

# FOOD SYSTEM INCUBATOR

2020 – 2021 PROGRAMME REPORT

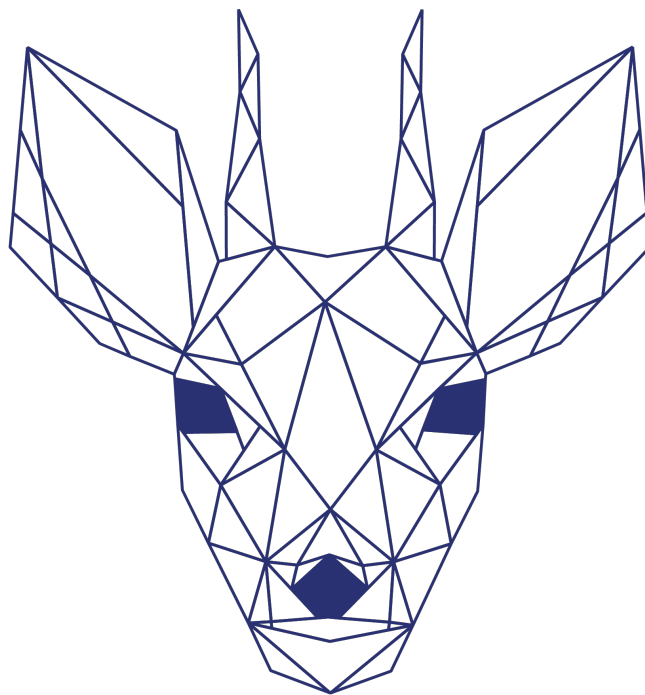


ORIBI VILLAGE  
| GROUPE SOS |

**pulse**  
| SOS GROUP |

# CONTENTS

WHY THE FOOD SYSTEM? _____	3
BRIDGING THE GAPS CHALLENGE _____	4
OUR METHODOLOGY _____	6
SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT _____	7
INCUBATION RESULTS _____	11
COLLABORATIONS _____	20
SOCIAL VALUE CREATED THROUGH SOCIAL ENTERPRISES _____	24
STAFF REFLECTIONS _____	25
PARTNERSHIP _____	28



# ORIBI VILLAGE

## | GROUPE SOS |

**FOR ANY QUERIES ABOUT THE PROGRAMME AND  
ACTIVITIES, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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\*For honest feedback, insights from stakeholders in this report gained anonymously and thus unattributed.



# WHY THE FOOD SYSTEM?

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Since we have launched our work with social entrepreneurs in 2018, we quickly realized that the social ills experienced in South Africa are systemic. In order to create inclusive economies, we believe that concerted effort has to be directed towards the crossover between informal and formal markets as the next African economic revolution.

26 years after the eradication of the Apartheid system, and now in a new democracy, the most vulnerable populations living in rural and peri-urban areas face the triple burden of poverty, unemployment and inequality. 55,5% of the population are still living under the upper-bound poverty line of R1 227 per month (Statistics South Africa, 2019). While the government has gradually implemented social development policies to correct the ills of the past, the results are slowed in pace. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states that “everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food”. At the national level South Africa is food secure, with enough food being produced, yet 22% of households have inadequate access to food and 27% of children under the age of five experience stunting (WWF Report, 2019).

People are going to bed hungry because:

- they do not have enough money to acquire healthy and nutritious foods
- there are geographical barriers such as the distance of supermarkets to homes, landlessness, and food deserts
- the food system is largely dominated by corporates, with complex value chains that are squeezing out small scale actors, and changing food cultures in low-income communities
- increased access to cheap, highly processed and non-nutritive foods due to food dumping in low-income communities
- most of the money spent on food leaves the communities, leaving little capital for people to find their own solutions

The COVID-19 pandemic further deepened this crisis, with an estimated 4 million people at risk of hunger due to loss of livelihoods. It is for this reason that Oribi Village and its partners saw an urgent need to launch the “Bridging the Gaps” innovation challenge at the onset of the hard lockdown (in March 2020); using the 21 days to identify and design solutions that would re-route the food system towards feeding the most vulnerable communities. After the innovation challenge, the nine-month Food System Incubation programme was launched with the following objectives:

- Supporting innovators, as job creators, to start, grow and sustain their businesses so that they can facilitate economic participation opportunities for women and youth
- Improving impact models by emphasising and supporting creation of social value for, and with the marginalised
- Facilitating collaborative actions within the Oribi network and creating alternative value chains principled on inclusion of informal and low-income communities

# BRIDGING THE GAPS CHALLENGE

4

Weeks

21

Coaching sessions

4

Webinars

91

Participants

40

Projects Submitted

15

Finalists

2

Winners



**Free webinar!**

16 April, 10 - 11am

**Mishinga Kombo**  
Head of ESD, Pick n Pay

**Leon Qwabe**  
Order Kasi App



**Free webinar!**

9 April, 10 - 11am

**Litha Kutta**  
Head of ESD, Tigerbrands

**Mark Vella**  
CEO, Sapientt



**Join our  
free webinar!**

2 April, 10 - 11am

**Ayanda Vana**  
Chief Operating Officer, Khula!



## WINNERS



Leon Qwabe is the founder and dreamer behind Order Kasi, launched his business in 2016 to increase access to market for township businesses by providing an online delivery platform tailored for the often overlooked township market, really easing some of the struggles caused by the pandemic while connecting the formal and informal economies.



Ashley Newell started Food Flow as a direct response to South Africa's lockdown. Through sponsorships, the initiative links small-scale farmers directly with those experiencing food insecurity. According to Newell, "Without the connection between farms and people, we have waste, hunger, and a missed opportunity for positive impact."

## WEBINAR

To find out more about the winners and their businesses [view the webinar here](#)



**FOOD TALK**  
FOCUS ON 2 SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL BUSINESSES



**LEON QWABE**  
Founder of Order Kasi



**ASHLEY NEWELL**  
Co-Founder of Food Flow

Facilitated by:



**NIALL NAIDOO**  
Food Expert & Lecturer at UCT



# OUR METHODOLOGY

Oribi is pioneering the establishment of a trust system around social entrepreneurship, with a special focus on the crossover between informal and formal markets. A model underpinned by cohort-based learning and a collaborative ecosystem approach.

We believe that this system can be created by assisting system-changers to:

Trust Yourself	Trust Your Solution	Build the Trust System
Ideas are dissected, tested and solidified to instil entrepreneurs with self-confidence and help them value their agency.	Strengthen their solutions through a human-centred design and systems thinking approach, with dedicated mentoring and coaching	Connect and create easy ways-in with formal markets for access to resources, capital and networks

The 9-month programme is divided in 3 phases:

P1 - Ideation	P2 - Operational+Impact Proof	P3 - Investment Readiness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>–Business skills development workshops</li><li>–Masterclasses with experienced innovators to share insights</li><li>–1-on-1 coaching session with ORIBI for leadership development</li><li>–1-on-1 mentoring session with a dedicated expert</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>–Applying knowledge and creating traction proof without denaturing their core business values</li><li>–Creating opportunities to collaborate within the Oribi network</li><li>–Design Thinking Sprints: capacity to think beyond their own model; co-creating solutions for each other and with other stakeholders to solve emerging ecosystem issues</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>–Strategic dives to assist with building a strong business case (operational model, go-to-market strategy, and impact goals)</li><li>–Connecting entrepreneurs to industry knowledge, investment, partnerships and markets</li><li>–Pitch Development training</li></ul>

# SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT

ORIBI Village received over 50 applications and, after reviewing and interviewing the applications, selected 36 participants to join the 3 day bootcamp that would conclude the selection process. After the 3 day bootcamp, 13 businesses were chosen to join the 9 month Food System Incubation Program, 7 FSAGRI Innovation Prize Winners and 2 Bridging the Gaps winners.

## SELECTION BOOTCAMP ACTIVITIES

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
Welcome and Intro to Oribi Session	Workshop: <u>Problem Framing Methodology   Human Centered Design Thinking</u>	<u>Submission of Pitch Video</u>
Workshop: <u>Understanding Social Entrepreneurship</u>	Co-thinking Masterclass: Business Cafe   Order Kasi	Pitch Booth with External Jury
Workshop: <u>Pitch Like a Pro</u>	Co-thinking Workshop: Design Thinking   Finding solutions for Order Kasi challenges together	Closing Session
Facebook and whatsapp group: QnA room with team and experts	Facebook and whatsapp group: QnA room with team and experts	Facebook and whatsapp group: QnA room with team and experts

## BOOTCAMP ATTENDANCE:

31 Pax	36 Pax	31 Pax	32 Pax
30 Jul 2020	30 Jul 2020	31 Jul 2020	1 Aug 2020
Welcome to the Food System Incubation Bootcamp	ICE BREAKER: Food System Incubation Bootcamp	Business Cafe and Design Thinking	Bootcamp Closing Event

The Bootcamp was a huge success. While many participants felt that the content was dense, they did nonetheless participate within the bootcamp content.

# ENTREPRENEURS - INCUBATION COHORT



## **Community Farmers Network**

*Sibuyiselwe Mlungwana*

A rural based agro-processing plant for indigenous foods helping small scale farmers to enter the food value chain beyond production.

*B2B2C – Product – Operational NGO to social*

**Food Flow**

## **Food Flow**

Ashley Newell

A platform for diverting healthy and nutritious food from small scale farmers to their own local communities

*B2B2C – Service – Operational NGO to Social Enterprise*



## **Inqaba Yesizwe**

Vanessa Hani

A healthy food and beverage company producing products for optimal cognitive and emotional management using traditional herbs and superfoods.

*B2C – Product – Development phase*



## **Kitchen Republik**

*Lisa Meyer & Brandon McCormack*

A mobile dark kitchen connecting local chefs to local sources of ingredients and local households.

*B2B pre-covid now B2C Service - post revenue*



## **KAPI**

Josephine Katumba

A data and logistics management platform to help reduce food waste and redirect it to communities in need or responsible re-use.

*B2B - eplatform - development phase*



## **Foodprint**

Julian Kanjere

A farm-to-fork food traceability and digital logbook

solution that is cloud-based and blockchain-enabled.

Visit <https://foodprintapp.com>

*B2B - platform - development phase*



## **Korn**

Kabelo Mbewe

is a food technology company that manufactures innovations to make nutritious foods more affordable and accessible in low income communities.

*B2B - development phase*





### **WILD HARVEST**

Vanessa von der Heyde

A range of salts, seed mixes and vinegars that use nutritious and flavourful, sustainably grown local wild herbs and leafy greens.

*B2B2C - Product - pilot phase*



### **Living Soils Community Learning Farm**

Rirhandzu Marivate

A learning farm showcasing the production of nutritious food through sustainable farming methods for the benefit of food security.

*B2B - product - Operational NGO to*



GOOD FOOD NETWORK

### **The Good Food Network**

Anna Shevel

A mapped platform that uses geolocating to connect the public with local organic & natural food places, skills, and service.

*B2B2C-e-platform - business model development phase*

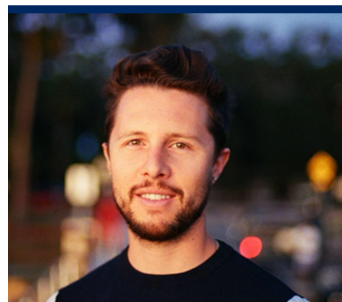


### **Food Jams**

Jade de Waal

A socially minded food and meeting space for locals, teams and tourists.

*B2B and B2C - post revenue - new market development*



### **Msanzi Lima Apps**

Christopher D'Aiuto

A suite of apps and services to help small scale organic farmers grow and sustain their businesses.

*B2B - app - development phase*



### **Ndalo Eco Cooler**

MamKhele U. Msongelwa

Provides a low cost, clean energy cold storage solution for small scale farmers and consumes in rural and peri-urban communities.

*B2B or B2C - development phase*



### **Order Kasi**

Leon Qwabe & Jayson Joubert

A hyperlocal multi services logistics company serving townships and boosting local economic activity by connecting informal to formal markets.

*B2B2C - post revenue - service*

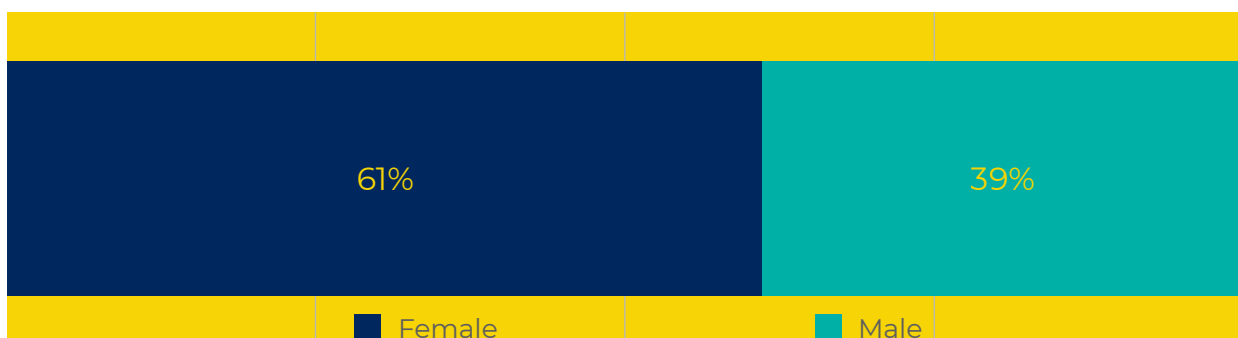
## ENTREPRENEURS - FSAGRI INNOVATORS IDEATION GROUP

	<b>JK Foods</b> Kgodiso Lebea	A provider of all natural and affordable moringa based spices <i>B2C- Post revenue - Product</i>
	<b>GreenFix</b> Maimela Mohale	Hydroponic food growers for rural food desert areas <i>B2C - development phase - Product</i>
	<b>Gloria Otunola</b>	Healthy snacks made with medicinal plants for diabetics, blood pressure and health conscious eaters. <i>B2C - development phase - product</i>
	<b>Craft Ale</b> Simphiwe Mokgawa	- Fruit based beer - all natural and nutritive B2C - Product - Post revenue
	<b>Morongwa Mathipa</b>	A natural based preservative for food based product entrepreneurs. <i>B2B - Product - Development phase</i>
	<b>Roumiana Nikolova</b>	Propagation bio tech solution for high value plants and products such as Bird's Eye <i>B2B - Product - business model development phase</i>
	<b>SaniEat</b> Nkateko Ncube	A moringa farm and product development company B2B or B2C - product - post revenue

# INCUBATION RESULTS

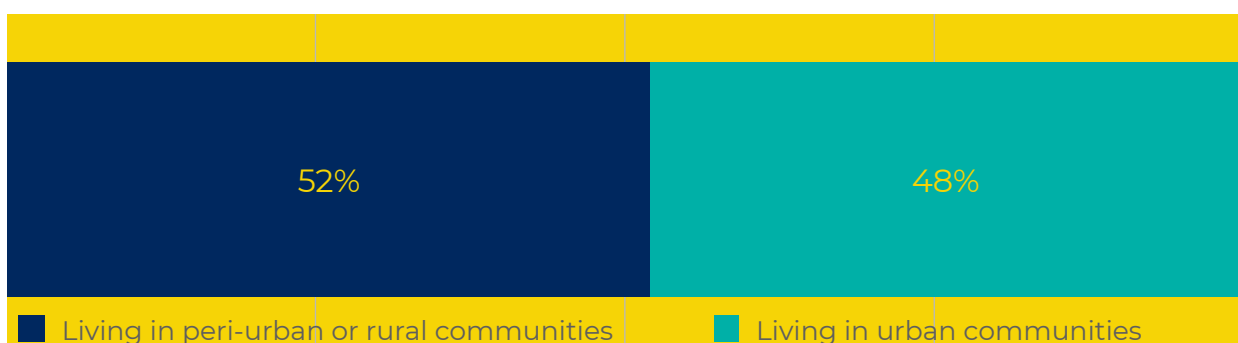


Gender Distribution



\*Target of the intervention was to work with 50% women in cohort

Rural/Urban Distribution



\*Target at least 50% of cohort living in peri-urban or rural communities

Race Distribution





## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**17**

**Masterclasses and workshops offered Aug 2020 - May 2021**

**3**

**Lean Startup Workshops for FSAGRI Food Innovators**

**1**

**Innovation Boot Camp, in Johannesburg**

These were delivered online due to Covid-19 restrictions (3 were offered as physical/hybrid events). The training sessions were delivered by external practitioners and Oribi team.



## TOP RANKED SESSIONS

- Legal Workshop
- Financial Modelling
- Theory of Change
- Informal Economy
- Storytelling
- LinkedIn Hacks for Growth
- Sales Methodologies
- Systems Thinking
- Networking: The Socials

## FEEDBACK FROM ENTREPRENEURS

“Covers the basics required to understand and implement that area of your business and ensure you have everything in order for your business to function properly”

“Very informative to small businesses and great platform to ask questions”

## WAY FORWARD

Our target for masterclass attendance was 80% and above. In Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the programme attendance was high. This may have been due to lockdown. As the country relaxed the Covid19 lockdowns, entrepreneurs started to get busier. We struggled to find a time to fit the facilitators, entrepreneurs busy schedules. Entrepreneurs also indicated that some of the masterclasses were not relevant to where they were in their business journey so they found that it clashed with time for urgent business needs.

With the next cohort, we would like to offer an opt-in or self-select option for entrepreneurs based on a deeper and longer onboarding process. At each phase of the programme, entrepreneurs will select which masterclasses they would like to attend (minimum 80% to graduate). We would also like to source more social entrepreneurs for the masterclasses as they have hands-on experience, for some of the subjects like Accounting, entrepreneurs felt the practitioner was knowledgeable and well prepared, however could not fully explore the day-to-day struggles of early stage social enterprises. We will crowdsource potential masterclass facilitators from this cohort.

## FACILITATORS



## THE CLOTHING BANK



## A F R I C A N



## SUCCESS STORY: FOOD JAMS

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Food is a huge part of every culture on the planet. Naturally, it makes sense that it would help us connect through our diversity. Jade De Waal realised this and created Food Jams, using food as a catalyst for helping her clients to connect and share.



### HOW DID FOOD JAMS BEGIN?

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It literally started with some of my friends who wanted to learn how to cook. I was surrounded by musicians and filmmakers who I used as guinea pigs while they used the space to create. We found ourselves together and hungry in my parents' kitchen — which happens to be my favourite place to cook. I threw a few recipes and ingredients together, things we were familiar with so that we could just *gooi*, work our magic and start cooking.

I approached it the same way I approached learning music; freestyling and learning by exploration. We see what we have and make something amazing with the people in the room. There are no right or wrong notes, or in this case, flavours.

I love the fact that there are no preconceived ideas about how or even what you need to cook in a Food Jam, the format encourages experimentation and exploration with food.

While hosting an event for my sister's lifeguard group, I recognized that this is a great tool for engagement as there was a bit of conflict in the team and the setting, combined with the activity of cooking together, made it easier for them to have these difficult conversations in an amicable way — food really relaxes people. Eleven years later, and we have Food Jammed



everywhere from an island in Mozambique; to the UJ campus; to somebody's wedding; to corporate team buildings; and even bachelorette parties.

Food brings out the best and worst in people, I have had people get really frustrated during the process and apologise afterwards and opening up about what's really stressing them out. I am definitely not a therapist, but it does feel like I am creating a space for engagement through food, which can be very therapeutic.

### **WHY DO YOU THINK FOOD CONNECTS US IN THIS WAY?**

It is so beautiful! It is like a language, a means of communication. Some people I know have a terrible relationship with food, part of that is growing up with a lot of pressure about what to eat and how to cook it, some of my friends were never even allowed in the kitchen by their parents. It's so great to see these people ease into the experience and create a new, more positive, relationship with food.

This tendency to open up while preparing and eating a meal together may have something to do with so much of our senses being stimulated. It also feeds our social nature as humans, as a shared experience helps us bond.





## HOW HAS ORIBI HELPED YOUR JOURNEY?

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Being involved with Oribi has been a huge eye-opener! For me, the “rock stars” have always been those at the root, the people on the ground but now I’m also learning about the people who are creating tools and systems that assist these people by providing a bigger space for local produce through access to market and sensible technology.

Being in the incubator has truly been an energizing experience, I’ve really enjoyed not being the smartest person in the room because I get to learn from all of these incredible people that I have connected with through the programme. Having walked this road with other changemakers I’ve also learnt that the torchbearers are us and that we can affect change with even the smallest of actions or changes.

My favourite part of this experience has really been seeing how myself and others have grown and noticing the big effects of the small changes we are making. What I am most grateful for is the access I’ve acquired to the most helpful resources, opportunities and people. I feel that Oribi as an organization, as well as its people, are incredibly generous; whether with time, knowledge, or a willingness to put in the effort to help me connect with people in the industry who may be beneficial.

The opportunities for collaboration have also been incredible. I have been working with Kitchen Republik who are now using our space for facilitation.

Another thing I love about the incubator is all the personalities I have met; I honestly think that they are an amazing bunch of people who can actually change the world.



EXTERNAL MENTORSHIP





## MENTORS' FEEDBACK QUOTES

"They get to know you on a personal level, they can support you emotionally as well and are with you every step of the journey. Because of their experience, knowledge and expertise the probability of success for your business increases"

"Having a voice of reason that I could turn to sometimes to offer a different/fresh perspective."

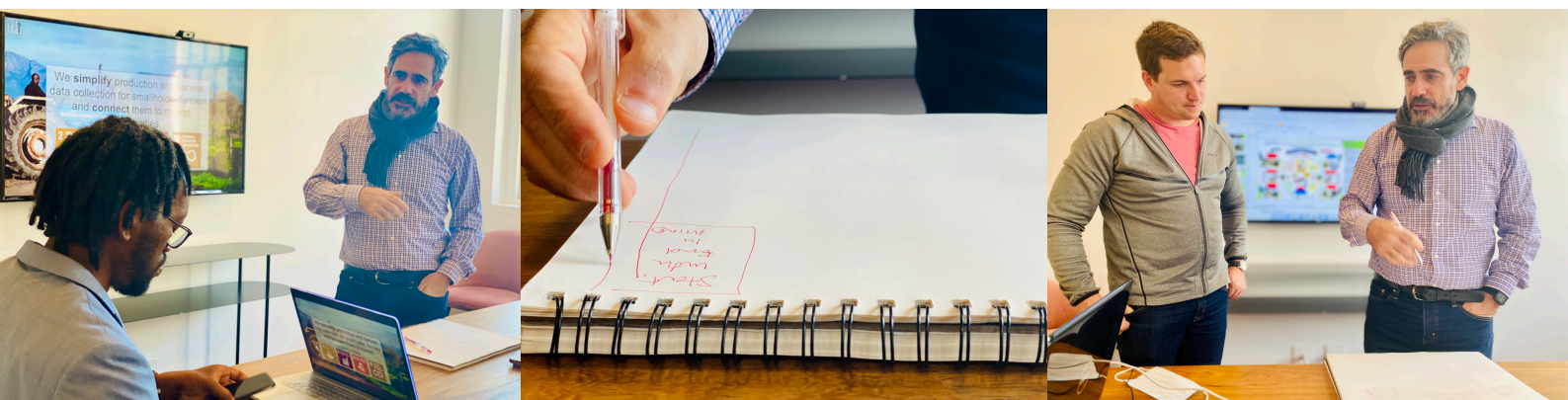
"The best part is the safe space, the opportunity for difficult questions and the company of a next-level entrepreneur"

## WAY FORWARD:

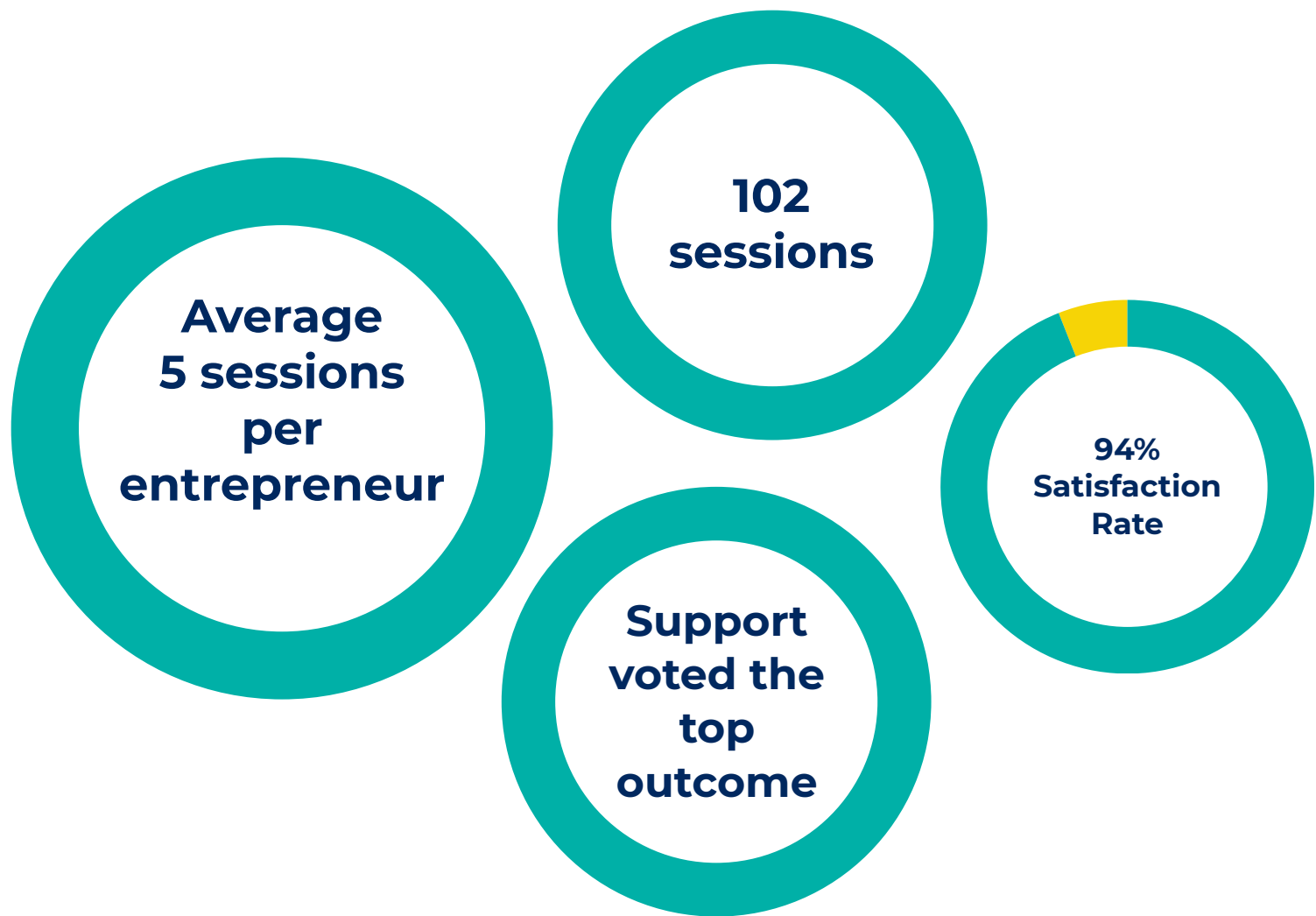
The entrepreneurs were satisfied with the external mentorship in general. However, they felt that a more robust matching process would be beneficial to link the mentor to mentee, also a possibility of choosing the mentor they would like to work with or rotating mentors depending on where they are in their business journey. In the next cohort, we will have mentors involved in the Selection and Recruitment Process (Bootcamp + 4-Week Lean sprint) so that they can get to know the entrepreneurs well and help with selecting final candidates.

We will also design a mentor toolkit with guidelines about how to run the mentor sessions with an inclusive and gendered approach. An Oribi coach will be assigned to attend the first introduction meeting, as opposed to an email introduction, where clear goals and objectives will be set per phase of the programme.

The team will increase the number of mentors in the network and give an option for mentors to select whether they are happy to be approached ad-hoc by other mentees within the programme.







### FEEDBACK QUOTES

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"Entrepreneurship can be a lonely journey and to be able to share with someone is great"

"They are tailored, informative and really want to understand where your business stands"

"Nice to connect and check in - often [Coach] had great ideas or connections to introduce me to"

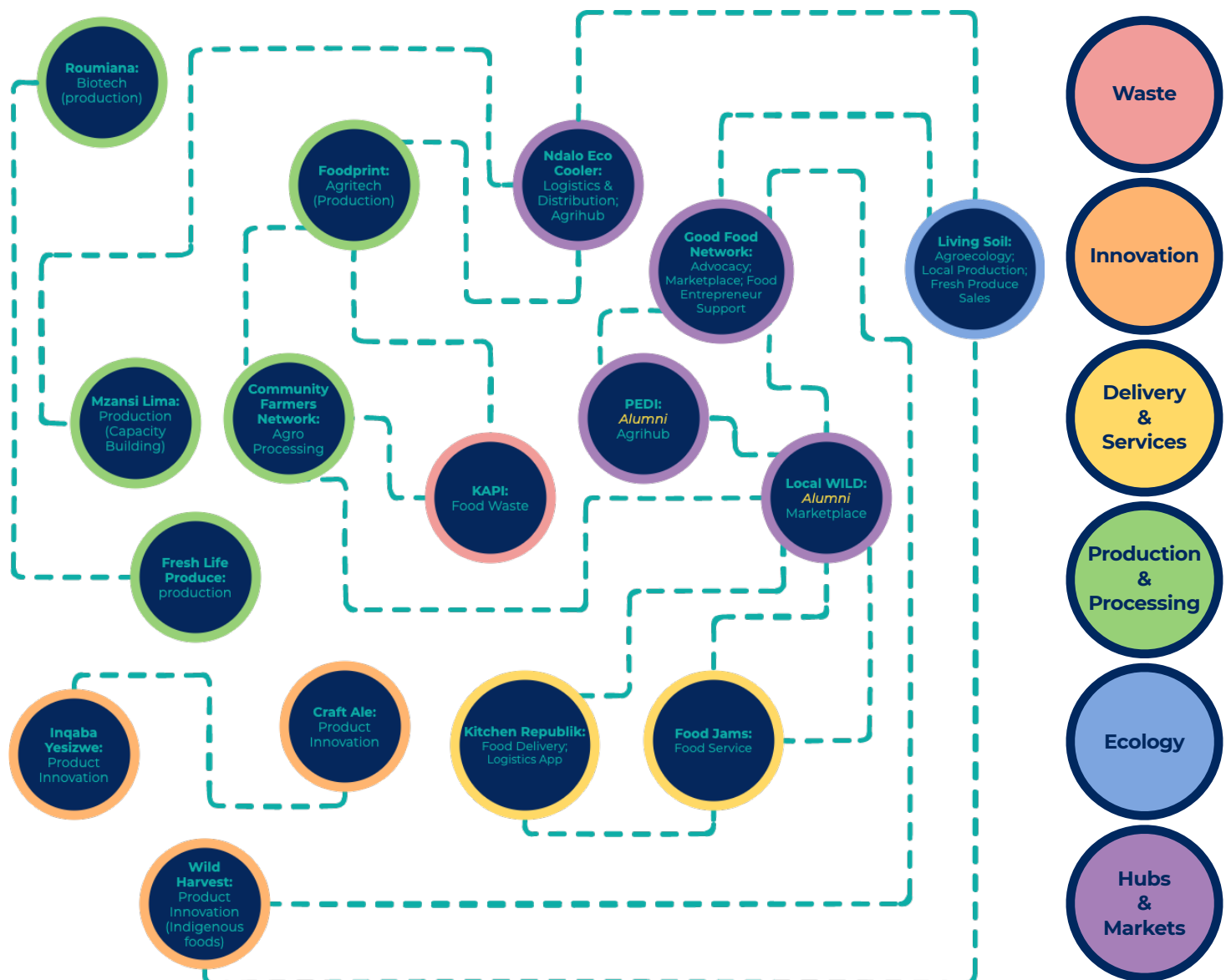
### WAY FORWARD

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Entrepreneurs indicated that they would like more sessions with the Oribi coaches. The team will set up a seamless booking system that shows availability and when entrepreneurs can book their meetings. The coaching sessions will be implemented as 'Mock' boardroom sessions. This will assist in creating accountability and help entrepreneurs to prepare for strategic conversations. Our biggest struggle from the Oribi side was engaging entrepreneurs with the feedback and reporting tools. We have conducted a co-design process to ascertain the main barriers and design tools that are informative and impactful for the entrepreneurs' journey. Each month before the internal coaching session, entrepreneurs will be required to fill a self-assessment tool and create an agenda - in order to have a more empowered and solution-focused approach.

# COLLABORATIONS

- Roumiana provided science expertise to help FLP improve their product; Fresh Life Produce was able to access Limpopo rural communities to pilot their project in a new area
- Craft Ale and Inqaba Yesizwe were able to exchange expertise on product development and manufacturing contacts and processes
- Msanzi Lima, Foodprint and Ndalo Eco Cooler entered into a potential collaboration for a value chain solution and pilot
- KAPI was able to access technological expertise from Foodprint while providing them with a network of small-scale farmers to pilot with
- Living Soil and Kurt Ackerman (facilitator) shared farming production practices and mentorship on developing a profitable learning academy model
- Living Soil helped Ndalo Eco Cooler with access to a site to pilot their technology
- KAPI and Community Farmers Network: KAPI able to source network of small scale farmers and get agro-processing services from CFN
- Good Food Network, Living Soil, PEDI, Wild Harvest: PEDI, Wild Harvest able to list on the Good Food Network platform. Early adopters of the platform
- Local WILD Food Store launched in collaboration with Good Food Network, PEDI, Kitchen Republik, Food Jams.



## LOCAL WILD FOOD STORE LAUNCH

The [Local WILD Food Store](#) is a collaborative effort between Oribi alumni from two different cohorts. Loubie Rush, of *Making Kos*, has always been a keen advocate for indigenous food and, with the help of her fellow Oribi alumni, has launched an online store to increase market accessibility to these local foods and reintegrate forgotten local indigenous and Cape wild foods into the local food system.

Local WILD is a voluntary association that was born out of its founder Loubie Rusch's passion to enhance knowing about, growing and using the forgotten and neglected local indigenous and wild foods of the Cape.

N'Rougas is a family farm near Kenhardt in the Northern Cape. The indigenous aspect of the business is a partnership between two women whose families have traditionally been farm labourers and 5th generation land owners. Seeing the potential for growing plants that thrive with just a few drops of precious rain in our arid area, we have been eager to share our range of indigenous produce with the market in Cape Town. We have been working with Loubie Rusch from *Making Kos* and Anna Shevel from Good Food Network to put the systems in place for smooth access to market for our produce and for the produce of other passionate small farmers. We have been supporting PEDI in being able to aggregate and package the produce from Ubuhle Bendalo, Living Soils, PEDI Farm and N'Rougas Farm.

### **Michelle Delport - N'Rougas Farm**

Working with Local Wild to develop a digitised agrihub has been a dream realised for the Good Food Network. Indigenous food species are the most environmentally beneficial types of foods, as they are adapted for the areas they grow in and need very little input. The farms and projects that are selling them on Good Food Network platform are creating economic growth and agricultural jobs in areas that are very difficult to grow conventional products, with very low employment rates. By empowering Local Wild to get online and to start trading, we are fulfilling our highest ideal of positive impact.

Working with Local Wild has required to GFN innovate to meet their needs so we are able to not only offer home users, suppliers and retailers a platform to connect and trade, but we have now developed a unique solution for agrihubs, farmer networks, and buying clubs to administer their complex operations too.

Our vision is to grow a decentralised network of GOOD food communities and hubs all over South Africa, and Local Wild has been an incredible flagship project to start with!

### **Anna Shevel - Good Food Network**



## COLLABORATION FEEDBACK

"A positive outcome for Kitchen Republik's participation in the incubation programme has been our collaboration with Food Jams. We knew the founder, Jade Waal, before the programme however we were only able to connect with her through the incubator. Food Jams has provided kitchen space for us to be able to grow our operations. Without the operational linkage, we are not sure if we would have reached the capacity we are at now, where we have increased from a 1 day delivery service to a 3 day delivery service. Our startup has grown to a point where we can now look for our own kitchen space to rent."

***Lisa Meyer - Kitchen Republik***

"Fresh Life Produce has been able to meet great people within the Oribi cohort and beyond. Unfortunately, due to Covid, we were not able to physically meet as often. However, I have connected with the Oribi alumni project, Mhani Gingi, to deploy one of our community projects. Without Mhani Gingi we would not have known where to start sourcing the right households to equip with the African Grower systems. She had deep knowledge about the community, on what to do or not to do, specifically in the Manenberg community. She assisted us with developing training programmes that would suit our beneficiaries and we have been able to install 3 exhibition tunnels at her facility so that the rest of the community can see the efficacy of the African Grower systems. We were also privileged to connect with Roumiana, a FSAGRI incubatee, who is a biotech specialist. She assisted us with a scientific research process for us to understand the efficacy of the African Grower system, and gave us ideas on how to improve the system. She has also given us access to the Limpopo region, as soon as we get the resources, she would be able to assist with setting up community projects in the new region."

***Louis-Gillis Van Rensburg - Fresh Life Produce***

"FoodPrint was able to collaborate with incubatees in the cohort and gain knowledge from our facilitators. We came into the incubation programme knowing that our traceability offering was a 'nice-to-have' for consumers but not a viable business yet. Hence without the support of my knowledgeable peers, Chris and Mamkhele, about the food system and the issues relating to food security in the SA context, I would not have been able to arrive at our new offering for small-scale farmers. I got insights directly from the ground, and it became clear that in order for our tech solution to work, we would need boots on the ground. I have connected with other projects like KAPI, who is working on a project to provide market access for small-scale farmers, through her network, Foodprint will have direct access to small-scale farmers in different regions of the country in order to pilot the new offering."

***Julian Kanjere - Foodprint***

For me, going to KZN opened up my eyes to how as an entrepreneur you do not have to have everything. Community Farmers Network has the farmers and the agro-processing facilities. It highlights the purpose of collaboration and shared value. CFN needed marketing and market access support. I have tried to source agro-processing services for small scale production from other suppliers. It was not easy to find help. They did not trust me as an entrant in the market. The fact that CFN is part of the Oribi network helped a lot. It validated me as an entrepreneur, we are on the same page. The fact that we are both socially focused.

***Josephine Katumba - KAPI***



## WAY FORWARD

Overall entrepreneurs found the access to a wider network of food system entrepreneurs a high-point. The benefit of the Oribi coaching sessions is that we were able to quickly identify any opportunities for collaboration within the group. Some collaborations went well, however, we found that in other collaborations we needed to intervene and facilitate a process for the partnership engagement and defining the goals and purpose of the collaboration.

The team's area of growth is finding and increasing the database of partners outside of the Oribi network. These are funding partners, partners who will give entrepreneurs access to markets or resources in the wider ecosystem. We have appointed a Partnerships Manager who will be responsible for this part of the programme. The team needs to do more work on external marketing so that we can start attracting the right partners.





# SOCIAL VALUE CREATED THROUGH SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

209 Direct  
economic  
participation  
opportunities  
created

6323  
people living  
rural and peri-  
urban  
communities  
reached



# STAFF REFLECTIONS

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## LOUIS PREVOST

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*Managing Director*

A standout with this cohort has been the realisation early on that collaboration can indeed help businesses to reinvent systems. Potentially changing the way economies are geared, for a more sustainable, accessible, and ethical way to approach consumption for everyone.

Incubation is all about relationships and the way you engage with your entrepreneurs. Doing everything virtually is slowing down the process of trust-building and capacity for individuals to open and collaborate in an organic way.

While the multiplication of platforms and tools has sometimes taken the team and entrepreneurs away from each other, it's been an incredible stress test for our activity and industry! We've learned to be more agile and to reach more people by deploying programs to different types of beneficiaries in different areas at the same time!

When the pandemic started, Oribi quickly refocused on key priority areas of support for social entrepreneurs which arose during this time. As unemployment skyrocketed in SA, Oribi's mission to deploy programs that strengthen capacity building for informal businesses, support gender forward initiatives, and strengthen solutions that bring more accessibility to food for disadvantaged communities is more important than ever.

Human relationships are complicated, even more when you take them in a business context. Nothing is free, everything has a cost. Trying to implement methodologies around ecosystem collaboration through a common vision for impact is hard, and we need to fight for it on a day to day basis. Learning how to deal with each stakeholder's needs, challenges and ideas, to bring individualistic paths as one collective direction requires humility, openness and patience. We learn everyday!

Stakeholders working on bridging gaps between formal and informal economies must first and foremost come together and discuss what has already been done to find feasible solutions faster. It requires trust between the two sides of the coin. It requires people to understand how it works first, to then leverage value at the right time, in the right way.

What I've learnt is that there are multiple food systems. In order to deal with systemic issues, there must be decisions taken around an approach, an angle, a "way to get in". This might bring in biased and preconceived ideas, but it's the only way to get in. Once you are in, it's up to you to talk to enough actors with enough different point of views and ideas to start unravelling the complexity of it, piece by piece; through collaboration, there's a way in toward a better food system!

Throughout this cohort, my biggest motivation was the energy of my team. It's incredible how steadfast they are, even in the harshest conditions. Oribi has people onboard who believe in what they are doing. People who do not fear criticism. Who are eager to learn and embrace that they are not perfect.

Our team knows the importance of learning and unlearning. To me, there's no better way to grow further. There's no better way to drive change.





## KAYLON KOERIES

*Communications Manager*

I joined the team late into the programme, but I have seen and been a part of some incredible initiatives. It is very inspiring to see people actioning their great ideas and finding success. My biggest highlight during my time with the entrepreneurs has definitely been getting to know the stories behind each of their businesses. I've really enjoyed learning from them and have been inspired, enriched and humbled in these past few months.



## MITCHEL NKHAMA

*Incubation Assistant*

The food system incubation programme was a learning journey of understanding the challenges that entrepreneurs face and the gap in the system. The Covid-19 pandemic made the invisible visible about the food insecurity in South Africa. This opened up opportunities for businesses to emerge and combat this. As an incubator we were able to reach more entrepreneurs as the master classes were hosted online. This however also brought challenges of data access and exhaustion of being online as we had to pivot from in person sessions. This brought forth opportunities to find ways to make online fun.



I learnt that it is through collaboration and networking with other actors in the food systems that will encourage the rethinking of food systems. We also live in a VUCA world where we need to co-create businesses that are resilient to changes.

## NTHAKOANA MAEMA

*Incubation Manager*

I joined the Oribi team in August 2020, in the thick of the COVID-19 pandemic. There are no words to express my gratitude, joining a team of 'fearless' development practitioners who are not afraid to question the system, with their own 'way of doing' and delving into experimentation to solve for a sustainable future has been nothing short of inspiring. COVID-19 highlighted the existing problem of food insecurity in the country. On one hand we had food hoarding and on the other hand we saw communities lining up for food parcels as their food insecurity deepened due to loss of livelihoods. I have been equally inspired by the cohort of entrepreneurs who are not afraid to challenge themselves, and explore new approaches to ensuring that people gain better access to nutritious and healthy foods. Crisis is a portal for opportunity, having the privilege to journey with the different entrepreneurial approaches, solutioning along the different expressions of the value chain has been awe-inspiring. While the world as we know it has been disrupted, it has really





given me hope that perhaps with a fertile environment for innovation and value-based leadership, social entrepreneurship is a credible arrangement in the social contract.

The pandemic has enabled the team and entrepreneurs to embrace agility and a growth mindset. We have also been challenged to really look at our innovations from a systemic perspective. No one wants the economy or the country to revert back to its fragmented 'old self', we now have an opportunity to recover better and rebuild inclusively. The continued endeavour for a transformative digital environment is a challenge that we need to spin into an opportunity. Taking the positive aspect of digital spaces, for providing opportunity to reach new, hard-to-reach populations, and providing blended environments, continuing to adapt to technology and methodologies that are conducive to our audience by meeting them where they are.

The pandemic has highlighted the prevailing leadership crisis. As leaders struggled to navigate complexity, and explore beyond their imagined frameworks, the rising gap has been filled by these youthful, self-reflective and generative entrepreneurs. I am continuously challenged as a development practitioner to refrain from blueprinting to move towards a developmental approach that is co-creative and open to change from its beneficiaries, as agents. They have an impeccable instinct for discerning and setting healthy boundaries, knowing when to step in and when to step out. Knowing when to acknowledge when they have struggled to show up fully, and knowing when to raise their voice, or listen to those who do not speak in words. This is the kind of leadership that we need as we imagine, experiment and become midwives of inclusive economies, in partnership.

As stakeholders in the ecosystem, we need to loosen the grip on innovation and consider ourselves hosts and not heroes as Margaret Wheatley would say. Our actions today are shaping the future, and we cannot shape the future without putting young people and women at the centre of innovation. We also need to embrace crises as portals of opportunity. The inequalities in society must be acknowledged in recovery. When we explore new directions for capital and resources, we need to consider that equity matters, that radical change will only come to the fore if we are able to bridge decent livelihoods and environmental regeneration through the lens of restorative justice. This is why the crossover of informal and formal markets is the solution to the current economic crisis.

People are not going to bed hungry by accident, it is an embedded design of the current food system. If we are going to resolve the pandemic of hunger, we need to embrace new arrangements of the value chain. We should be inspired by traditional systems, in this new world of innovation. People are not merely consumers, they have the capacity to make the right food choices, the capacity to learn new ways of growing food that does not harm nature or do so at the expense of human capital and the capacity to generate their own sustainable livelihoods. The triple bottom line is not merely the three words: People, Planet and Profit or a measurement tool. It is a paradigm that connects us all for the wellbeing of this and future life, it requires a transdisciplinary convening, learning and partnership space for enabling production and distribution that is fair and equal leaving no person or place behind.

I am SUPER inspired by the amazing network of experts, mentors, facilitators, researchers and partners who are willing to journey with us on this messy pathway of development. Trusting that we are measured in our approach but not afraid to let go of 'ways of doing' that do not serve social, environmental and economic justice. This is really an emerging network of solidarity and trust, where we have seen so much generosity from everyone in the network, appreciating and co-creating stories of change together.

# PARTNERSHIP

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## ORIBI X PULSE: FRENCH CONNECTION, LOCAL IMPACT

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PULSE was established in 2006, with the mission to support and promote entrepreneurship as a lever for inclusive and sustainable development. Elsa Walwer, Operations Manager at Pulse, highlights the importance of partnerships and the experience that she and her team have had working with Oribi Village.

### HOW DID THIS PARTNERSHIP EMERGE?

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Pulse identified Oribi Village as the ideal partner to expand the work we were doing through Lab'ess and Bidaya in territories we had not yet reached nor had any running partnerships in. South Africa was seen as a hub for entrepreneurship in Africa, and also a country where entrepreneurship is a real lever for economic development. We saw a real opportunity to introduce social and environmental impact through entrepreneurial development.

### WHAT HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE BEEN WITH ORIBI VILLAGE?

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This has been the first recreation of an incubator by Pulse; we have noticed the development of its activities for the last three years now and it has been amazing. At the end of 2019, after just one year, Oribi already had legitimacy and visibility within the environmental entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Oribi quickly developed its first cohorts and special methodology. The organisation is so agile because it learns and changes, testing everything; understanding the industry, pinning down the needs of beneficiaries and finding the best ways to support them. This has led to an incubator that is highly tailored to each cohort and also easily adjustable.

In the beginning, the support from Pulse to Oribi was largely financial but we also provided a lot of technical support and assisted in the development of the team.

Oribi had a novel approach and were hyper focused in a sector, first sustainable tourism and then the food system, figuring out how the whole sector behaves as a system and how to improve it. By connecting with universities, public actors, and key stakeholders in the sector; entrepreneurs could be connected to the right people and change the system itself. This way of working was of great inspiration to the other organisations under Pulse.

### WHY IS THE SYSTEMIC APPROACH SO IMPORTANT?

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It is very interesting, as it puts many different stakeholders together; people who, when they meet and are able to work together, can affect real change to the whole system. It's more than just a "theme" or simply an industry focus, having all these people work together in a different way in the value chain of the system will change that very value chain.

### WHY IS PARTNERSHIP IMPORTANT FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION?

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We embrace partnership, because together we're stronger and we know more. We have partners in Paris, Morocco, Tunisia, and the Balkan region now. All of them are developing methodologies, a lot of which could be easily transferrable to other countries. Oribi's approach to partnerships enables collaboration between various actors in the system working together around one issue in order to bring about systemic change. This allows for greater innovation by entrepreneurs and that is very interesting, think of the possibilities you could have for awareness, activism, and advocacy that could be developed through the projects of these entrepreneurs.

## WHAT DOES THE FUTURE OF THIS PARTNERSHIP LOOK LIKE?

Well this is only the beginning really. Oribi is young, Pulse is young too and we have the basis for good cooperation and an opportunity to grow together. The idea is for Pulse to go further as an international organisation. The idea is always to have an increasingly collective test force that grows together as each individual part innovates and shares their knowledge.

We'd like to further take advantage of our international positioning, though it currently isn't the best time for international mobility, it is a key point to consider. I'd like to see more continuous training for teams to learn more from each other about how each team is solving various issues in their respective region.

For entrepreneurs of course this should also be pursued, as a solution in one market could have incredible impact across the world.

## WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS LOOKING TO PARTNER WITH ORIBI VILLAGE?

They have a great team, go! Oribi is really engaged in reaching its mission with oriented action and energy, because it is impact driven. This is evident in the way it functions and the integrity of its people. Oribi has an incredible capacity to reach the right partners in order to implement things contextually; they are not isolated and are able to connect you to a vast and actionable network.



## IN THE PIPELINE

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### FOOD SYSTEMS INCUBATION COHORT 5 AND LAUNCH OF ALUMNI PROGRAM

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Selection and recruitment for the Food Systems Incubation programme will take place end of October - December in preparation for launch of the 5th Cohort in Jan 2022.

Current incubatees and alumni have indicated that they would still like to receive support from Oribi in the near future. This would mainly be around assisting with connecting to the Oribi network, providing services around coaching, business strategy, support for fundraising and onboarding new formal partners. The Alumni programme is due to launch at the end of September.

### IMPACT FUND

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We are activating an impact fund focusing on investing in innovative and impact-driven early-stage enterprises that are addressing the challenges faced by low-income communities in South Africa. The fund is currently in research and development phase, it is inspired by worker co-operatives, 'stokvels' and building on the Yunus micro-financing model.

From our experience, we have identified a gap in funding and tailored financial instruments for social enterprises, more so township-based enterprises and/or informal businesses. Entrepreneurs lack access to traditional capital, due to reasons such as lack of consistent cash flow and lack of personal assets for collateral. This has been confirmed by the SAB Foundation and Bertha Centre of Social Innovation, '[Early Stage Social Enterprise Funding Report](#)'. There is a gap for smaller ticket sizes and milestone-based funding for 'the missing middle' and 'low value return industries'. Yet, a small to medium ticket size injection of unrestricted funding would create high social and environmental return and potential growth. As a result, we are currently in talks with potential investors, community development and financial inclusion experts, aiming at launching the first iteration of the fund in 2022. ORIBI's impact fund model would allow investors at all levels to sustainably grow the financial well-being of the untapped informal economy whilst yielding social, environmental and economic returns on investment. Our stakeholders will function as a network-based ecosystem that co-creates/co-owns solutions which build an inclusive circle of financial progress allowing us to reduce financial exclusion.

### LAUNCH OF WOMXN IN BUSINESS STRATEGY

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Oribi Village was selected as a beneficiary for technical assistance from [Value for Women](#) for 6 months (2021). This has been a transformative process and an eye-opener for the team. We have organically reached a higher percentage of women in our programmes, however through our experience and getting closer to women entrepreneurs we understand that a more focused approach to bridging the gender parity gap in entrepreneurship is necessary. The Womxn in Business cohort, starting in 2022, is aimed at unleashing women-owned social enterprises in the township economy. The project aims to put the informal market, dominated by female citizens, at the forefront of economic reset by recognizing their invaluable contribution to society. Through their experience and facilitating womxn geared sources of capital, more womxn leaders can fully participate in the economy, become role models for young girls and lead advocacy for culturally-adapted, gender-responsive policymaking and mobilization of resources. By promoting gender inclusion in business models, Oribi aims to support the full and equitable participation of womxn in the labour market and value chains, therefore, driving growth and eliminating poverty.



# THANK YOU TO OUR ENTREPRENEURS, PARTNERS, AND ECOSYSTEM!



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