

#FOODSYSTEMS
2022-3
INCUBATION REPORT

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FOREWARD

Dear Esteemed Readers,

As we step back to reflect on the journey of the 2022/2023 #FoodSystem Programme, a tapestry of progress, challenges, and aspirations emerges. This transformative expedition has not only illuminated the path to innovative solutions for food security and unemployment in South Africa but has also revealed valuable insights that shape our ongoing efforts and industry.

The entrepreneurs within the Food System Programme have demonstrated remarkable dedication and progress in their projects. Their commitment to effecting change is nothing short of inspiring. However, as with any ambitious endeavour, challenges have risen along the way.

One notable challenge has been the impact of load shedding on some entrepreneurs' ability to fully engage in programme activities, which in this year's cohort were mostly through digital mediums. Additionally, ensuring consistent adherence to the programmes' online schedule has posed difficulties for a number of participants. In response, we are proactively exploring strategies to provide enhanced reminders, and innovative ways to further increase entrepreneurs' in participating in the programme. These include clearer and more tailored communication of the overall programme, unpacking what to expect and how to engage from the offset.

The most recent pitching sessions were a testament to the entrepreneurial energy that fuels this programme. In the sessions, entrepreneurs showcased their social enterprises with passion and depth, giving us a glimpse into their innovative impact initiatives. Particularly noteworthy was the articulation of required investments, providing a road-map for us to navigate the exciting terrain of the final phase: Investor Readiness.

Amid these milestones, it's worth acknowledging the profound personal growth evident in each entrepreneur. Their confidence, entrepreneurial drive, business growth and self-assuredness are testaments to their growth over the 9 months of the journey. Yet, we can't help but wonder how much more could be achieved with deeper engagement and more in-person interactions.

As we continue forward, our commitment to supporting these entrepreneurs remains unwavering. We recognise that "investor readiness" must encompass not just investor readiness, but also addressing systemic barriers that may hinder access to vital resources for business development.

Moreover, the question of engagement has provoked introspection on the digital nature of our programme. While digital platforms provide reach, they also highlight the importance of equitable digital access.

In closing, the Food System Programme is not just an initiative for us at Oribi; it's our commitment to collective transformative change through entrepreneurship. The entrepreneurs' journeys are testaments to resilience, innovation, and the power of collaboration. As we reflect on the past and strategise for the future, we would love to acknowledge and thank all our supporters, partners and sponsors with special mention to our funding partners, AFD, IDC, Schmidt Family Office for joining us on this journey of empowerment, growth, and lasting impact.

Yours in Transformation,

Tumi and Lucas

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ongoing polycrisis, spanning the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war and the ever-escalating conversation of climate change, has had a profound and compounding effect on global food systems. This multifaceted turmoil, marked notably by diminished exports of essential grains, oilseeds, increased costs of inputs and financing for farmers has disproportionately affected the world's most vulnerable communities, intensifying their preexisting food insecurity to alarming levels. Consequently, since 2020, the cost of a basic local food basket has increased by almost **50%**, increasing the strain on already stretched household budgets which is demonstrative of the importance of enabling local food systems and local economies through entrepreneurship.

Oribi is a social entrepreneurship incubator, which has set out to catalyse transformative entrepreneurship and propel change within South Africa's complex food landscape. In understanding the inequality that exists in South Africa due to its complex history, Oribi's programmes are finetuned to enable those traditionally underserved by society. Since its inception in 2018, Oribi has become a dynamic force, reaching around 156 social entrepreneurs in establishing businesses within the food chain with a mission to create thriving, inclusive, and alternative food systems. Oribi forms part of the **Groupe SOS PULSE** network of incubators which aims to lead positive change in all regions of the world through creating pathways towards social entrepreneurship as a means to a more inclusive society.

At the heart of Oribi's impact is the #FoodSystem Programme, a 9-month-long incubation journey that catalyses change through transformative entrepreneurship. Its pedagogy focuses on holistic development of the entrepreneur as well as the eco-system in which they operate. By fostering a holistic systems approach, the programme empowers the social entrepreneurs to innovate across the food value chain, from farming and processing to distribution and consumption. With an unwavering commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, #FoodSystem Programme directly contributes to Zero Hunger (**SDG 2**), Decent Work and Economic Growth (**SDG 8**), Sustainable Cities and Communities (**SDG 11**), and Responsible Consumption and Production (**SDG 12**).

For the 2022/2023 #FoodSystem programme cohort, we shortlisted over 50 entrepreneurs who took part in our #BridgingTheGaps Innovation Challenge, which formed part of our selection strategy. From this cohort we identified 21 promising entrepreneurs through a secondary selection process to join the incubation programme. The entrepreneurs represented varied interests in the food value chain, and hailed from five out of the nine provinces in the country, reflecting a diversity of values, knowledge, and worldviews. The programme was made up of 13 men and 8 women, **100%** identifying as people of colour, and was reflective of our target beneficiaries which are women and youth from marginalised communities.

2 **ZERO HUNGER**
Our commitment to food security addresses the mission of achieving zero hunger. By empowering and enabling the development and growth of entrepreneurs who are innovating along the food value chain, we contribute to working towards a world where every person has access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food.

5 **GENDER EQUALITY**
Through our gender sensitive incubator program, Oribi supports women to have better outcomes in the food system through social entrepreneurship.

8 **DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**
By fostering the growth of impactful social businesses, our programme directly supports the goal of decent work and economic growth. Through the lens of sustainable entrepreneurship, we pave the way for dignified livelihoods and economic empowerment.

11 **SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES**
The ripple effects of our programme extend to creating sustainable communities. By promoting social impact and innovation in our programme, we contribute to building resilient and sustainable enterprises and communities, enriching urban and rural landscapes alike.

12 **RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION**
Our commitment to responsible consumption and production is ingrained in our programme's ethos. By nurturing businesses that embrace sustainability, we promote responsible practices across the entire food value chain.

#BTG VALUE CHAIN DISTRIBUTION:

Our shortlisted entrepreneurs are driving change across the food system:

- **farming methods:**
26%
- **farmer training & support:**
16%
- **Agro-processing:**
21%
- **indigenous product innovation:**
5%
- **responsible consumption**
5%

INCLUSIVE IMPACT:

Oribi's reach and depth over the year:

- **74** applicants
- **51** bridging the gap participants shortlisted
- **21** businesses chosen for incubation
- **11** experts mentors

• **satisfaction rate:**

GRANT PROGRAMME:

Recognising the power of access to funding, Oribi's Grant Programme, which is running now for the 2nd cohort is our initiation towards contributing to development financing and inclusive funding. In this cohort we have awarded a total of **R200,000** to 5 deserving entrepreneurs, fuelling their growth journeys and development towards financial sustainability.

"This follows a success pilot in which 3 enterprises, namely, Order Kasi, Mhani Gingi and Kitchen Republic were each rewarded with grant funding to the total value of **Rask Lucas the amount**]

Order Kasi



SELECTION PROCESS AND PHASES:

Oribi's selection process is robust and equitable, intentionally bridging gaps for entrepreneurs from marginalised backgrounds. Through a pre-incubation challenge, "Bridging the Gaps," in which we received **74 applications**, we identified **21 businesses** ready to embark on the journey and kick off the "Ideation Phase". This initial cohort showcased impressive growth, with **15 selected** for the intensive "Product Market Fit" phase. As the programme unfolded, 11 top-performing entrepreneurs advanced to the "Investment Readiness" phase of which, 5 demonstrated readiness for grant funding.

Oribi's dedication to fostering sustainable food systems is exemplified through the #FoodSystem Programme's impactful journey. By supporting social entrepreneurs, nurturing collaborations, and channelling grants to promising ventures, Oribi is not just incubating businesses but igniting a movement towards an equitable, and prosperous South Africa.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

WHAT ARE FOOD SYSTEMS?

The reason that Oribi has made Food Systems the focus area of our incubation programme rests on the fact that in South Africa and many other African countries, the reality of food systems perpetuates the injustices inherited from a colonial era. Legacy issues surrounding land, capital, spatial apartheid, and access continue to shape people's everyday food realities, having weighty impacts on the status of their wellbeing, income, social stability and more. Food systems are intricate networks encompassing a vast array of processes, participants, and interactions that drive the journey of food from its origins on the farm to its presence on our plates. This intricate web encompasses everything from planting and harvesting crops, processing and packaging, transportation and distribution, to consumption and waste management.

In South Africa we are also confronted with a problematic structural reality of increasing corporate control over the agri-food

sector, the consequences of which manifest in a variety of ways. These repercussions encompass significant waste production, adverse effects on food security, and the exclusion of informal entrepreneurs from economic engagement. This situation also has the potential to further strengthen corporate control over South Africa's food system and displace alternative food networks. More than a mere sequence of events, food systems are the heartbeat of our sustenance, intricately linked with the well-being of individuals, communities, and the planet as a whole.

South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world and faces endemic unemployment and chronic poverty. The most vulnerable populations living in rural and peri-urban areas face the triple burden of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. An estimated **55.5%** of the population is still living under the upper-bound poverty line of R1558 per month (Statistics South

Africa, 2023). Furthermore, the unemployment rate for youth under 25 years had climbed to **63.9%** in 2022.

The constitution of the Republic of South Africa states that "everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food". However, food security is a national crisis as **25%** of the households have inadequate access to food and **27%** of children under the age of five experience stunting (WWF Report, 2019).

By enabling the development of local Food System businesses, Oribi aims to work towards food justice, eradicating hunger and ensuring small actors from marginalised communities are able to build sustainable livelihoods from the system, while participating in the development of businesses operating in alternative food systems.

ORIBI BACKGROUND

Oribi is an impact incubator which was established in 2018 to support social entrepreneurs with skills development, financing, and networking opportunities, needed to enable the development and growth of employment and economic participation opportunities. In supporting local emerging social enterprises, led by entrepreneurs from marginalised communities, Oribi contributes to a financially thriving, inclusive, and alternative food systems for a better society!

WHAT IS THE #FOODSYSTEM PROGRAMME?

The Oribi #FoodSystem Programme stands as a 9-month-long incubation journey, aimed at catalysing transformative change within South Africa's complex food landscape. We support an array of social entrepreneurs operating along the food system value chain – especially those who are creating and growing businesses to push us towards an inclusive food economy.

Our overarching mission is to empower these social entrepreneurs to conceptualise, cultivate, and sustain innovative solutions that directly tackle the multifaceted challenges of food security and unemployment. Rooted in a holistic systems approach, our programme seeks not only to address immediate issues but to cultivate a sustainable and resilient food ecosystem for the future.

OUR VISION: NURISHING PROGRESS, ENABLING CHNAGE.

Envisioning a future where every plate is full, every opportunity is seized, and every life is enriched, the Oribi #FoodSystem Programme aims to foster a thriving food economy that leaves no one behind. We are committed and invested in growing the entrepreneur as well as nurturing a community of change-makers who understand that food security and economic growth are intrinsically linked, and who are dedicated to steering South Africa toward a prosperous, equitable, and sustainable future.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Food System programme aims to unleash the potential of social entrepreneurs in developing and sustaining innovative solutions to address food security and unemployment issues in South Africa through a systems approach. Through this programme, Oribi seeks to support the growth of responsible entrepreneurs to achieve inclusive economic development, particularly for unprivileged communities, residing in peri-urban, rural areas, and townships. By empowering entrepreneurs within the #FoodSystem Programme, we drive solutions for food security, cultivate economic growth, foster sustainable communities, and champion responsible consumption and production, propelling South Africa towards a brighter, more equitable future. Being aware of the impediments woman in particular face, we approach our programmes through a gender lens, actively seeking to accommodate and ensure equitable opportunities for women, fostering an inclusive environment where those with promise may thrive.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES ARE THE FOLLOWING:

- 1.** Strengthen the entrepreneurial mindset, economic inclusion, and self-confidence of 50 food system innovators, especially youth and women entrepreneurs from rural and peri-urban communities.
- 2.** Support the launch and development of 30 innovative social enterprises enabling food security in South Africa.
- 3.** Showcase, build trust and solidarity within the social entrepreneurship ecosystem to unlock collective growth.

Since 2018, we have supported the creation of over 375 economic opportunities in disadvantaged communities, 156 entrepreneurs directly, 80% of whom are youth (18-35), 60% are women, 60% are people of colour, and 50% are from rural and peri-urban areas.

The #FoodSystem Programme's pedagogy encompasses a three level Trust System Model as we believe that by intertwining personal growth with ecosystem development, we will attain lasting impact in South Africa's food systems.

The levels are:



TRUST YOURSELF

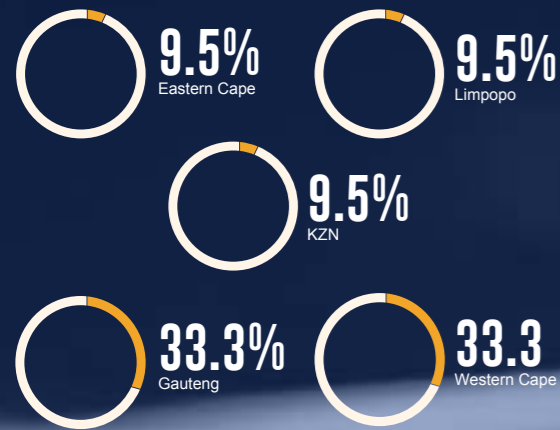
INDIVIDUAL & COLLECTIVE AGENCY

Our #FoodSystem Incubation 2022/2023 Programme is tailor-made for social enterprises led by young minoritised social entrepreneurs and leaders in the food system value chain who are eager to create a positive impact through entrepreneurship but are limited to do so because of a lack of access to social capital, funding and opportunities.

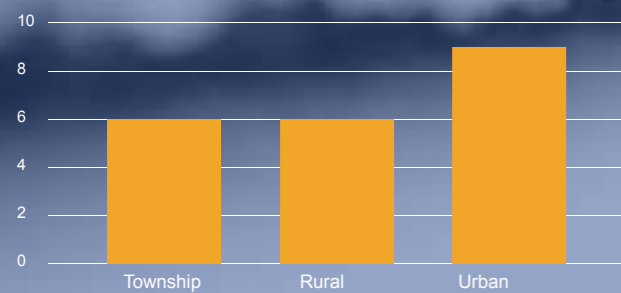
Our intention is to support entrepreneurs to grow and sustain their businesses whilst bridging informal and formal markets for entrepreneurs from rural and township places.

1. GEOGRAPHIC

WHERE ARE THEY FROM?

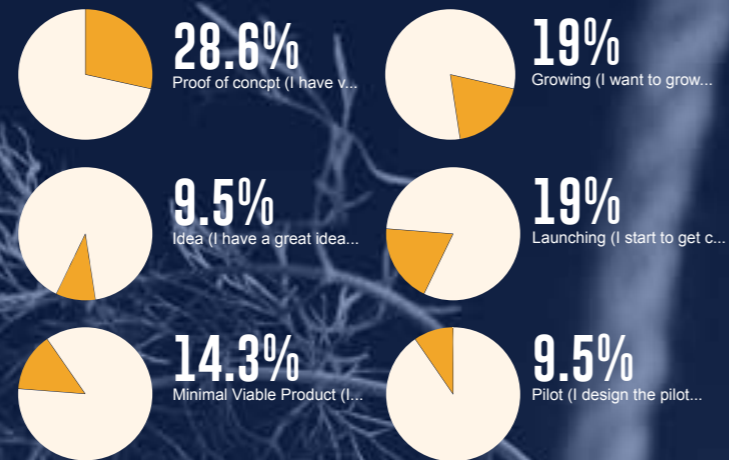


COUNT OF LOCATION TYPE



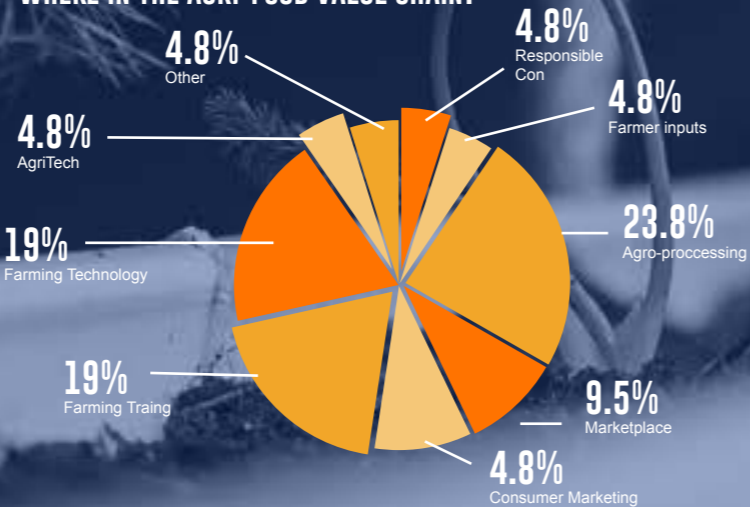
2. BUSINESS PHASES

PHASE OF THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

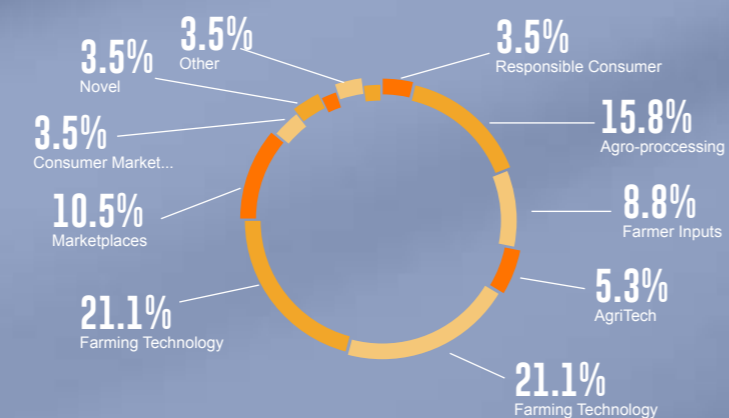


3. VALUE CHAIN DISTRIBUTION

WHERE IN THE AGRI-FOOD VALUE CHAIN?



COUNT OF WHERE IN THE AGRI-FOOD VALUE



PEDAGOGY

The pedagogical approach of Oribi's #FoodSystem Programme is a unique blend of holistic personal growth of the entrepreneur and ecosystem development.

This programme is meticulously crafted to empower social entrepreneurs with regular coaching, mentoring, and knowledge acquisition or sharing opportunities. Our aim is to provide the skills, knowledge, and mindset needed to drive impactful change within South Africa's food landscape. Central to our pedagogy is the belief that enabled entrepreneurs drive sustainable change. Beyond traditional business development, our programme nurtures the personal growth of entrepreneurs. By fostering leadership skills, resilience, and a deep understanding of systemic challenges, we equip participants to navigate complexities with confidence and a sharp entrepreneurial mindset.

Aside from the entrepreneur, we also focus extensively on developing and nurturing collaborative ecosystems in which the entrepreneur exists. We do so by facilitating inter-relationships between entrepreneurs through work-together-shops, mastermind sessions; by connecting entrepreneurs to opportunities; as well as by providing grant funding for them too. Recognising that transformation extends beyond individual efforts, we foster cross-value chain collaborations, creating an environment where entrepreneurs, experts, and mentors collaborate to unravel and address complex challenges. This nurturing of a supportive ecosystem propels innovative solutions and meaningful partnerships to drive collective action in strengthening our Food System.



My main takeaway was to get out of my head – empathy mapping revealed that I am way too in my head and I don't allow myself to hear and understand the client and this might mean not getting to the heart of the matter or what the client needs.

Akhona Maqwazima
Food Systems Entrepreneur

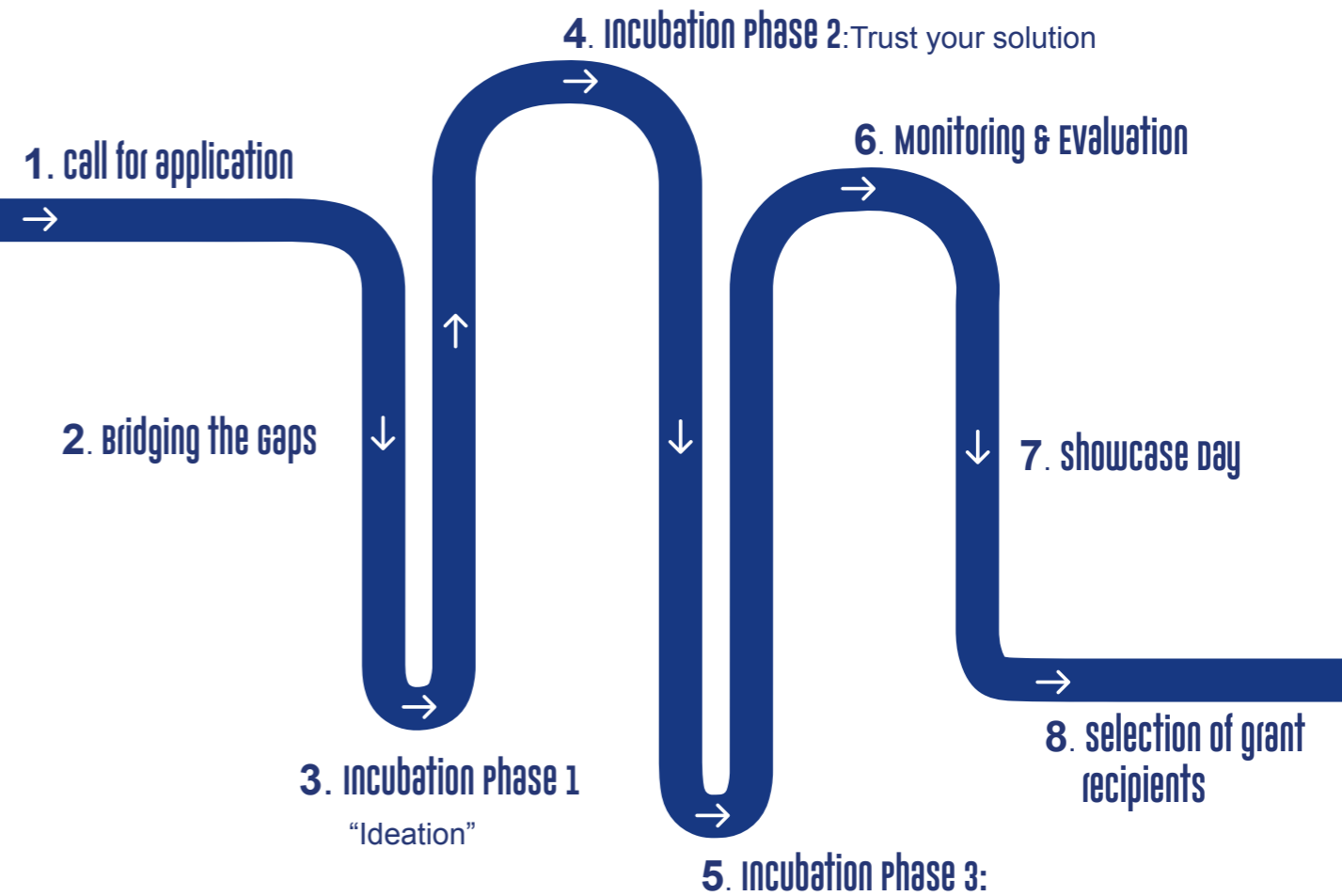
MENTORS & MASTERCLASS EXPERTS

Our programme invites **Mentors** from backgrounds and sectors similar to those the entrepreneurs come from to provide experiential guidance on the entrepreneurial journey that lies ahead. The mentor aspect of the programme forms an essential guiding force, steering our impact/social entrepreneurs towards success. Our mentors have walked the journey themselves and are seasoned entrepreneurs who understand the challenges and opportunities within

the food system landscape. Their insights provide invaluable perspectives that empower our participants to navigate complexities and unlock innovative solutions. They engage not just as advisors, but as advocates, champions, and partners in progress. Through one-on-one interactions, and hands-on support, they amplify our entrepreneurs' potential and enable them to thrive in the green economy.

Our #FoodSystem Programme **Masterclasses** are taught by an ensemble of masterclass experts, each a respected leader in their respective field contributing to our participants' journey towards impactful change and growth in business acumen. These experts represent a diverse tapestry of knowledge and experience, united by their passion for sustainability, entrepreneurship, and innovation. They are comprised of a well-balanced mix of academics, changemakers and successful entrepreneurs that have demonstrated themselves to be a valuable contributor to the programme.

INCUBATION FRAMEWORK



Call for Application

Our recruitment for applicants for incubation included running a social media campaign across our social media channels, as well as reaching out to our existing partners to increase exposure and awareness and leveraging our community networks.

We hosted information sessions to give those interested an opportunity to know more about the programme and assess whether the programme aligns with their business and growth objectives. The information session took place on the **29/06/2022**.

Overall, our call for applications ran over a course of a month which was released around mid-July until mid-August.

#FOODSYSTEM INCUBATION PROGRAM 2022 INTRO

Webinar 1 Registration:
WEDNESDAY 29/06/2022 1PM - 2PM



Programme Manager
Nthabisani Masinga



Resident Coach
Tami Simela

Open to the public
Bheke/Imizamo Yethu



Bridging the gaps

#BridgingTheGaps innovation challenge was a pre-incubation challenge which served as part of our selection process for the #FoodSystem incubation programme. It offered entrepreneurs an opportunity to crystallize what they think are the foundations of building a social impact business, while gaining a deeper understanding of the Food Systems context

Our 3 main outcomes were:

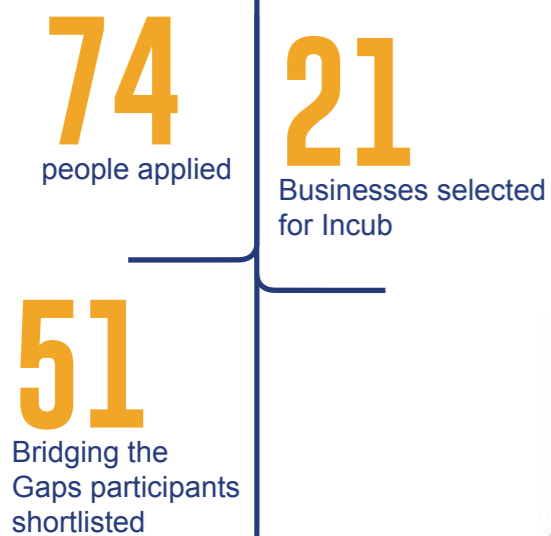
- #1. For entrepreneurs to have a better understanding of the food system & how to strengthen their innovations.
- #2. For entrepreneurs to crystallise the key foundations of their business models.
- #3. To showcase successful case studies within the Oribi network.

The content and webinars were all mandatory for entrepreneurs to engage in. They were all used as an assessment towards selecting entrepreneurs for the #Food System Incubation Programme.

The content for this innovation sprint covered aspects such as:



BRIDGING THE GAP AT A GLANCE:



ACTIVITIES:

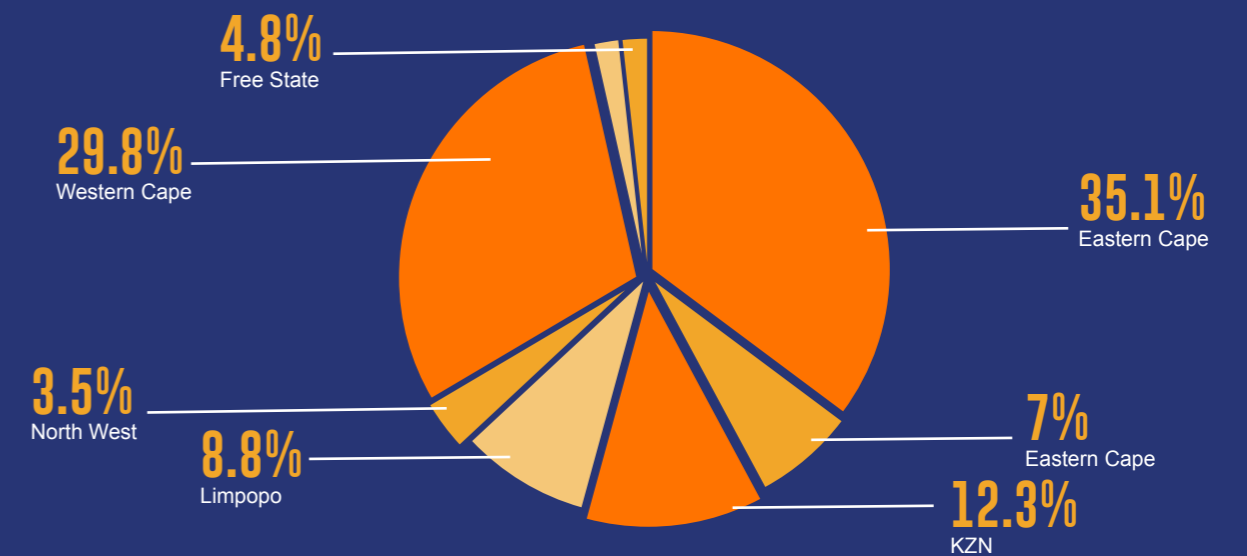
- Weekly masterclasses (4 in total).
- 4 Case studies showcasing successful food innovation.
- 4 e-learning modules and assignments.
- Facilitated coaching groups.



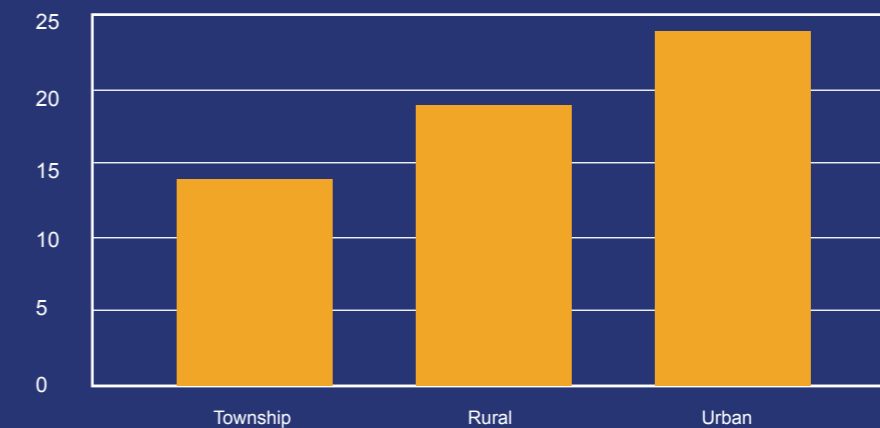
#BTG

Entrepreneurs Geographic spread

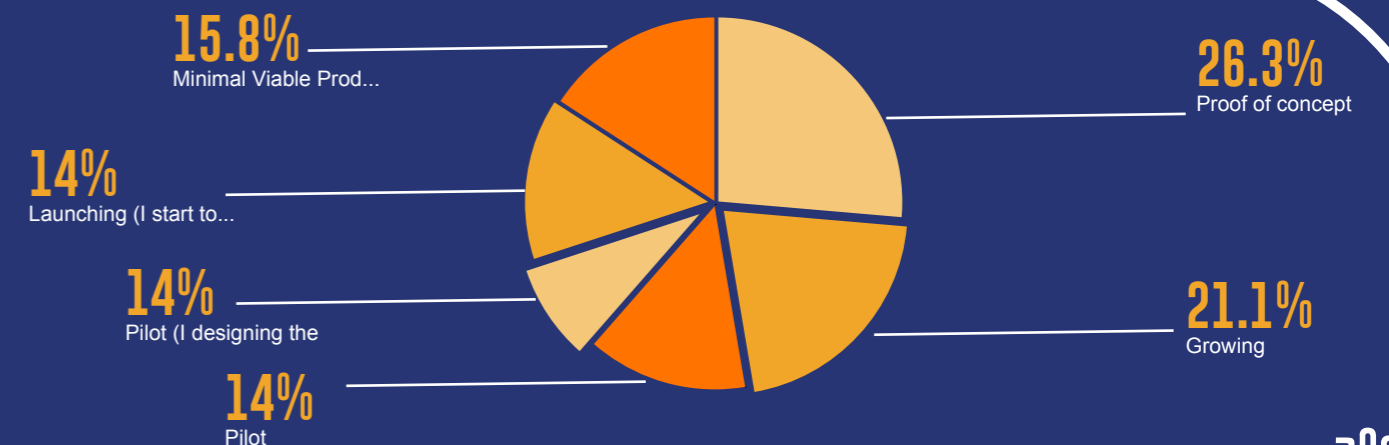
1. COUNT OF LOCATION:



2. COUNT OF LOCATION TYPE:



#BTG ENTREPRENEURS DEVELOPMENT PHASE:



INCUBATION SNAPSHOT

The **Food System programme** is delivered over 9-months, completely virtually. The 9 months are set out in phases, which are broken down in this way:

PHASE	PURPOSE OF PHASE	TIME FRAME	PHASE AT A GLANCE
Phase 1: Ideation- "Trust yourself"	<p>In the first phase, between September and December 2022, we kicked off with 21 entrepreneurs who were supported in a 12-Week ideation sprint to define their value proposition towards strengthening their social business models and strategies. They partook in monthly masterclasses led by food industry experts and experienced social entrepreneurs.</p> <p>They also participate in collective mastermind sessions and peer-to-peer learning to address their business challenges, while having access to external mentorship to enter new networks and build new strategies. The Masterclass workshops covered topics such as Value Chain Mapping, Business & Financial Modelling, Measuring Impact.</p>	3-months	21 Entrepreneurs 12 week ideation sprint 4 Collective Sessions Monthly mentor Sessions 6/18 Coaching calls
Phase 2: Product Market Fit- "Trust your solution"	<p>At the end of phase 1, between January and February 2023, the best 15 social entrepreneurs are selected to be brought to entering the market. Through masterclasses focused on the Operational Model, Communications and Marketing Model, Financial Model and Impact Model, Digital marketing and Digital trends and research, the entrepreneurs were helped to refine their business case, their market and pricing strategies, as well as supported in tracking proof to build the business case. They are also offered one-on-one support in the creation of their communication and financial plans through the support mentors and Oribi coaching.</p> <p>The end of phase 2 was also an exit phase, where we would further shortlist our entrepreneur group down to the final 11 who will continue to the third and final phase of the Food System programme. To mark the end of the phase, we hosted an Entrepreneur Showcase, which was a selection event and an opportunity for entrepreneurs to present their business pitches.</p>	3-months	15 entrepreneurs 6 Collective Session
Phase 3: Investor Readiness "Fund your solution"	<p>In the last phase, the 11 top performing social entrepreneurs attend three pitch training sessions to develop their fundraising strategy, structure a strong pitch (oral and deck) and understand due diligence processes to access funding. They receive feedback and advice from their mentor to boost their confidence.</p> <p>At the end of the cohort, 5 most promising social entrepreneurs were selected to receive a grant to support their development at pre-seed and seed phases. To ensure effective use of the grant, the winners benefited from follow-up business development and grant management support.</p>	3-months	11 Entrepreneurs 3 Collective Sessions 81.81% program completion

At the end of the incubation programme, each entrepreneur is invited to apply for the Grant programme, where they may be awarded a grant of up to **R100 000** to further develop their business or scale it in line with the development plan the entrepreneurs have worked on during the programme. This grant programme is managed and delivered by the Finance and Operations Lead at Oribi.



This month I had a session with the finance expert, I learned about the Application Xero for managing my financial accounts.

Biggest learning



Incubation Programme components

MASTERCLASSES & WORKSHOPS

Masterclass and workshops allows for a blended learning approach which combines online educational material with online interactive sessions with peers and network professionals to allow entrepreneurs to put into practice what has been learnt.

Topics:

Phase 1

- Welcome Event
- Business and Financial Modelling
- Measuring Impact
- Collective Feedback Workshop

Phase 2

- Understanding Finances Part 1
- Legal Matters
- Understanding Finances Part 2
- Digital Marketing Strategy
- Digital Trends & Customer experience
- Personal Branding & LinkedIn

Phase 3

- The Anatomy of a Pitch
- The Investment Landscape in Cape Town
- Pitch Branding & LinkedIn

Overall the satisfaction rate for the masterclasses were rated was **82.2%**.

work-together-shops

The intention of the work-together-shops were for the entrepreneurs to bring their work into the session and to refine an element of their business.

mentoring sessions

Mentoring sessions were conducted throughout the program's various phases, pairing entrepreneurs in our cohort with experienced entrepreneurs or food system actors for monthly sessions. Our Incubation Team supports mentors by providing guidance and resources to enhance their mentoring relationships. Monthly feedback from mentors is systematically collected to gain insights and continuously improve our support mechanisms, with each mentor expected to engage in at least a one-hour monthly meeting to address business challenges and facilitate knowledge sharing based on common ground within the Food System sector or the entrepreneur's specific needs.

growth point?

A key challenge relating to the mentoring sessions is that entrepreneurs often do not reach out to them or respond to their questions about potential meetings. As the programme team who tends to mediate between mentors and mentees, it is important that we assist in communication between the two where necessary. As an intermediary, we can follow up before meetings to ensure that the mentoring sessions takes place.

COACHING SESSIONS

- Entrepreneurs in our cohort also receive coaching support. The intention of the coaching support is to understand what progress they've made in their business during the programme, and what support they need to reach their goals as well as to nudge them along in completing outstanding programme activities. This serves as a platform to identify any barriers to participation and finding ways to support the equitable participation of the incubatees.

- Coaching sessions are scheduled and happen monthly with Resident Coach, Tumi.

The overall satisfaction rate of the coaching aspect is **95.6%**

PITCHING AND PITCHING

Our aim is to provide entrepreneurs with an opportunity to pitch and get feedback from a business coach and Enterprise Development expert. The intention of getting an external person to give feedback gave entrepreneurs an opportunity to hear feedback on their pitches from someone who is similar to the profile of person they will pitch to in the future. The pitching and feedback sessions were well attended.

SHOWCASE DAY

Entrepreneur Showcase Day

Entrepreneur Showcase Day

Showcase Day was our capstone event and served to celebrate the culmination of their incubation journey as well as a window into their future.

Showcase day marked the end of our 2022 #FoodSystem programme event in which entrepreneurs showcased their business through timed-pitches. Each entrepreneur had 4 minutes to pitch their business, and answer questions from a panel of evaluators.

Prior to the event, the 11 entrepreneurs who successfully finished Phase 3 were immersed in an intensive pitch training programme. This comprehensive preparation equipped them with the finesse needed to present their business case with clarity and conviction; as well as a clear ask and action plan.

Showcase Day marked the start of our OriBi Grant Programme selection process. With the intent of awarding a total of **R200,000** in grant funding to 5 entrepreneurs whose businesses are ready for the next phase of growth.

Each entrepreneur's pitch was meticulously evaluated against various parameters. The clarity with which they defined the problem they aimed to solve, the articulation of their business solution, and their projected impact were pivotal. Furthermore, their ability to chart the course for their business's future steps and the potential for scalable impact formed integral parts of the evaluation.



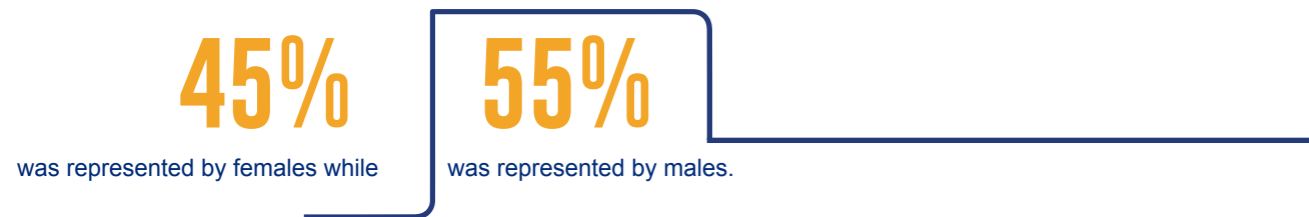
Monitoring and Evaluation

Our monitoring process employs an outcomes measurement methodology designed by PULSE group to support the incubator programme in its measuring of short-term impact. The programme is closely monitored through activity feedback surveys monthly Engagement Reports as well as quarterly Activity Reports; and co-design sessions with program stakeholders. These reports are consolidated to inform the impact measurement of the incubation report at the end of each incubator programme in order to measure the impact of the incubation programme. To measure the impact of the incubator programmes, the methodology observes key indicators before and after the programme and evaluates the difference thereof. The measurement of impact is carried out a priori and a posteriori. The monitoring, evaluation and learnings are used to further support programme implementors for continuous improvement of the programme with each iteration as well as to report to donors about the programme results.

Below you'll find the methodology for the data analysis alongside the results.

Methodology for data analysis:

This report covers data collected during the period of **January 2021 – November 2023**. wards Oribi's impact goal of enabling the creation of financially thriving, inclusive, and alternative systems for a better society. At the point of data collection, Oribi selected **29 entrepreneurs** that were eligible to participate in the final "Investment Readiness" phase of the incubation programme. Of the group of participants:



For the purpose of data analysis, **21 entrepreneurs** (n= 21) were selected as the study population. During the reporting period, baseline data was collected through online questionnaires which entrepreneurs were asked to complete prior to commencement of the incubation programme. Follow up data was collected through applying the fore mentioned methodology, following completion of the 9-month incubation programme. Qualitative indicators made use of baseline data, as well as data collected following the completion of the incubation programme. Entrepreneurs were presented with a series of statements in which they could answer the degree to which they agreed with the statement. For the purpose of this report, indicators that did not have both baseline and follow-up data were not included in the analysis. For indicators where baseline data was not available, post programme data was included as a means of measuring the impact of the incubation programme.



Indicators listed in the table below were used to measure the contribution that the food incubation programme is making towards Oribi's impact goal of enabling the creation of financially thriving, inclusive, and alternative systems for a better society.

INDICATORS	DEFINITION
Emergence and creation of companies responding to problems in Africa	<p>This indicator measures the proportion of business creation dedicated to SSE.</p> <p>A business is created if it meets 2/3 of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The company has access to financing, either through organizations or through turnover. • The company is legally established. • The company has a product or service on the market.
Progress and acquisition of non-technical skills	<p>This indicator measures the evolution in terms of hard skills (i.e., professional knowledge and know-how) of participants as a result of the program</p>
Impact of the incubator on the entrepreneur's sense of social evolution	<p>This indicator measures the evolution in terms of soft skills (i.e., behavioural and life skills) of participants as a result of the program.</p> <p>This indicator measures the entrepreneur's sense of social change, which is positive if 2/3 of the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurs are grateful to the incubator. • Entrepreneurs express a feeling of progress and/or transformation in their daily lives thanks to the incubator. • Through the incubator, entrepreneurs who are vulnerable feel integrated into the society/community.
Economic impact of supported projects	<p>This indicator measures the economic impact of the entrepreneur's activities on its ecosystem. The economic impact exists if 2/3 of the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurs believe that their project has saved the community money. • Entrepreneurs feel that their project has created decent jobs (FTEs) or opportunities for economic participation. • The entrepreneurs estimate that they have created 3 more partnerships after the incubation.
Social impact of supported projects	<p>This indicator measures the social impact of the entrepreneur's activities on its ecosystem. Social impact exists if 1/3 of the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entrepreneur considers that his company promotes one or more forms of solidarity. • The entrepreneur considers that his company participates in the improvement of the living conditions of a part of the population. • The entrepreneur considers that his company fights against one or several discriminations (social, racial, gender...)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

71.43% of enterprises enrolled had creation dedicated to SSE following graduating from the incubation programme.

Social entrepreneurs play a crucial role in addressing social and environmental challenges through developing innovative solutions that drive positive impact. Both hard and soft skills are essential for their success, as they enable social entrepreneurs to navigate the complexities of their work and industry, and effectively bring about positive change to their communities, and the greater society. The food system programme supports the development of hard skills for social entrepreneurs through providing resources that enable the improvement of analytical skills, industry-specific technical skills, financial literacy, and project management, to mention but a few. The extent to which participants had gained and/or development skills within this category was measured through a series of questions that required self-assessment by participants on how well they felt equipped with professional and industry-specific skills and knowledge. Cohort 4 had a **229%** increase in the average score by participants in their hard skills test following completing the programme. Phase 3 in cohort 5 had an average increase of **82%** in their hard skills test on graduating from the programme. This shows that participants had increased their professional knowledge and industry skills pertaining to managing, operating, and growing their social enterprises. At the end of the programme, phase 3 in cohort 5 had an average increase of **15%**, compared to baseline scores in soft skills test. Development of soft skills, i.e., behavioural and life skills, is imperative to the success of a social entrepreneur.

Social evolution aims to measure the entrepreneurs' sense of social change. A sense of social change is not only important for defining the purpose and direction of a social entrepreneurship venture but is also critical for creating meaningful, sustainable, and impactful solutions to address societal challenges. It serves as a guiding force that shapes the strategies, decisions, and actions of social entrepreneurs throughout their journey. Social evolution assesses whether entrepreneurs are grateful for the incubator, whether they express a feeling of progression in their daily lives as a direct result of the incubator and looks at the degree to which vulnerable entrepreneurs feel integrated in their communities. Social evolution was assessed on programme exit, and **100%** of entrepreneurs included in the sample population indicated that they had benefited from a positive social impact as a result of the activities provided by the incubator.

Economic impact of the entrepreneur's activities on its ecosystem considers the entrepreneur's belief that their project has saved their community money, and whether the enterprise had created full time employment or contributed to opportunities for economic participation. Additionally, economic impact considers the establishing of partnerships by entrepreneurs following participation in the incubation programme. At the start of the programme, there was no measurable degree of economic impact found in any social enterprises participating in the incubator. Following graduating from the food systems incubation programme, **66.67%** of enterprises were realising economic impacts. Economic impact is imperative to any organisation as it provides the financial means to sustain and scale social enterprise initiatives. It also aligns with the goal of creating positive social change by leveraging market forces and building self-sustaining models that address social issues in a holistic and scalable manner. In addition, an increase in organisational economic impact by incubatees aligns with Oribi's goal of enabling the creation of financially thriving systems that contribute to a better society.

70% of organisations were found to have a positive social impact, with this indicator remaining the same at baseline and follow-up. For cohort 5, where there was no baseline data present, **72%** of organisations were found to have a positive social impact on completion of the programme. Although it is unclear if this finding is attributable to the food system incubation programme, it is worth noting the extent to which social impact is present. Social and environmental impacts of social enterprises are what sets these organisations apart from traditional business models, and is imperative to driving food system transformation within our country and beyond.

“

We have had to make some adjustments to our operations and made changes to our packaging and making adjustments to the food for better results and value.

Biggest learning



Feedback and satisfaction

Based on a series of feedback mechanism, we extracted the feedback below.

- **Entrepreneurs wanted to know about:**
Entrepreneurs expressed keen interest in various crucial areas. They sought guidance on organising their financial matters effectively within their enterprises. Additionally, they aimed to deepen their understanding of business modelling, refining strategies for sustainable growth. Entrepreneurs also sought insights into translating their personal belief systems and values into tangible impact indicators, aligning their ventures with their core principles. Furthermore, they were eager to comprehend the intricacies of measuring impact, including what factors to consider when assessing the real-world effects of their endeavours.
- **What were they expecting?**
Based on this feedback, participants had clear expectations for the program. They were anticipating a more profound grasp of the subject matter, seeking comprehensive insights into the topics discussed. In addition, they expressed a desire for extended sessions that incorporated practical examples directly relevant to their specific businesses or industries. A suggested glossary of key concepts related to the discussions was also desired, enhancing understanding and engagement. Furthermore, participants were looking forward to hands-on experiences, hoping for practical demonstrations in which they could actively develop tools or reports discussed during the sessions. Overall, they were seeking a highly practical and immersive learning experience to apply directly within their entrepreneurial contexts.
- **What did they enjoy?**
89% of participating entrepreneurs demonstrated that they were grateful for and enjoyed several aspects of the programme. The collective expertise of all the speakers left a positive impression, as they provided valuable and insightful information on various subjects. The use of straightforward language by both speakers and the host was well-received, making complex topics more accessible and relatable. The speakers' patience and encouragement were particularly appreciated, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment throughout the event. These factors contributed to an enriching experience that resonated with the entrepreneurs, resulting in 77.8% of participants reporting that their business progress or even transformation was directly because of the incubator.
- **This is what they would change:**
Participants expressed insights about potential improvements for future iterations of the program. They suggested introducing Q&A segments early in sessions, allowing for real-time interaction and clarifications during discussions. To this end, we improved our webinar hosting and introduced the work-together-shops and mastermind sessions. They also recommended collecting entrepreneurs' questions ahead of sessions to address their specific concerns and enhance engagement. Furthermore, participants suggested incorporating practical components where a report, tool, or model is collaboratively developed during the session, enhancing the hands-on learning experience. These suggestions aimed to foster a more interactive, personalised, and practical approach to the event's structure, ensuring greater value for all involved.

developing the **Ecosystem**

#FOODSYSTEM PROGRAM IN THE MEDIA

In July 2022, the preparatory phase of the #FoodSystem Program 2022, Oribi made some significant changes to its PR & Media strategy resulting in an outcome of media coverage to the value of R200 744.43. In the months, from January to July, LinkedIn proved to be the fastest growing platform showcase a growth rate of 118.4%. On Facebook, the posts promoting the #FoodSystem open call, received more reactions and more link clicks than 100% prior Facebook post and stories reaching a total of **356 000** users. Instagram followed in its suit, with the incubation open call reaching more reactions and clicks than 100% of the prior post and a total of 54 000 users reached.

As Oribi continues on a path of organic growth its main social media platforms, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn, have had a significant increase in growth, reach and more people have visited our social media pages and interacted with us online during the month of September 2022. It has become apparent that storytelling presents an effective way to reach and engage a larger audience and will be employed more rigorously with the year ahead with regular Food heroes and entrepreneur features. Since this realisation, Oribi has featured 10 entrepreneurs in our #FoodSystem's Heros Series which was promoted on all our Social Media platforms.

FOOD SYSTEM HEROES SERIES

Our #FoodSystem Heroes blog series was created to feature Food System entrepreneurs and champions in our communities. The series attracted a total of 765 views from July 2022 to June 2023. The entrepreneurs that have been featured are:

- [Samuel Tshabalala: Stanza Bopane Community Centre](#)
- [Wilweena Fortune: Jacob's Garden](#)
- [Natalie & Aurbon Hurling: Roots & Raw](#)
- [Nontuthuzelo: Tshwane Hub](#)
- [Lefentse Chapman: Amber Dale Farm](#)
- [Sune Stassen: Open Design Africa](#)
- [Jade Orgill: Sprightly Seed](#)
- [Banothile Khuboni: Imvelo Agri Solutions](#)
- [Siyabonga Mngoma: Abundance Wholesome Foods](#)
- [Leon Qwabe: OrderKasi](#)

#CHANGEMAKERS SOCIAL

We hosted a transformative sequel of events, "The Changemakers Social," which took place in Johannesburg and Cape town during November 2022. In Cape Town, on November 26, 2022, at the inspiring Africa Works, Touchstone House on Bree Street, and in Johannesburg, on November 12, 2022, at the dynamic Makers Valley Studio, Victoria Yard, change-makers converged to ignite innovation, collaboration, and impact.

"The Changemakers Social" was more than just an event; it was a convergence of minds, a nexus of possibilities. With a laser focus on supporting innovative solutions that uplift communities and our planet, Oribi provided a platform for connections to flourish. Entrepreneurs, mentors, and partners united, sharing ideas, experiences, and strategies that fuelled progress. The event allowed the Oribi team, mentors, and partners to delve deep into the entrepreneurs' visions, and food system entrepreneurs found a nurturing space to con-

nect with their support networks and like-minded peers. Most importantly, the event illuminated how impactful businesses can thrive around sustainable models, fostering a brighter, more inclusive future. With The Changemakers Social, we took a bold step towards cultivating a network of collaborators who believe in the potential of transformative ideas. This sequel of events was a celebration of the change-makers who are propelling us towards a brighter, more equitable future, one solution at a time.



Food for Thought JHB Documentary screening

An enlightening documentary screening and social evening which was held in Troyville, in Johannesburg on the 20th June 2023. This event was intended to serve as a closing event in which the Johannesburg based Food System incubates could connect and foster meaningful relationships while learning about what is happening in Food Systems around Africa. The film emphasised sustainable food systems and opportunities for positive change.

The highlight of the evening was the screening of different documentaries provided courtesy of PLAAS, the institute of Poverty, [Land and Agrarian Studies from the University of the Western Cape](#). The documentaries provoked profound insights into the state of food systems in [South Africa](#), [Tanzania](#), and [Ghana](#). These thought-provoking films masterfully con-

veyed the essence of sustainable food systems, shedding light on the imperative of positive change. The documentary traversed the challenges and opportunities embedded within our food systems, leaving an indelible impact on the audience.

The event was graced with the presence of passionate changemakers, entrepreneurs, and advocates of the food system community. The subsequent discussions that followed the documentary screening were a testament to the dedication and enthusiasm of those in attendance. The exchange of ideas, sharing of experiences, and exploration of opportunities underscored the collective commitment to driving positive change within our food systems.

To enhance the experience, attendees were treated to wholesome, plant-based dishes

curated by Noni (Nonkululeko). These dishes perfectly complemented the event's theme, reflecting our shared vision for a sustainable and equitable future.

The Food System Changemakers Social in JHB was a resounding success, illuminating the potential for transformation within our food systems. The event captured the essence of our commitment to fostering innovation, collaboration, and sustainable practices within the realms of food security, equity, and environmental stewardship.

with a strong focus on gender-equity. This resulted in 2 print media in the Journal of African Business and 5 online media press clippings.

Oribi's long-term goal is to position Oribi as a thought-leader and a place where knowledge is shared, and experts teach. All communication efforts are informed by Oribi's core company values. The core values Oribi wants to communicate are community, Impact and Knowledge The image Oribi wants to represent is: Accessible/approachable, authentic and inclusive

SUGGESTION OF IMPROVEMENTS:

50% of our top posts featured faces, images of our team or our incubees. reels do much better than static image posts We will continue to test different hashtag sets Employee advocacy - we should be sharing on our personal channels as well to push organic reach even further more platform specific posts Comms team to reach out to stakeholders for relevant media, but also to engage on opportunities to collaborate an inclusion of both programs but a difference in their posting style and approach.

ECOYSTEM REACH:

Oribi set out to campaign and advocate for social entrepreneurship, gender equity, i7nformal economies and/or food systems through thought leadership in different events and social networking opportunities

We have been invited to 24 events as valued guests or speakers.

We Co-organized The French Embassy Round table at Workshop 17 on the cross-cutting theme of food security, sustainable agriculture and climate resilience. The objective being to foster an exchange with & between actors of the social entrepreneurship ecosystem + civil society organisations on the development of resilient and inclusive food systems, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas.

We were invited to participate in the Philippi Village Bertha Spaces 2023 Festival to speak on food justice, celebrating the power of physical spaces in promoting human connection and social change, as we gather alongside three continents, blending in-person activities and virtual events hosted by five activist hubs;

OTHER NOTEWORTHY EVENTS ATTENDED:

Panelist Oxfam Regional Food Symposium 2023

ANDE Learning Lab Cape Town and Johannesburg: Township Economies

Food Dialogues 2023 - speaker on social entrepreneurship in food systems

Guest Speaker - Social Entrepreneurship and Food System - Western Cape Food Forum ;

IDC WeCare; showcasing our work to IDC employees and partners

AfrifoodLinks Kickoff Meeting – Kenya, Kisumu

TSIBA Knowledge exchange - University Exchange;

JICA (Japan/Nigeria) Informal Economy Snapshot;

Meeting with Brown University MBA students on Inclusive Innovation and Emerging Markets - with Reciprocity;

New Economy Festival - UWC Development Studies and IFAA- Info Day about Oribi and Social enterprise lecture - University students;

UCT D-school - sharing about design thinking in social change and Oribi methodology;

Reciprocity and University of Toronto - Enterprise Development Landscape in South Africa lecture

Workshop 17 podcast - how networking can enable creative systems;

Digital Marketing Masterclass - Makers Landing Food incubator;

Inspiring African Women, platform for women in STEAM, and contribute about feminist innovation and developing their incubation program;

Rural small-scale farmers "Road to Agribusiness" Training in Eastern Cape by Oxfam,

Media reach

SOCIAL MEDIA

July 2022- October 2022

During this period we ran an open call for the 5th cohort of the #Food Systems Incubator program taking place from applications for the 5th cohort during the period of the 15th of July till the end of August 2022. Our main social media platforms during this period were Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram. During this time we prioritised paid social media advertising, this allowed us to achieve a total of 74 applicants for the Food systems incubation programme.

Oribi's Facebook page increased by a **53,2%** decrease (149,283 accounts reached), however a **90%** increase on our page visits. While the Instagram reach increased by **84,7%** (58,839), with a 74% increase on our profile visits. LinkedIn saw a decrease of 4,8% (177 users) since July 1st. With twitter reaching an increase of 50% (306 visits).

July 2022- December 2022

Shortly after the start of the Incubation programme, Oribi's Facebook page reach decreased to about 3572, with the Instagram following suite with 3041 accounts reached. LinkedIn saw an increase of **9,8 %** and an increase of unique visitors with an 16% increase. Twitter saw a steady increase in impressions with a total of 1580, with 371 total profile visits. What worked for us during this period was our events. We created fresh new content during our events, and shared it with our audience. Which really activated our network online. Really giving partners and entrepreneurs a heads up that we will be sharing, so they know in advance to look out for our posts.

Jan 2023- June 2023

Oribi's Facebook page reach increased by about 61%. The reason for that is better performing social media posts including job adverts with a call to action. This is a significant improvement compared to Q1 of 2023 as well as Q4 of 2022. The Instagram reach decreased by about **29%** due to less frequent posting during the transition to a new comms manager. In total, more people have visited Oribi's Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn since April. In 2022, Oribi decided to prioritize LinkedIn, which has worked well and resulted in increased reach on LinkedIn. During this period, Oribi distributed two press releases, both thought-leadership pieces

Ecosystem connections

32% of our Food System entrepreneurs have connected with each other or ecosystem partners.



Grant Programme

The Oribi #FoodSystem Programme serves as an instrument of inclusive financing for social entrepreneurs, and at its core lies a vital pillar: the Grant Programme. The grant programme is aimed at assisting social entrepreneurs to strengthen their economic model as they prepare for further funding and prior to reaching financial sustainability. The grant program was initiated in 2020 in which 3 #FoodSystem alumni, namely Kitchen Republik, OrderKasi and Mhani Gingi were rewarded with grants to support early-stage business development. In this cohort, we selected 5 entrepreneurs who successfully completed the #FoodSystem incubation programme.

Through the grant programme, we provide a financial support to deserving entrepreneurs who exhibit promise but face pre-seed capital challenges, enabling them to propel their concepts forward and pave the way for further funding opportunities. By infusing much-needed capital into ventures, we bolster entrepreneurs' ability to scale their solutions and amplify their impact on food security and unemployment challenges.

The #FoodSystem program enable Oribi to better understand the funding needs of early-stage social entrepreneurs which validates the feasibility of building inclusive financing instruments in the organisation. The grants provided are primarily channelled towards enhancing business operations, providing entrepreneurs with a much-needed boost to fuel their growth trajectory.

At the conclusion of each incubation programme cycle, when entrepreneurs showcase their businesses for Showcase Day, the team and selected evaluators assess each business, providing an empirical experience of the due diligence process that the entrepreneurs will face by potential business investors. The selected grant recipients— are social enterprises that demonstrate readiness for the next phase of business development. These deserving individuals have exhibited exceptional promise and readiness to leverage the grants for meaningful progress.

The significance of this funding cannot be overstated, especially for minoritized founders who often grapple with restricted access to traditional funding avenues. The Oribi Grant occupies a pivotal space—it serves as a rigorous learning opportunity as well as the cornerstone of the “friends, family, and fools” round of funding that is often elusive for founders facing systemic barriers. This funding injection prepares them for the growth journey ahead, aligning perfectly with our commitment to equitable opportunities. In the current cohort, the grant recipients are:

- Siyabonga Mngoma (**Abundance Wholesome Foods**),
- Yoliswa Masemola (**BioNat Consultancy Services**),
- Lefentse Chapman (**Amber Dale Farm**),
- Banothile Khuboni (**Imvelo Agri Solutions**), and
- Aurbon & Natalie Hurling (**Roots & Raw**).

Grant programme at a glance:

- 5 grant recipients (1 pending due diligence)
- Total of **R200 000** in Grant Funding
- Mainly for business operations



This month I had a session with the finance expert, I learned about the Application Xero for managing my financial accounts



“

My session with my mentor was excellent and I enjoyed the Mastermind - bring your Challenges to the session where Lucas connected me with two farmers who are in Hydroponics, and we have setup meeting sessions already

GRANT RECIPIENTS

#1. IMVELO AGRI

Entrepreneur: Banothile Khuboni



About: Imvelo-Agri Solutions is a KwaZulu Natal non-profit company based in Inanda township that operates from a local school and specializes in hydroponics farming, installations, maintenance and training with the aim of building resilient communities around the school in face of water scarcity and land infertility resulting from climate change.

Province: KwaZulu Natal

Key product or services: Hydroponic training, installations and maintenance; & Organic hydroponic produce

Stage of Business Development: Imvelo Agri Solution has advanced to the proof-of-model stage. Imvelo's produce underwent various quality assurance assessments by Spar and two additional retailers, securing approval for consumption and retail placement in their stores. Presently, Imvelo Agri Solution regularly serves a monthly clientele of 12-15 customers.

Social or Environmental Impact: The hydroponics system used by Imvelo Agri Solutions is designed to save and re-use water, furthermore, they use organic fertilizer that is 100% plant based. The business is guided by the sustainable development goal #12 and #13 in promoting sustainable consumption and production and climate action. To date they have had 10 hydroponic training programs with over 100 high school learners.

Team: 3 part-time employees & 1 full-time employee

Grant impact: Imvelo Agri-solution will use the grant to purchase additional hydroponic equipment which would equip them to expand their system, increase their yield and better respond to current demand of their produce.

#2. ABUNDANCE WHOLESOME FOODSOLUTIONS

Entrepreneur: Siyabonga Mngoma



About: Abundance Wholesome Foods is a Johannesburg online fruit and veg market that aims to serve as the missing link between organic small-scale urban farming women and consumers. It provides a secure online payment and booking system for weekly delivery service of fresh organic produce to consumers.

Province: Gauteng

Key Product or Services: A weekly delivery service of fresh organic produce from a network of audited organic small-scale farmers.

Stage of Business Development: The idea is developed and at a proof of model stage. They are in operation, with 12-15 customers a month. Despite the business not being profitable yet, it is covering its costs except the Operations manager's salary.

Social or Environmental Impact: The business embraces SDG #2 Zero Hunger as well as SDG #12 Responsible Consumption and Production. It contributes to the livelihood of small scale farmers and practices plastic free packaging encourages responsible and local consumption.

Team: 1 full-time and 2 part-time employees, 4 urban organic farming partners of which 2 are women owner and the other 2 focusing on farming opportunities for youth and women.

Grant impact: Abundance Wholesome Foods will use the grant to launch a 3-6 month digital media campaign which will enable her to create quality content for a credible online presence which we project will increase her clientele from 84 to 130 in the next year.

#3. BIONAT CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Entrepreneur: Yoliswa Masemola /
Ntombi Yoliswa Zikode



About: BioNat is an essential food safety service provider that aims to help township food entrepreneurs meet their food safety goals affordably.

Province: Gauteng

Key Product or Services: They provide tailor-made services for different food businesses needing to meet specific food health and safety regulations.

Stage of Business Development: BioNat is in operation, regularly facilitating food safety workshops as well as consultations and currently working towards becoming accredited by FOODBEV SETA, SAQA, QCTO, SAAFOST & SAATCA to become service providers for NYDA, SEDA & DTI.

Social or Environmental Impact: BioNat works with township entrepreneurs in incorporating food safety measures to protect the health and safety of the public, strengthen the food system in townships, minimize food waste and aid in food security.

Team and Reach: 1 full-time member; the social enterprise has trained about 70 local township food entrepreneurs on food health and safety regulations.

Grant impact: BioNat intends to use the grant funding received for a number of required accreditations with the food quality assurance bodies such as FOODBEV SETA, SAQA, QCTO, SAAFOST & SAATCA which will allow her to commence with public marketing of her services.

4. ROOTS & RAW

Entrepreneurs: Aurbon & Natalie Hurling



About: Roots and Raw is a social enterprise dedicated to providing, affordable and convenient, high-quality, indigenously sourced plant-based juices, soups and meals to health-conscious individuals seeking convenient and nutritious meal options.

Province: Western Cape

Key Products and Services: They offer an array of nutrient dense plant-based foods such as smoothies, ready-made meals, vegetarian soups and ginger turmeric shots as well as sustainable living workshops, yoga and wellness sessions.

Stage of Business Development: They currently have two community yoga locations, at College of Cape Town, Crawford Campus and one in Strandfontein. They also are in full operation with their production of plant-based food.

Social or Environmental Impact: Root & Raw asserts partnering with local growers and informal household farmers from neighbouring communities in order to support local entrepreneurship and holistic wellness development in surrounding areas.

Team & Reach: 4 full-time employees; they have about 100 people per month joining for regular yoga; and 25 regular clients per for smoothies, meals and juices.

Grant impact: Roots & Raw will allocate a certain portion of the grant funding to further research and development in order to gain a deeper understanding of their product, industry and target market. The remaining portion of the grant funding will be used for food safety compliance measures as well as improving packaging.

#5. AMBER DALE FARMING

Entrepreneur: Lefentse Ledwaba - Chapman



About: Amber Dale Farm produces green peppers, spinach, beetroot and butternut in open field and greenhouse tunnels. The farm has 12 hectares even though it is only using 4 hectares currently. The farm is off grid and uses Solar Power and borehole water. Amber Dale Farm launched a Village Garden Fresh program that assist local women from the villages to grow their own produce by providing the necessary inputs, farming implements and coaching.

Province: Limpopo

Key Products: The Farm produces green peppers, spinach, beetroot and butternut for sale in retailers such Spar, Boxer, Freshmark.

Stage of Business Development: The business has regular notable customers such as the Johannesburg Fresh produce market and RSA Market in Polokwane. There is interest from Z22 who wishes to partner with the business and make it an out grower for its export market. Spar, Freshmark and Boxer have also shown interest in becoming clients to Amber Dale Farm.

Social or Environmental Impact: Amber Dale Farm focuses on SDG #12, providing well priced local fresh produce within reach of rural community and its Village Garden Fresh program focuses on SDG #5, increasing the economic activity of women and girls in the village whilst promoting improved nutrition and health of women and family through backyard farming.

Team: 3 full-time & 2 casual employees. Through the CSI initiative how many women have been trained? Produce diverted to poorer households?

Grant impact: Amber Dale intends to use the grant funding for farming infrastructure, inputs for ploughing of the remaining 8 hectares of land; and to purchase a hydroponic grower to allow for a larger yield and more consistent produce such as lettuce and herbs allowing for consistent income.

Key Learnings and Recommendations:

The 2022 #FoodSystem Cohort marked the 5th iteration of our Incubation Programme and has been nothing short of inspiring. The variation of impact entrepreneurs in this cohort brought to light some of the most relevant, and forward-looking food businesses of today, that focus on key areas of the holistic South African food ecosystem and the team has had an absolute pleasure and honour serving and supporting them.

Over the course of the 2022 #FoodSystem cohort, we were reminded of the importance of being more intentional and maintaining a user centred approach in working with early phase entrepreneurs, especially those coming from underrepresented and minoritized communities. One of the aspects that worked well was that we had hand picked the right masterclass experts who were at the right level for our entrepreneurs, and with whom they could connect really well.

There were many learnings that we took from this cohort. The concerns that stood out for us most and which we intend to make assertive changes relate to recruitment and participant engagement. Below you'll find the key learning and recommendations.

selection and recruitment:

Insight: Early in the recruitment process, we realised that we were not attaining the desired amounts of applications and needed an assertive new approach to reach our target of 150 applications. Faced with the challenge of low application numbers, we urgently readapted our approach and applications jumped from 15 to 71. The low application numbers were coupled with the demographics of the interested participants not reflecting our target beneficiaries of 60% women and 80% youth. In concluding the recruitment phase, we ended up with 71 applications despite assertive strategic efforts by the communications team towards the end of the application process.

recommendations:

- **Social Media Campaigns and paid ads:** In preparation for the following cohort, our communications team is to devise a social media strategy which includes paid advertisements to reach our targeted demographic of minoritized women and youth. continue using social media campaigns and.
- **Partner Outreach:** In the months ahead, and prior to future recruitment campaigns, we intend to strengthen our presence in the Food Systems and Entrepreneurship ecosystems through partner outreach. A large extent of our efforts will be directed to in person routine events called Changemakers Socials. These events will not only build the local food system ecosystem but also allow for us to attract individuals interested in food justice and positive impact in the food system. These events will be accompanied by a target email campaign and direct partnership building with youth and women-focused networks/CSOs to already existing partners and newsletter subscribers with a direct call to action, encouraging them to share our message to potential applicants that compound their impact through our programme.
- **Ecosystem Mapping:** We are continuing to formalize and strengthen our ecosystem mapping project, in partnership with FEED, which we believe will be beneficial to identify partners working with women, entrepreneurs, and youth; and food system actors who could provide collaborative partnerships to food system entrepreneurs. In better understanding who these actors are, we can create bridges and source entrepreneurs from these spaces. This includes tapping into public agencies, civil society, university entrepreneurial networks and private sector. We intend to be much more intentional and strategic in recruiting the next cohort by tapping into ecosystems aligned with target demographics, particularly women and youth. The communications team and targeted marketing strategies played pivotal roles in the recruitment process.
- **Showcasing Case Studies and Real-Life Stories:** As part of the future recruitment campaign, we intend on sharing real-life stories and case studies, using emotive language to give potential applicants a tangible idea of what the programme is and how it could potentially positively impact their ideas or businesses.



Low Programme Engagement:

Insight: Throughout the programme, we were faced with dwindling engagement rates for course content as well as coaching and mentoring sessions.

Recommendations:

- **Non-Linear Learning Journey:** We understood that not all entrepreneurs needed the same form of support at their respective stages of business development. The linear approach to the programme may not have worked for all entrepreneurs. Given this, we are considering providing an intensive in-person sprint at the very beginning of each phase to cover the necessary content but then allow for entrepreneurs a more needs-based or tailored support based on their individual needs.
- **Programme Schedule:** In order to manage expectations about the time commitment the programme requires, for future iterations, we intend to provide a clear programme schedule from the beginning. This allows for participants to make provisions well in advance. This requires that we plan and secure masterclass experts as well as workshops in a timely manner.
- **Flipping the Grant Programme:** Another mechanism we explored in incentivising participant engagement was access to grant funding during earlier phases of the programme. This would apply where entrepreneurs demonstrated readiness and needed a financial injection to support business growth, allowing them to use the funds as they learned. This would be under the guidance and support of the grant funding team.
- **Hybridisation:** Despite understanding the importance of digital literacy in our modern economy, we realised that South African entrepreneurs still have resistance to the digital environment. The programme's digital format, combined with the occurrence of load shedding and limited access to equipment, posed challenges for some participants to actively participate. Additionally, a less-than-optimal environment further hindered engagement for certain individuals. With this, we are considering implementing a hybrid approach, combining digital and in-person elements to better support the learning journey. This will require developing a community hub model in key areas, partnering with alumni and interested partners, spaces in other provinces as well as designating "Field Catalysts" to support building an ecosystem around the entrepreneurs as well as to facilitate engagement and events on behalf of Oribi.



Conclusion

In conclusion, Oribi's key learnings and recommendations emphasize the need for targeted recruitment strategies, improved programme engagement, and ongoing support for minoritized entrepreneurs. We need to remain cognizant of the needs of minoritized entrepreneurs which is supportive systems and warm networks to best support them in facing the systematic barriers such as access to network capital, financial capital and social capital. We as the incubator need to continue to serve as a human-centred developmental support, intentionally creating the ecosystems around the entrepreneurs where they can access what they need most.

By implementing these recommendations, Oribi can continue to empower social entrepreneurs and foster meaningful change within South Africa's food systems.

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