills development, and mentorship**. Despite recruitment and retention challenges, the programme provided **holistic interventions addressing both practical business skills and socio-emotional growth**.

Participants gained **foundational competencies** in financial literacy, business planning, marketing, networking, and project management. They also developed **resilience, confidence, and community-oriented leadership**, positioning them to create meaningful social and economic impact in their communities.

BTGG represents a strategic, gender-sensitive intervention aligned with Oribi's mission of fostering inclusive, sustainable economic ecosystems. Future iterations should focus on broadening reach, deepening mentorship, and providing ongoing support to maximize long-term impact.

