GROWTH PLAN REPORT

July 03, 2025

IKHWEZI
Growth Plan Report

Disclosure on Use of AI-Assisted Tools

Parts of this report were enhanced using AI-assisted tools for grammar refinement, stylistic consistency, and visual design. All analysis, interpretations, and recommendations remain the sole work and responsibility of the consultant.

Prepared For:

22 On Sloane
Bryanston., Johannesburg,
SA 2000
info@22onsloane.com

IKHWEZI

Table of Contents

SECTION A
Executive Summary

Executive Summary

This Growth Plan presents a structured 12-month roadmap to scale and institutionalize Ikhwezi, a vertically integrated agribusiness enterprise based in the Eastern Cape. Ikhwezi's business model is rooted in rural enterprise development, smallholder farmer aggregation, and agri-processing, with a vision to create an Agri-Business Centre of Excellence. The plan addresses core readiness gaps identified in the 2025 As-Is Analysis and aligns with strategic imperatives of off-take partnerships, inclusive growth, and local processing. It outlines targeted interventions across five capability domains: Financial Position, Operational Capacity, IT Infrastructure, Market Position, and Governance & Compliance, prioritized using a weighted matrix of strategic fit, business need, urgency, cost, and ROI. The consolidated budget ranges from R430,000 to R670,000, covering once-off setup and rollout costs, ensuring affordability and scalability.

This roadmap emphasizes phased implementation to ensure minimal disruption while achieving maximum institutional impact. Each domain intervention is sequenced to build on foundational activities—starting with budgeting tools, cloud migration, and internal controls—before scaling into CRM systems, grant readiness, and investor engagement.

Furthermore, the Growth Plan reinforces Ikhwezi's long-term sustainability by integrating monitoring indicators and governance reviews into routine operations. Risk mitigation strategies address potential delays in system adoption, staff resistance, or funding shortfalls through proactive training, funder-aligned reporting formats, and external technical support where needed. This approach not only supports compliance and transparency but also strengthens funder confidence and operational resilience. By the end of the 12-month period, Ikhwezi is projected to emerge as a structured, tech-enabled, and governance-compliant enterprise ready to scale regionally and participate in broader agricultural value chains.

Creating Value Together

Budget Overview

Each domain's intervention costs are estimated using South African SME benchmarks, reflecting a blend of once-off setup and 12-month rollout costs. The total budget ranges from R430,000 to R670,000, distributed across Financial Position, Operational Capacity, IT Infrastructure, Market Position, and Governance & Compliance to address readiness gaps and support scalable growth.

Domain	Estimated Budget Range (ZAR)
Financial Position	R100,000
IT Infrastructure	R160,000
Operational Capacity	R120,000
Market Position	R180,000
Governance	R110,00
Total	**R670,000**

Table A: Consolidated Budget Estimates by Domain (ZAR)

IKHWEZIhas earmarked R3.85 million for the Kasi Digital Connect 2026 Summit—a platform intended to expose 500 township entrepreneurs to the Kasi360 ecosystem and support 200 through a one-year programme. While the initiative reflects strong brand vision, this level of expenditure must be carefully reassessed given the organization's current institutional maturity. Instead, we believe that rebalancing investment toward core systems—such as IT infrastructure, governance, market positioning, and financial controls—will ensure that IKHWEZIcan execute such programmes responsibly, credibly, and with lasting impact. Hence, we propose a more conservative budget as shown in Table 1 above.

Creating Value Together

Roadmap Overview

Q1 (Months 1–3):
- Finalize budget templates, SOP structure, and segmentation logic
- Appoint governance consultant, initiate CRM setup

Q2 (Months 4–6):
- Deploy CRM and accounting tools
- Finalize GTM strategy and initiate brand guideline development
- Governance charter signed; policy rollout begins

Q3 (Months 7–9):
- Launch dashboards, begin NPS feedback collection
- Digitize key workflows and set up cybersecurity
- Establish risk register and compliance logs

Q4 (Months 10–12):
Conduct review audits and refine SOPs
Package reporting for funders and stakeholders
Evaluate campaign ROI and update governance policies

Key Performance Indicators

KPIs measure adoption and impact: Financial—100% compliance in variance reports by Month 4; Operational—full SOP usage by Month 6; IT—complete CRM and accounting adoption by Month 9; Market—segmentation and GTM strategy completed by Month 6; Governance—risk register and compliance tools implemented by Month 9. These ensure measurable progress.

Creating Value Together

SECTION 1
Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This Growth Plan presents a 12-month, evidence-based strategy to address critical institutional gaps and unlock scalable growth for Ikhwezi, a vertically integrated agribusiness in the Eastern Cape. Rooted in rural enterprise development, smallholder farmer aggregation, and agri-processing, Ikhwezi aims to establish an Agri-Business Centre of Excellence, connecting local producers to formal markets with enhanced traceability and inclusive value chains. The 2025 As-Is Analysis revealed significant shortfalls in process formalization, digital enablement, and governance maturity, which limit operational resilience and investment readiness. These gaps threaten Ikhwezi's ability to scale, attract funding, or sustain partnerships with entities like Woolworths, despite its strong leadership and social impact goals.

The plan targets five strategic domains—Financial Position, Operational Capacity, IT Infrastructure, Market Position, and Governance & Compliance—with interventions drawn from diagnostic findings and costed against SME benchmarks. Each domain addresses specific constraints, such as informal financial systems or undocumented workflows, through prioritized actions like budgeting tools, SOPs, and CRM deployment. These are sequenced to build foundational systems first, enabling more complex reforms later.
Ikhwezi's current momentum includes key leadership, offtake interest, and a clear vision, but informal systems and limited digital infrastructure create bottlenecks. For instance, manual processes hinder scalability, while the absence of governance structures risks compliance failures.

This approach aligns with Ikhwezi's rural context, where resource constraints demand efficient, high-impact solutions.
By committing to timely execution and continuous monitoring, Ikhwezi can transition from pre-scale promise to a fundable, scalable model.

Creating Value Together

1.2 Key Growth Objectives

Ikhwezi's 12-month growth trajectory is anchored in a set of targeted, evidence-based objectives designed to convert operational potential into institutional maturity. These objectives respond directly to the readiness gaps outlined in the As-Is Analysis and align with Ikhwezi's vision to lead rural agri-enterprise development through localized value chains, inclusive sourcing, and formal market access. The following objectives reflect strategic imperatives across financial systems, operations, digital infrastructure, governance, and market engagement.

Financial Position:

Develop structured budgeting templates, monthly variance reporting, and internal financial controls to support funding readiness and cost management.

IT Infrastructure:

Introduce cloud-based accounting, CRM, and cybersecurity protocols for digital traceability and performance management.

Operational Capacity:

Document SOPs for logistics, HR, procurement, and quality control to ensure consistency and scalability.

Market Position:

Design a GTM strategy, develop buyer personas, and formalize brand assets for market expansion and stakeholder communications.

Governance:

Constitute a governance charter, initiate board functions, and roll out compliance policies to meet funder expectations.

Creating Value Together

1.3 Domain Interventions

The diagnostic assessment of IKHWEZIrevealed varying levels of institutional readiness across five critical domains. The table below summarizes the key interventions required to close the gaps identified in each domain. These interventions are directly linked to documented weaknesses and opportunities and serve as the foundation for the domain-specific plans presented in subsequent chapters.

Domain	Key Interventions
Financial Position	Develop structured budgeting templates, monthly variance reporting, and internal financial controls to support funding readiness and cost management.
IT Infrastructure	CRM system, cloud accounting tools, cybersecurity protocols, digital backup systems.
Operational Capacity	Document SOPs for logistics, HR, procurement, and quality control to ensure consistency and scalability.
Market Position	Customer segmentation, GTM strategy, CRM-based sales tracking, brand asset toolkit.
Governance	Governance charter, board setup, compliance policies, risk register, authority matrix.

Table 1: Consolidated Budget Estimates by Domain (ZAR)

Creating Value Together

1.4 Intervention Prioritization

Ikhwezi's interventions are prioritized using a value-effort matrix assessing impact, urgency, cost, effort, strategic fit, business need, ROI, and organizational readiness, derived from the Growth Plan Approach framework. High-priority items like budgeting tools, SOPs, and CRM setup scored strongly in impact and urgency, addressing immediate operational and funder readiness needs. These foundational systems enable downstream reforms in staffing, market activation, and governance. For example, financial controls in Q1–Q2 lay the groundwork for accurate reporting, critical for investor trust.

Market-facing and operational interventions received higher weights to align with Ikhwezi's focus on revenue traction and efficiency. SOPs ensure consistent delivery, vital for offtaker relationships, while CRM supports structured customer engagement. Governance and compliance, though critical, are sequenced later to build on established systems, ensuring resource efficiency.
Lower-priority items, like full-scale dashboards or brand campaigns, are scheduled for Q3–Q4 due to their complexity and dependency on prior systems. This sequencing prevents resource strain while maximizing early wins, such as improved financial visibility or process standardization, which build organizational confidence.

The prioritization reflects Ikhwezi's pre-scale phase, balancing rapid improvements with long-term planning. By focusing on high-impact, low-effort interventions first, Ikhwezi can establish credibility and operational discipline, critical for scaling in a competitive agribusiness sector. This method ensures resources are allocated efficiently, delivering measurable outcomes. Regular KPI reviews will validate prioritization, allowing adjustments based on real-time feedback, positioning Ikhwezi for sustainable growth and fundability.

SECTION 2
Financial Position

info@ikhwezi.co.za

2.1 Introduction

This section evaluates Ikhwezi's financial position, highlighting gaps in budgeting, cost controls, and forecasting per the 2025 As-Is Analysis. While foundational documents like cash flow projections exist, the absence of structured systems hinders effective planning and funder engagement. Informal spreadsheet-based practices and lack of controls raise risks of misallocation, especially in agriculture's volatile cost environment. These limitations threaten scalability and investor confidence, critical for Ikhwezi's growth ambitions.

Proposed interventions introduce formal financial structures using accessible tools like Excel and cloud storage, ensuring alignment with Ikhwezi's team size and digital maturity. Budget templates, variance reporting, and controls aim to enhance audit readiness and resource allocation, addressing immediate operational needs. A multi-year forecast will support strategic planning, aligning funding with milestones.
The As-Is Analysis noted no procurement protocols or variance tracking, increasing risks as Ikhwezi scales. These interventions mitigate such risks by embedding monthly routines and digitized documentation, fostering transparency and accountability. For example, variance reporting will enable leadership to address overspending early, crucial for seasonal cash flows.

These reforms are designed for sustainability, with internal ownership to minimize consultant dependency. Training will ensure staff can maintain systems, embedding financial discipline into daily operations. This approach aligns with Ikhwezi's rural context, where lean solutions are essential.
By establishing these systems, Ikhwezi will strengthen its financial foundation, positioning it as a credible investment opportunity. The interventions not only address current gaps but also build capacity for future growth, ensuring resilience in a competitive agribusiness landscape.

Creating Value Together

2.2 Intervention Details

To transition from informal financial coordination to a structured, fundable system, Ikhwezi will implement five core financial interventions over the next 12 months. Each intervention is designed to improve control, increase transparency, and build confidence among investors and partners. Tools will be configured using standard software (e.g., Microsoft Excel, Google Sheets) and supported by internal role assignment and part-time consulting where necessary.

1. **Budget Template Development-** A standardized annual operating budget template will be introduced, capturing income, direct costs, overheads, and planned capital expenditures. Budgeting will be structured by quarter and aligned with project timelines, supplier cycles, and funding disbursement schedules. The format will include actual vs projected comparisons to support in-year decision-making.
2. **Monthly Variance Reporting-** Ikhwezi will initiate a simple monthly financial reporting process with a focus on variance tracking. Reports will compare actuals against the budget, highlight overspending or underspending, and provide commentary on deviations. This process will also support internal learning and adjustment of financial forecasts.
3. **Financial Controls Checklist-** A basic internal control system will be documented, including expenditure approval thresholds, dual sign-off for payments, vendor quotation procedures, and receipt archiving. These controls will be embedded into procurement workflows and tracked monthly.
4. **Document Storage Protocols-** All financial documentation—including bank statements, receipts, quotations, and reports—will be digitized and stored using cloud platforms such as OneDrive or Google Drive, with permission-based access.
5. **Multi-Year Forecasting Model** - A three-year financial forecast will be developed to model revenue growth, input costs, and funding needs. It will incorporate expansion assumptions linked to strategic milestones.

**Creating
Value
Together**

2.3 Priority Rationale

Financial interventions are prioritized based on their foundational value and alignment with investor readiness, addressing immediate operational gaps while building long-term capacity. Budget Template Development and Monthly Variance Reporting are high-priority, enabling resource allocation and real-time performance tracking, essential for funder reporting and cost control in agriculture's volatile environment.

These systems provide immediate visibility, critical for operational discipline.
Financial Controls Checklist and Document Storage Protocols are medium-priority, reducing mismanagement risks and ensuring traceability for audits. Controls formalize expenditure oversight, while digital storage supports compliance, both vital as Ikhwezi scales its team and operations. The Multi-Year Forecasting Model, also medium-priority, supports strategic planning and fundraising narratives by modeling growth scenarios.

It is sequenced later to leverage data from initial systems, ensuring accuracy and relevance. This prioritization balances immediate needs with strategic goals, ensuring early wins like budgeting lay the groundwork for complex forecasting. It aligns with Ikhwezi's pre-scale phase, where financial credibility is key to unlocking funding and partnerships.
By focusing on high-impact, low-effort systems first, Ikhwezi builds a robust financial foundation. Regular reviews will ensure these priorities remain effective, positioning the enterprise for sustainable growth and investor trust.

Creating Value Together

2.4 Budget Assumptions

The budget estimates for the proposed financial interventions are based on a combination of internal documentation, external service benchmarks, and conservative cost assumptions. The table below summarizes the projected costs for implementing each intervention over a 12-month period. The budget that we propose for this Domain is R50,000 – R73,000 broken down as follows:

Intervention	Estimated Cost Range
Financial Policy Framework	R12,000
Budgeting and Forecasting Templates	R18,000
Internal Reporting Systems	R15,000
Cost Tracking and Margin Analysis Tools	R8,000
Fundraising and Capital Planning	R20,000
TOTAL	**R73,000**

Table 2: Budget Estimation Framework

Creating Value Together

2.5 Budget Justification

The score for this Domain was obtained by scoring the top five priorities of this domain and adding up their scores. This Domain has a 0.25 weighting (out of 1.0) towards total company score.

R12K

Financial Policy Framework

Justification: Covers drafting a controls checklist for approvals, documentation standards, and financial roles, with training for adoption.

R18K

Budgeting and Forecasting

Justification: Funds a structured Excel budgeting tool tailored to Ikhwezi's cost drivers, including training for quarterly updates.

R20K

Fundraising and Capital Planning

Justification: Includes drafting of a controls checklist covering approvals, documentation standards, and financial roles.

R15K

Internal Reporting Systems

Justification: Supports a reporting pack comparing actuals to budget with charts and narrative templates**.**

R8K

Cost Tracking Analysis

Justification: Covers setup of a digital filing system with naming conventions and access permissions**.**

Budget Breakdown = R73k

2.6 Return on Investment

The return on investment (ROI) for Ikhwezi's financial interventions is primarily realized through increased fundability, improved cost control, risk reduction, and operational transparency. While these systems do not directly generate revenue, they enable the business to attract funding, manage capital efficiently, and support growth planning—all of which are critical for scaling an agribusiness model.

1. **Enhanced Funder and Investor Confidence**: A structured budget, multi-year forecast, and variance reporting system create the financial transparency required by donors, development financiers, and equity investors. These tools demonstrate fiscal discipline and allow Ikhwezi to credibly engage funding partners.
2. **Improved Cost Management and Burn Rate Control:** Monthly reporting and internal controls allow the team to identify over-expenditure early, allocate resources more effectively, and reduce waste. This is especially important in agriculture, where input and logistics costs can fluctuate significantly.
3. **Audit and Compliance Readiness**: A digitized financial document repository and internal control protocols prepare Ikhwezi for audit reviews, grant reporting, and due diligence processes. This minimizes the risk of funding delays or disqualification.
4. **Strategic Financial Planning**: The forecast model enables leadership to test assumptions, model capital requirements, and prepare for growth scenarios. It also supports grant applications and investor pitches with quantifiable financial projections.
5. **Organizational Learning and Accountability**: Variance analysis builds a culture of financial awareness and supports more informed decision-making by both leadership and operations staff.

Collectively, these outcomes create the institutional foundation required for scale while minimizing financial risk and improving capital utilization efficiency.

" Creating Value Together

2.7 Implementation Timeline

The financial interventions for Ikhwezi will be implemented over the first six months of the 12-month Growth Plan. The schedule is designed to allow sequential onboarding of tools, internal adoption, and the gradual introduction of reporting routines without overwhelming the current team structure. Priority is given to interventions that enable immediate operational control and funder engagement.

Month 1–2:

- Engage part-time financial consultant or internal lead
- Develop and finalize annual budget template
- Set up structured folder system for financial documentation (e.g., OneDrive, Google Drive)
- Conduct basic training on budgeting inputs and folder use

Month 3–4:

- Build and pilot the monthly variance reporting pack
- Introduce internal review sessions to discuss financial performance
- Draft internal controls checklist and define roles for expenditure oversight
- Begin collecting and storing supporting documents in digital repository

Month 5–6:

- Finalize and adopt internal financial controls (e.g., sign-off protocols, quote tracking)
- Develop and test 3-year forecasting model linked to operational and funding assumptions
- Train founder or finance lead on maintaining and adjusting forecast model
- Conduct internal review of system usage and refine templates based on feedback

Creating Value Together

2.8 Monitoring Indicators

To ensure effective implementation and sustained usage of the new financial systems, Ikhwezi will monitor a structured set of performance and compliance indicators. These metrics are intended to measure both the adoption rate and the operational impact of financial reforms. Regular monthly reviews will be conducted by the founder or a designated finance lead, with a strong preference for automating reporting through embedded Excel formulas and cloud-based dashboards to reduce administrative workload and enhance data reliability.

Key indicators include the

- **Budget Completion and Usage Rate-** with a target of finalizing the annual budget by Month 2 and integrating it into all financial decision-making processes.

- **Monthly Report Submission Rate-** aims for 100% timely submission of variance reports from Month 4 onward.

- **Budget vs Actual Variance Tracking-** requires full tracking of budget categories with explanatory notes for any deviation greater than 10%, starting by Month 5. Compliance with internal controls is also prioritized, with 90% of transactions expected to follow approved approval and quotation processes by Month 6.

- **Document Digitization Rate-** targets digitizing 95% of receipts, statements, and reports into cloud folders by Month 3, while the

- **Forecast Model Update Frequency-** ensures at least one financial forecast update by Month 6, establishing a quarterly update cycle. These indicators will be tabled at monthly leadership meetings and shared with external stakeholders such as funders or partners upon request, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Creating Value Together

2.9 Risks Measures

Ikhwezi's shift from informal financial practices to a more structured financial governance model introduces several operational risks, particularly around adoption, internal capacity, and consistency. To address these challenges, a targeted set of mitigation strategies has been developed, tailored to the organisation's current staffing levels and operational realities. These strategies aim to ensure smooth implementation and sustained use of the new financial systems.

One risk involves resistance to new financial routines, as the team may view budgeting and reporting as burdensome or unnecessary. This will be mitigated by emphasizing time-saving benefits, using simplified tools, and co-developing templates with staff to foster ownership. Another concern is inaccurate or incomplete budget inputs, which may stem from assumptions lacking operational validation. To counter this, budget inputs will be directly linked to recent cost data and verified against agribusiness benchmarks. Additionally, the inconsistent use of variance reports will be addressed by embedding variance discussions into monthly team meetings and requiring explanations for deviations exceeding 10%. To prevent weak enforcement of internal controls, responsibilities will be assigned to named individuals, and no payments will be released without supporting documentation. Data loss or disorganization will be mitigated by storing all records in cloud folders with structured naming conventions and access controls, complemented by monthly checks. Finally, the underuse of the forecast model will be resolved by assigning a quarterly update schedule and aligning forecast updates with procurement and fundraising cycles. Together, these measures will not only reduce implementation risks but also promote consistent, effective financial governance at Ikhwezi.

" Creating Value Together

2.10 Sustainability

The long-term sustainability of Ikhwezi's financial management reforms depends on embedding new tools and routines into existing workflows, minimizing dependency on external consultants, and fostering a culture of internal accountability. Each intervention introduced in this plan—budgeting, variance reporting, internal controls, and forecasting—has been designed to operate using readily available tools and minimal ongoing costs, ensuring financial governance can be maintained even in a lean operational environment.

The first pillar of sustainability is integration into routine management practices. Budget reviews must become a standing agenda item in monthly team meetings, with the variance report serving as a shared performance feedback tool. Control checklists should be aligned with procurement and payment workflows to avoid duplication and ensure natural adoption. These steps reduce the risk of abandonment due to perceived administrative burden.

The second pillar is internal ownership. A finance focal point—ideally the founder or a designated operational lead—must be tasked with maintaining budget templates, generating reports, and ensuring document digitization. With proper training, these tasks do not require a full-time finance professional. Building this role into existing structures increases continuity and reduces reliance on external consultants after the setup phase.

The third pillar is continuous relevance and adaptation. Templates and tools must remain flexible and periodically updated. Annual budget reviews, quarterly forecast refreshes, and documentation audits should be scheduled proactively. These small refresh cycles will ensure that financial systems evolve with the business and remain aligned with funder expectations and operational needs..

Creating Value Together

SECTION3
IT Infrastructure

info@ikhwezi.co.za

3.1 Introduction

This section addresses Ikhwezi's underdeveloped IT infrastructure, identified as the largest readiness gap in the 2025 As-Is Analysis. The absence of CRM, cloud accounting, and cybersecurity protocols results in manual, untracked processes vulnerable to inefficiency and data loss. These gaps limit scalability, stakeholder engagement, and risk management, critical for an agribusiness aiming for formal market integration.

Proposed interventions include deploying a CRM, cloud-based accounting, cybersecurity protocols, an asset register, and an IT governance guide. These tools are selected for affordability, compatibility with existing systems, and ease of use, ensuring alignment with Ikhwezi's current capacity. They enable financial tracking, customer engagement, and compliance, supporting broader growth goals.

The lack of digital systems hinders Ikhwezi's ability to provide real-time data to funders or maintain operational continuity. For example, manual customer tracking risks losing partnership opportunities, while unprotected data increases breach risks. These interventions address such gaps with lightweight, scalable solutions.

By prioritizing usability and security, Ikhwezi will build a digital foundation that enhances operational resilience and funder credibility. Training and internal ownership will ensure adoption, aligning with the company's rural context and resource constraints.

This IT framework positions Ikhwezi for sustainable growth, enabling traceability and efficiency in a competitive sector. It supports the vision of an Agri-Business Centre of Excellence, driving inclusive value chains and market access.

Creating Value Together

3.2 Intervention Details

To build a functional and scalable digital foundation, Ikhwezi will implement five IT infrastructure interventions over the next 12 months. These systems are designed to support core business functions, improve visibility and traceability, and reduce operational risk. Each intervention has been selected to align with Ikhwezi's scale, available bandwidth, and budget constraints, with a focus on affordability and ease of use.

1. **CRM System Deployment**: A lightweight CRM system—such as Zoho CRM or Microsoft Dynamics 365 Starter—will be introduced to track client interactions, manage partner engagement, and log customer communications. The system will support segmentation, lead tracking, and follow-up scheduling, and will serve as a single source of truth for external relationships.
2. **Cloud-Based Accounting Tool;** Ikhwezi will adopt an entry-level accounting platform such as Xero, Sage Business Cloud, or Zoho Books. This system will allow real-time financial tracking, automated invoice generation, and digital audit trails. It will integrate with the budgeting and variance reporting systems outlined in Chapter 2.
3. **Cybersecurity and Data Backup Protocols;** Basic protections will be put in place to guard against data loss and unauthorized access. This includes anti-virus software on all company devices, monthly file backups to a secure cloud folder, and access controls for sensitive data.
4. **Digital Infrastructure Register**; An asset register of IT equipment will be developed, documenting devices, software licenses, and user permissions. This enables lifecycle management and clearer responsibility.
5. **IT Governance Playbook:** A short guide will be created to document acceptable use policies, data handling procedures, and escalation protocols in the event of system failure or data breaches.

Together, these interventions will establish a secure, efficient, and funder-compliant IT environment.

Creating Value Together

3.3 Prioritization Justification

The IT infrastructure interventions for Ikhwezi have been prioritized based on their operational urgency, strategic value, and ability to enable other domains—particularly financial management and customer engagement. The following prioritization sequence reflects both implementation feasibility and the impact on scale-readiness.

1. **Cloud-Based Accounting Tool** (High Priority): This system directly supports the financial governance reforms introduced in Chapter 2. It enables real-time expense tracking, digital invoicing, and automated reporting—all of which are essential for audit readiness and funder engagement. Integration with cloud storage also reduces reliance on manual spreadsheets.
2. **CRM System Deployment** (High Priority);A CRM will centralize customer and partner interactions, enabling Ikhwezi to manage its growing network of buyers, off-takers, and stakeholders. The CRM supports future marketing efforts, partnership tracking, and impact reporting—critical for grant applications and market expansion.
3. **Cybersecurity and Data Backup Protocols** (Medium Priority): As digital systems are introduced, basic cybersecurity becomes essential to protect financial data, customer records, and compliance documentation. These tools also help ensure business continuity in the event of device loss or failure.
4. **Digital Infrastructure Register** (Medium Priority): Maintaining an inventory of IT assets and software licenses creates visibility, simplifies troubleshooting, and reduces redundancy. This is a low-effort intervention with long-term operational benefits.
5. **IT Governance Playbook** (Medium Priority) Documenting IT usage protocols reinforces security, data privacy, and accountability. While not urgent, it is essential for institutional maturity and compliance, especially as the organization grows.

This prioritization supports a staged digital transition aligned with Ikhwezi's operational scale and absorptive capacity.

Creating Value Together

3.4 Budget Assumptions

The following table presents the projected budget for implementing Afribiz Connect's IT infrastructure interventions over a 12-month period. Costs are based on publicly available rates for SaaS platforms, consulting support, and internal development of digital oversight structures. The budget that we propose for this Domain is R73,000 – R115,000 broken down as follows:

Intervention	Estimated Cost Range
CRM and ERP Deployment	R40,000
IT Governance and Oversight Roles	R12,000
Platform Usage Dashboards and Analytics	R25,000
Cybersecurity and Data Protection Enforcement	R25,000
IT Procedures and Vendor SLAs	R8,000
Total (IT Infrastructure Domain)	R115,000

Table 3: IT Infrastructure Investment Assessment

Creating Value Together

3.5 Budget Justification

The score for this Domain was obtained by scoring the top five priorities of this domain and adding up their scores. This Domain has a 0.25 weighting (out of 1.0) towards total company score.

IT SOPs and Vendor

R8K

Justification: Covers design of an asset register and data population for device and license tracking.

Cybersecurity and Data Protection

R25K

Justification: Funds antivirus, access controls, and cloud backups with 2FA setup.

Platform Usage and Analytics

R25K

Budget: R25,000
Justification: Supports dashboards for CRM and accounting data, enabling performance insights.

IT Governance and Oversight Roles

R12K

Justification: Covers drafting of IT governance guidelines, including acceptable use policies.

CRM and ERP Deployment

R40K

Justification: Includes licensing, setup, and training for a CRM to manage customer interactions**.**

Budget Breakdown = R115K

3.6 Return on Investment

The return on investment (ROI) for Ikhwezi's IT infrastructure interventions is primarily realized through improved efficiency, data visibility, partner readiness, and risk mitigation. Although digital systems require upfront costs, they quickly pay off by enabling process automation, performance tracking, and professional engagement with funders and customers.

1. **Operational Efficiency Gains**: Cloud-based accounting and CRM tools reduce administrative overhead by automating invoices, contact management, and reporting. This frees leadership capacity and reduces turnaround time on internal requests and external engagements.
2. **Enhanced Partner and Funder Readiness**: Digital tools improve traceability and transparency—key requirements for institutional funders. CRM and cloud storage allow for quick access to engagement history, financial reports, and compliance documents during due diligence processes.
3. **Risk Reduction and Data Protection:** With automated backups, antivirus protection, and user access controls, Ikhwezi significantly reduces the risk of data loss, unauthorized access, and operational disruptions caused by system failures or file mismanagement.
4. **Decision-Making Visibility**: CRM and accounting dashboards provide real-time data that support better decision-making. Leadership will have visibility into receivables, partner pipelines, and outstanding issues—enabling proactive responses.
5. **Foundation for Scalable Systems**: Investing in entry-level, cloud-based tools lays the groundwork for future digital upgrades. As Ikhwezi scales, these tools can be expanded without requiring full system replacement, preserving institutional knowledge and workflows.

These returns position IT investment not as a cost center, but as a strategic enabler that improves organizational credibility, resilience, and productivity.

3.7 Implementation Timeline

The rollout of Ikhwezi's IT infrastructure interventions will be sequenced over a 9-month period, beginning in Quarter 2 of the implementation year. This phasing ensures adequate time for tool selection, staff onboarding, and gradual integration with existing workflows.

Month 1–2

- Select CRM and accounting platforms based on price, compatibility, and team input
- Procure licenses and assign internal implementation leads
- Set up cloud storage structure for data backups and document access

Month 3–4

- Configure accounting system (chart of accounts, bank linkage, reporting templates)
- Deploy antivirus tools on all devices and set up basic cybersecurity protocols
- Initiate CRM setup (contact database, tagging logic, lead tracking)
- Begin staff training on accounting software and document storage use

Month 5–6

- Go live with accounting and CRM systems
- Implement monthly data backup routine and define user access permissions
- Draft digital infrastructure register and populate with current assets

Month 7–9

- Finalize IT Governance Playbook covering data handling, device use, and access controls
- Conduct refresher training on systems usage and data protection
- Review user adoption and troubleshoot pain points
- Prepare internal handover of digital systems management to appointed staff

Creating Value Together

3.8 Monitoring Indicators

To ensure the successful implementation and sustained use of digital tools, Ikhwezi will monitor a comprehensive set of IT-specific performance indicators. These indicators are designed to track system adoption, safeguard data security, and assess the practical utility of digital systems in daily operations. All metrics will be reviewed quarterly during internal performance check-ins and will be available for inclusion in external stakeholder reports as needed.

Key indicators include :

- **System Deployment Completion Rate-** which targets 100% deployment of core IT systems—such as CRM, accounting software, and antivirus protection—by Month 6.

- **User Adoption Rate-** measures the percentage of staff actively using CRM and accounting platforms monthly, with an 80% target by Month 7. To secure data integrity.

- **Data Backup Compliance-** will track monthly cloud backups of financial and operational files, aiming for 100% compliance starting in Month 4.

- **Endpoint Security Coverage-** indicator ensures all company devices are protected by antivirus and password protocols, with full coverage expected by Month 3.

- **CRM Data Accuracy-** will be tracked through the completeness of customer and partner profiles, targeting 90% accuracy by Month 6.

- **Infrastructure Register Accuracy-** measures how well IT assets are tracked and assigned, with a goal of full registration by Month 6. Lastly, **IT Governance Awareness-** will ensure that all staff are trained and have acknowledged the IT Governance Playbook, aiming for 100% training completion by Month 9.

Collectively, these indicators will validate that digital systems are not only implemented but also effectively embedded into Ikhwezi's operational routines.

**Creating
Value
Together**

3.9 Risks Measures

Implementing IT infrastructure in a growing enterprise like Ikhwezi introduces several risks associated with system adoption, digital literacy, cost management, and data integrity. To address these challenges, a risk matrix has been developed, outlining key threats and corresponding mitigation strategies tailored to Ikhwezi's current scale and available resources. One critical risk is low staff adoption of new systems, where team members may default to manual processes or avoid using digital platforms. This can be mitigated by providing hands-on training, appointing peer champions, and embedding digital tools into routine workflows—such as requiring CRM updates before meetings. Another concern is cost overruns during platform configuration, which may arise due to scope creep or vendor delays. To prevent this, Ikhwezi should implement milestone-based vendor contracts, cap consulting hours, and focus on delivering only the most essential features in the initial rollout phase.

Data quality is also at risk, particularly in CRM and accounting systems where incomplete or inaccurate entries can limit system effectiveness. To counter this, the organization should set minimum data entry standards, perform regular monthly data quality checks, and assign clear accountability to a specific team member. Additionally, cybersecurity breaches and data loss pose a significant threat, especially in the absence of strong security protocols. Mitigation includes installing antivirus software, enforcing strict file access permissions, scheduling monthly backups, and enabling two-factor authentication for email and storage systems. Finally, system fatigue or underutilization can occur once the initial excitement wears off. To keep digital tools in active use, Ikhwezi should integrate reporting outputs from these systems into leadership reviews and funder updates, demonstrating their strategic value. These targeted measures will help ensure that Ikhwezi's IT investments deliver sustainable, long-term benefits.

Creating Value Together

3.10 Sustainability

Sustaining Ikhwezi's IT infrastructure requires more than tool installation—it demands integration into daily operations, clear internal ownership, and lightweight governance that supports both compliance and adaptability. The long-term effectiveness of these digital investments depends on consistent usage, routine updates, and continuous relevance to core business processes.

The first sustainability lever is operational embedding. CRM usage must be tied to customer follow-ups, stakeholder tracking, and partner engagement workflows. Similarly, accounting tools must serve as the default platform for invoice generation, expenditure logging, and monthly financial reporting. When systems are routinely used to deliver outputs required by leadership or funders, adoption becomes self-reinforcing.

The second lever is internal capacity and role clarity. A designated team member—likely the finance or operations lead—should be tasked with managing CRM data hygiene, approving user access, and ensuring backup routines are followed. This point person should also act as a liaison for any future IT upgrades or troubleshooting. With minimal additional training, this role can be fully embedded in the existing organizational structure.
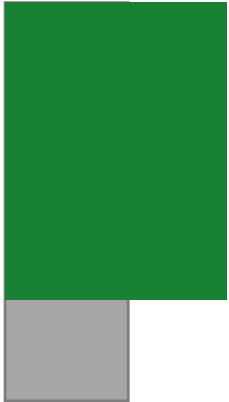
The third lever is light governance through living documentation. The IT Governance Playbook should remain a live document, updated as new tools are added or roles evolve. Acceptable use guidelines, data protection procedures, and asset logs should be reviewed annually to ensure compliance and practical value.

Lastly, sustainability is reinforced by system modularity. Each platform selected—CRM, accounting, antivirus—is scalable and cloud-based, allowing Ikhwezi to upgrade functionality as needs grow without overhauling the digital stack.

Together, these practices ensure the IT infrastructure becomes a stable, cost-effective, and growth-aligned enabler of institutional maturity.

Creating Value Together

SECTION4
Operational Capacity

4.1 Introduction

This section addresses Ikhwezi's operational capacity, marked by informal coordination and undocumented processes per the 2025 As-Is Analysis. Without SOPs, role clarity, or performance tracking, scalability is constrained, risking inconsistent delivery in a sector demanding reliability. These gaps threaten customer retention and investor confidence, critical for Ikhwezi's growth ambitions.
Interventions include SOPs, task tracking, staffing frameworks, performance dashboards, and escalation protocols, designed for minimal disruption and high impact.

These reforms formalize workflows, enhance accountability, and prepare Ikhwezi for increased volume and geographic expansion using lightweight tools.
The As-Is Analysis highlighted reliance on individual initiative, leading to inefficiencies and errors. For example, undocumented logistics processes risk delays in offtaker deliveries, while unclear roles cause coordination breakdowns. These interventions address such issues by standardizing workflows and clarifying responsibilities.
By embedding operational discipline, Ikhwezi will improve team efficiency and service reliability, aligning with its vision of an Agri-Business Centre of Excellence.

Training and internal ownership will ensure adoption, tailored to the company's rural context and lean operations.
These reforms position Ikhwezi for scalable growth, supporting customer trust and investor readiness. They lay the foundation for consistent delivery and operational resilience in a competitive agribusiness landscape.

**Creating
Value
Together**

4.2 Intervention Details

To improve execution consistency, internal accountability, and scale readiness, Ikhwezi will implement five key operational interventions. These interventions aim to formalize core business processes, clarify team responsibilities, and create visibility into daily performance. Each is designed for practicality, requiring minimal systems investment while significantly improving structure and coordination.

1. SOP Development for Core Functions: Ikhwezi will document standard operating procedures (SOPs) for critical operational areas, including procurement, logistics, quality control, HR processes, and reporting routines. These SOPs will detail step-by-step workflows, inputs, outputs, and responsible roles. Templates and visual flowcharts will be used to simplify training and onboarding.
2. Task Tracking System Deployment; A basic task management platform—such as Microsoft Planner, Trello, or Google Tasks—will be introduced to assign responsibilities, monitor progress, and manage deadlines. Team members will use shared boards to ensure transparency and real-time collaboration on key activities.
3. Staffing Structure and Role Definition; A formal staffing framework will be introduced, outlining clear roles, reporting lines, and responsibilities. Job descriptions will be created or refined for each position, including current and anticipated roles aligned to the company's growth path.
4. Performance Dashboard and KPIs; A lightweight operational dashboard will be developed using Excel or Google Sheets, tracking key indicators such as fulfilment accuracy, task closure rates, and turnaround times. Indicators will be reviewed monthly in team meetings.
5. Internal Escalation and Handover Protocols : Escalation routes and handover procedures will be defined to ensure continuity during absences and emergencies. This structure ensures task coverage and institutional memory retention.

Together, these interventions establish the operational discipline needed to support reliability, team productivity, and growth-focused delivery.

Creating Value Together

4.3 Priority Justification

The operational interventions have been prioritized to address Ikhwezi's most pressing execution gaps—namely, lack of formal procedures, limited team visibility, and unclear accountability structures. The following sequence ensures that foundational systems are in place before layering in more advanced tools and protocols.

1. SOP Development for Core Functions (High Priority) : Standard operating procedures are critical for ensuring consistency, reducing reliance on institutional memory, and enabling scale. Without SOPs, new staff onboarding is inefficient and task execution remains inconsistent. These documents form the foundation for all other operational systems.
2. Staffing Structure and Role Definition (High Priority) : Defining who is responsible for what ensures that workflows have clear owners, escalation paths are understood, and duplication is avoided. This is essential for productivity and accountability, especially as team size grows.
3. Task Tracking System Deployment (Medium Priority) Introducing a visual task board increases real-time visibility into progress, deadlines, and dependencies. While not urgent, it greatly enhances daily coordination and complements SOP rollout by making tasks traceable.
4. Performance Dashboard and KPIs (Medium Priority) : Dashboards provide insights into delivery speed, fulfilment quality, and process efficiency. Once SOPs and task tracking are operational, performance metrics can be monitored and refined continuously.
5. Internal Escalation and Handover Protocols (Medium Priority) These protocols ensure service continuity during staff absences and support resilience under stress. They are best implemented once role definitions and workflows are formalized.

This prioritization ensures rapid impact on execution consistency while building longer-term capacity for process optimization and scale.

Creating Value Together

4.4 Budget Estimation

The table below presents the estimated cost of implementing operational capacity interventions over a 12-month period. These figures reflect a lean execution model that leverages internal resources supplemented by light-touch external support. The budget that we propose for this Domain is R93,000 broken down as follows:

Intervention	Estimated Cost Range
SOP Development and Rollout	R45,000
Delegation Matrix and Job Descriptions	R15,000
Task and Workflow Tracking Tools	R15,000
Performance Management Framework	R18,000
Operational Scalability Plan	R93,000
TOTAL	R68,000 – R103,000

Table 2: Financial Systems Assessment

Creating Value Together

4.5 Budget Justification

The score for this Domain was obtained by scoring the top five priorities of this domain and adding up their scores. This Domain has a 0.25 weighting (out of 1.0) towards total company score.

SOP Development and Rollout

R45K

Justification: Covers support to document and validate workflows with templates and flowcharts.

Delegation Matrix

R15K

Justification: Funds job descriptions and reporting lines to clarify responsibilities.

Task and Workflow Tracking

R15K

Justification: Supports setup and training for a task tracking platform like Trello.

Performance Management Framework

R18K

Justification: Includes design of a KPI dashboard for fulfilment and turnaround metrics.

Operational Scalability Plan

R10K

Justification: Covers escalation protocols and handover checklists for resilience.

Domain Budget = R93,000

4.5 Budget Justification

The proposed budget for Ikhwezi's operational capacity interventions reflects a strategic and cost-effective investment in improving execution quality, enhancing team coordination, and enabling long-term institutional scalability. Each component has been thoughtfully scoped to ensure affordability while achieving measurable improvements, leveraging standard SME consultancy rates and open-access platforms to minimize costs. The first major item—Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) development and workflow design, budgeted at R30,000 to R45,000—will support the engagement of an external consultant to document and validate key operational processes across procurement, logistics, quality assurance, and HR. This work includes stakeholder interviews, visual flowchart creation, and the development of adaptable SOP templates, supported by internal validation sessions to ensure relevance and ease of use.

Additional budget lines include task tracking setup and user training (R10,000–R15,000), aimed at deploying tools like Trello or Microsoft Planner. This enables the configuration of team boards, permission settings, and sample projects, alongside practical training for team leads to embed shared accountability practices. Another critical investment is the development of a staffing structure and role framework (R10,000–R15,000), which will produce clear job descriptions, updated reporting lines, and a scalable HR map to streamline future recruitment and reduce role confusion. A lightweight KPI dashboard (R12,000–R18,000) will also be implemented using tools like Excel or Google Sheets, capturing key performance indicators such as order fulfilment and turnaround time for monthly performance tracking. Lastly, R6,000 to R10,000 is allocated for documenting escalation and handover protocols, including emergency checklists and role-specific continuity templates. Together, these interventions establish foundational systems that boost operational effectiveness without introducing the burden of ongoing software licensing costs.

Creating Value Together

4.6 Return on Investment

The operational interventions proposed for Ikhwezi are expected to deliver strong returns across reliability, productivity, and scalability. By transitioning from informal coordination to structured systems, the company will reduce execution errors, improve staff accountability, and prepare for increased operational volume—all without requiring major capital outlays.

1. Improved Service Consistency: Documented SOPs and task tracking tools will reduce variability in how core functions—like procurement or quality control—are executed. This improves fulfilment rates and reliability for offtakers, increasing partner trust and repeat business.
2. Reduced Time-to-Onboard New Staff; Clear role descriptions, training materials, and documented workflows will shorten onboarding time for new team members. This reduces productivity lag during hiring or turnover and enables faster team scaling.
3. Increased Task Completion and Accountability: Shared task boards and dashboards make ownership visible and deadlines transparent. This reduces follow-up time, improves cross-functional coordination, and helps prevent missed steps or duplicated effort.
4. Operational Risk Mitigation: Defined escalation paths and handover protocols ensure continuity during staff absences, public holidays, or emergencies. This reduces dependency on specific individuals and strengthens institutional resilience.
5. Performance-Driven Decision-Making: Dashboards and KPIs introduce objective visibility into bottlenecks, delays, or inefficiencies. Leadership can use this data to refine processes and allocate resources more effectively.

These operational upgrades generate long-term efficiency gains and position Ikhwezi to absorb growth without sacrificing quality or reliability—critical attributes for a scaling agri-enterprise with formal market ambitions.

Creating Value Together

4.7 Implementation Timeline

Ikhwezi's operational capacity interventions will be implemented over a structured six-month timeline, carefully aligned with internal readiness and concurrent reforms in finance and IT. This phased rollout allows the team to absorb changes gradually while sustaining day-to-day operations. Each phase is designed to build upon the previous one, ensuring consistent process alignment and active staff engagement throughout the transition. In Months 1 to 2, the organization will engage an operations consultant to map workflows across procurement, logistics, HR, and quality assurance functions. During this period, initial drafts of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for three to four core processes will be created and reviewed. Simultaneously, the team will begin redefining the staffing structure and role descriptions, supported by internal validation sessions with team leads to refine the SOPs.

In Months 3 to 4, the SOPs will be finalized and accompanied by practical job aids for daily use. A task tracking platform, such as Trello or Microsoft Planner, will be configured and launched, enabling real-time coordination and accountability. Training sessions will be conducted to ensure the team can effectively use task boards and engage in regular check-ins. The staffing framework will also be completed and job descriptions published. By Months 5 to 6, attention will shift to developing a performance dashboard that links operational KPIs to the established SOPs and task tracking tools. A performance baseline review will be conducted using this dashboard, while escalation protocols and handover checklists are drafted to enhance operational resilience. The final step will involve reviewing the adoption of new systems and refining templates based on staff feedback. By the end of Month 6, Ikhwezi will have completed all key operational reforms, with SOPs embedded, digital tools in daily use, and performance metrics actively tracked—setting the stage for scalable process improvements in the latter half of the growth plan.

Creating Value Together

22

4.8 Monitoring Indicators

To track the success and sustained adoption of its operational interventions, Ikhwezi will monitor a targeted set of key performance indicators (KPIs) that assess progress in documentation, task execution, team accountability, and process optimization. These indicators are designed to provide clear, actionable insights and will be reviewed on a monthly basis, with formal check-ins incorporated into quarterly management meetings. The first KPI is the SOP Completion Rate, which measures the percentage of priority workflows that have been documented and reviewed; the target is full coverage of targeted processes by Month 3. The Task Tracking Adoption Rate will monitor how many staff members consistently use the shared task board, with a goal of reaching 85% active participation by Month 4.

In addition, Ikhwezi will assess the Task Completion Rate—specifically, the proportion of assigned tasks completed on time through the tracking system—with a target of 90% by Month 5. Role Clarity and Staffing Alignment will be tracked by ensuring all staff have updated job descriptions and reporting lines, aiming for 100% alignment by Month 4. The Dashboard Usage Frequency will capture how often the operational dashboard is reviewed and updated, with at least one review per month starting in Month 5. Finally,

Escalation Protocol Adoption will evaluate whether team members are trained and actively applying handover and escalation procedures, targeting 100% implementation by Month 6. Monitoring these indicators will allow Ikhwezi to identify areas of resistance, refine its operational systems, and showcase its growing maturity to funders and strategic partners.

**Creating
Value
Together**

4.9 Risks Measures

Introducing new operational systems within an early-stage business like Ikhwezi involves inherent risks tied to staff uptake, consistency, and sustained usage. Given Ikhwezi's current operating context—characterized by informal coordination and lean staffing—these risks require tailored mitigation strategies to ensure successful implementation. One key challenge is resistance to SOP adoption, where team members may view standardized procedures as overly rigid or unnecessary. To address this, staff should be involved in the co-design of SOPs, supported by the use of visual aids and flowcharts, with walkthrough sessions that demonstrate their practical value. Another risk is inconsistent use of task tracking tools, as staff may default to familiar methods like verbal updates or WhatsApp coordination. Mitigation involves embedding task boards into daily and weekly routines, and appointing task board champions to promote consistent use.

As Ikhwezi expands its team, role confusion may arise, leading to duplicated efforts or overlooked responsibilities. This can be mitigated by regularly publishing job descriptions, updating the HR structure quarterly, and aligning SOPs to clearly defined roles. Additionally, there is a risk that performance dashboards may be underutilized, with data not being reviewed or used to inform decisions. To prevent this, dashboard reviews should be tied to monthly check-ins and KPI reporting, with an operations lead assigned to maintain and update the dashboard regularly. Lastly, staff may neglect to follow escalation protocols, defaulting to informal problem-solving or reacting too late. This can be countered by incorporating escalation procedures into SOPs and induction materials, and using brief role-play scenarios to reinforce appropriate response behavior. By proactively addressing these risks, Ikhwezi can ensure that its operational systems are not only implemented effectively but also become embedded in the organization's culture, supporting long-term growth and efficiency.

Creating Value Together

4.10 Sustainability

Sustaining operational improvements at Ikhwezi requires embedding new systems into everyday routines, assigning clear ownership, and creating feedback loops that promote continuous refinement. The goal is to ensure that documented workflows, tracking tools, and performance dashboards remain active beyond the initial implementation phase and evolve with the organization's growth.

The first element of sustainability is routine integration. SOPs should be stored in a shared digital folder and referenced during onboarding, troubleshooting, or performance reviews. Task tracking platforms must be positioned as daily workspaces—checked at the start of each day, updated before check-ins, and reviewed during team meetings. Linking use of these systems to internal rhythms ensures they are not treated as standalone tools.

The second element is role-based accountability. A designated operations lead (or founder initially) should take responsibility for updating SOPs, managing task board configurations, and maintaining dashboard data. This role ensures continuity and enables system updates without full re-training.

The third is capacity for adaptation. All templates—whether for tasks, KPIs, or SOPs—should be version-controlled and reviewed quarterly. Feedback from staff should guide refinements to workflows, metrics, or escalation procedures. This approach reinforces internal ownership and relevance.

By grounding its systems in everyday use and internal accountability, Ikhwezi ensures that operational maturity becomes a habit—not a one-time exercise.

Creating Value Together

SECTION5
Market Position

info@ikhwezi.co.za

5.1 Introduction

This section addresses Ikhwezi's market positioning and outlines interventions to strengthen its commercial engagement, customer tracking, and visibility. The 2025 As-Is Analysis revealed early signs of market traction—most notably the offtake relationship with Woolworths and a strong social impact narrative—but also highlighted critical gaps in segmentation, go-to-market (GTM) planning, CRM usage, and brand consistency. Currently, marketing and sales efforts remain informal, founder-led, and largely undocumented.

Ikhwezi operates in a competitive value chain that demands clarity of offering, consistency in communication, and the ability to demonstrate reliability to institutional buyers. Without formal customer segmentation, structured outreach, or digital engagement systems, the business risks underleveraging its strongest asset: social credibility anchored in rural inclusion and traceable production. Strengthening its commercial infrastructure is therefore essential—not only to attract and retain customers but also to convert visibility into repeat revenue and funder interest.

This chapter proposes targeted interventions that formalize Ikhwezi's customer engagement and brand management strategy. These include deploying a CRM system, defining target customer segments, designing a structured GTM strategy, launching a basic digital presence, and creating brand guidelines for internal and external communication. Each intervention is grounded in verifiable gaps and sequenced for implementation alongside digital and operational upgrades.

The aim is to shift Ikhwezi from reactive sales efforts to a structured, data-enabled commercial model that supports sustainable revenue growth, enhances customer retention, and increases eligibility for formal procurement and grant opportunities. Where possible, Microsoft-compatible platforms will be used to maximize alignment with broader infrastructure plans.

Creating Value Together

5.2 Intervention Details

To transform its market positioning from a narrative-driven presence to a structured commercial strategy, Ikhwezi will implement five key interventions. These are designed to formalize customer engagement, clarify targeting, and improve brand consistency. Each builds on evidence from the As-Is Analysis, which noted strong market intent but limited tools or documentation to support execution.

- CRM System for Relationship Management: Ikhwezi will deploy a cloud-based CRM platform—such as Zoho CRM or Microsoft Dynamics 365—to manage partner engagement, track outreach, and centralize customer data. The system will log key contacts, communication history, and deal stages, ensuring that customer relationships are sustained beyond individual staff memory.
- Customer Segmentation Framework: A practical segmentation model will be developed based on customer type (e.g., retail, wholesale, institutional), geographic reach, purchase frequency, and potential volume. This will enable Ikhwezi to tailor communications, prioritize engagement, and allocate marketing resources more effectively.
- Go-To-Market (GTM) Strategy Design;A basic GTM plan will be created, outlining value propositions per customer segment, outreach channels (digital, in-person, partnership), and follow-up schedules. The GTM strategy will include lead nurturing tactics, pitch materials, and a simple conversion funnel.
- Brand Identity Toolkit; To improve professionalism and consistency, Ikhwezi will develop a brand style guide covering logo usage, color palette, tone of voice, and basic templates for proposals and presentations. This ensures coherent messaging across platforms and audiences.
- Launch of a Basic Digital Presence; khwezi will launch a simple landing page or one-page website showcasing its value proposition, core offerings, certifications, and contact form. This supports credibility and lead capture.

Together, these interventions establish a structured, scalable commercial presence that reflects Ikhwezi's strategic intent.

Creating Value Together

5.3 Priority Justification

The following commercial interventions have been prioritized based on their potential to immediately enhance Ikhwezi's market credibility, improve customer engagement, and align with the digital systems outlined in earlier phases. The focus is on foundational tools that support structured sales execution while fostering brand trust and visibility. At the top of the priority list is the deployment of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is essential for managing structured customer interactions. A CRM centralizes communication history, facilitates follow-ups, and enables data-driven decision-making. As Ikhwezi continues to expand its network of off-takers and partners, the CRM will be critical in maintaining relationship quality while scaling operations.

Equally important is the development of a Go-To-Market (GTM) strategy, which ensures that customer outreach efforts are focused, consistent, and aligned with Ikhwezi's delivery capabilities. The GTM plan will guide lead generation, nurturing, and the conversion of interest into formal agreements. Supporting these high-priority interventions are medium-priority steps, such as the creation of a customer segmentation framework. This framework enables Ikhwezi to tailor communication and prioritize high-value prospects, though its effectiveness is optimized once CRM and GTM systems are operational. Additionally, the development of a brand identity toolkit will reinforce trust with buyers and funders, supporting all external-facing communication. Finally, establishing a basic digital presence through a website will boost visibility and accessibility, but it should follow branding and segmentation efforts to ensure consistent messaging. This sequenced approach ensures that Ikhwezi builds a robust and actionable commercial infrastructure grounded in real-world engagement and strategic alignment.

Creating Value Together

5.4 Budget Estimation

The budget estimates for market positioning interventions are based on current pricing for CRM platforms, digital marketing services, segmentation consulting, and feedback system setup in the South African SME context. The focus is on scalable tools that integrate with the mobile app and e-commerce backend.

Intervention	Estimated Cost Range
CRM System (license + implementation)	R40,000
Segmentation Framework Development	R15,000
Go-To-Market Strategy Design & Activation	R30,000
Feedback System (NPS, forms, analysis)	R12,000
Branding & Communication Assets	R25,000
Total Estimated Range	R122,000

Table 2: Financial Systems Assessment

Creating Value Together

5.5 Budget Justification

The score for this Domain was obtained by scoring the top five priorities of this domain and adding up their scores. This Domain has a 0.25 weighting (out of 1.0) towards total company score.

R40K

CRM Deployment

Justification: Covers licensing, setup, and training for a CRM to manage customer interactions.

R30K

Structured Sales Funnel

Justification: Funds a GTM strategy with segment-specific propositions and lead nurturing.

R15K

Customer Segmentation

Justification: Supports segmentation model development based on customer type and volume.

R12K

Customer Feedback Mechanisms

Justification: Covers setup of a feedback system for NPS and customer insights.

R25K

Multi-Channel Messaging Framework

Justification: Includes logo refinement, color palette, and templates for branding.

Domain Budget = R122K

5.6 Return on Investment

The return on investment (ROI) for Ikhwezi's market positioning interventions will be realized through improved lead conversion, strengthened brand trust, and more structured partner engagement. By developing internal systems and tools for targeted outreach, Ikhwezi enhances its commercial performance while avoiding the need for expensive marketing campaigns. One key benefit will be improved lead conversion and retention through the deployment of a CRM system, which facilitates structured follow-up, reduces missed opportunities, and fosters stronger partner relationships. By tracking communication history and follow-up actions, Ikhwezi increases its chances of converting early conversations into long-term supply contracts.

Additionally, the development of a consistent brand identity and professional digital presence will enhance the organization's credibility among off-takers, grantmakers, and institutional partners. This is especially important for accessing formal supply chains and participating in public procurement processes. With customer segmentation and go-to-market strategies in place, Ikhwezi can also engage more efficiently by targeting high-potential buyers and crafting tailored messaging, thereby maximizing outreach effectiveness. Furthermore, CRM records, segmentation frameworks, and a public-facing landing page will offer tangible tools for funder engagement and reporting, showcasing the enterprise's commercial discipline and investment readiness. Importantly, all tools chosen are scalable, allowing Ikhwezi to grow into more advanced marketing, customer analytics, and partner engagement platforms over time. Collectively, these interventions establish a commercial backbone that promotes revenue stability, builds partner confidence, and enhances institutional reputation, all while maintaining a modest initial cost.

Creating Value Together

5.7 Implementation Timeline

Ikhwezi's market positioning interventions will be phased over a six-month period, allowing adequate time for internal alignment, tool configuration, and content development. Early efforts focus on systems and messaging, followed by outreach tools and digital visibility. This timeline is sequenced to complement operational and IT improvements occurring in parallel.

Month 1–2

- Select CRM platform and initiate setup (contact fields, lead stages, user accounts)
- Begin segmentation framework development based on current customer base and planned expansion
- Draft value propositions and outline GTM strategy components
- Conduct internal workshop to validate customer personas and messaging tone

Month 3–4

- Finalize CRM deployment and train staff on daily use and reporting functions
- Complete segmentation model and embed into CRM tagging logic
- Develop full GTM strategy, including engagement calendar and lead nurturing tactics
- Begin brand identity toolkit design: logo, color palette, document templates

Month 5–6

- Launch brand toolkit internally and revise existing materials for consistency
- Finalize and publish basic landing page or one-page website
- Monitor CRM usage and outreach effectiveness; refine segmentation or GTM plan as needed
- Conduct internal review of all commercial tools and prepare funder-ready engagement materials

Creating Value Together

22

5.8 Monitoring Indicators

To measure the effectiveness and sustained adoption of its market positioning interventions, Ikhwezi will monitor a set of targeted indicators that assess CRM utilization, outreach consistency, brand visibility, and stakeholder engagement. These metrics will be reviewed monthly and integrated into the broader KPI reporting cycles established in earlier phases. The CRM Adoption Rate will track the percentage of team members actively using the system for updating contacts and managing follow-ups, with a target of reaching 80% of intended users by Month 4. Lead Conversion Tracking will evaluate the proportion of contacts progressing through predefined sales stages in the CRM, aiming for a fully implemented conversion funnel by Month 5 and at least 25% of leads advancing to the negotiation phase.

Additionally, Segment-Based Messaging Usage will be monitored by counting the number of outreach campaigns or proposals tailored to specific customer segments, with a goal of executing at least one customized communication per segment by Month 6. The Brand Toolkit Usage indicator will ensure brand consistency, targeting 100% alignment of all proposals and pitch materials with approved brand guidelines by Month 6. To assess online visibility, Digital Presence Metrics will track the number of unique website visitors and inquiries, with a target of at least 50 visits per month and visible contact form activity by Month 6. Lastly, the GTM Calendar Execution metric will measure adherence to scheduled outreach activities, aiming for 90% completion of the planned go-to-market actions for quarters two and three. Together, these indicators confirm that Ikhwezi's tools are not only in place but actively embedded into day-to-day commercial operations—ensuring consistency, driving lead conversion, and building long-term brand equity.

Creating
Value
Together

5.8 Monitoring Indicators

To measure the effectiveness and sustained adoption of its market positioning interventions, Ikhwezi will monitor a set of targeted indicators that assess CRM utilization, outreach consistency, brand visibility, and stakeholder engagement. These metrics will be reviewed monthly and integrated into the broader KPI reporting cycles established in earlier phases. The CRM Adoption Rate will track the percentage of team members actively using the system for updating contacts and managing follow-ups, with a target of reaching 80% of intended users by Month 4. Lead Conversion Tracking will evaluate the proportion of contacts progressing through predefined sales stages in the CRM, aiming for a fully implemented conversion funnel by Month 5 and at least 25% of leads advancing to the negotiation phase.

Additionally, Segment-Based Messaging Usage will be monitored by counting the number of outreach campaigns or proposals tailored to specific customer segments, with a goal of executing at least one customized communication per segment by Month 6. The Brand Toolkit Usage indicator will ensure brand consistency, targeting 100% alignment of all proposals and pitch materials with approved brand guidelines by Month 6. To assess online visibility, Digital Presence Metrics will track the number of unique website visitors and inquiries, with a target of at least 50 visits per month and visible contact form activity by Month 6. Lastly, the GTM Calendar Execution metric will measure adherence to scheduled outreach activities, aiming for 90% completion of the planned go-to-market actions for quarters two and three. Together, these indicators confirm that Ikhwezi's tools are not only in place but actively embedded into day-to-day commercial operations—ensuring consistency, driving lead conversion, and building long-term brand equity..

Creating Value Together

5.9 Risks Measures

The introduction of new commercial tools and practices at Ikhwezi may face challenges related to staff adoption and consistent execution. To ensure that these interventions lead to tangible improvements in market performance, a series of risks and corresponding mitigation strategies have been identified. One major risk is low CRM adoption, where team members may default to manual recordkeeping or avoid using the system altogether. To address this, Ikhwezi will provide role-specific CRM training, appoint a CRM champion, and tie usage to performance evaluations. Daily outreach routines will also include embedded CRM tasks to normalize system use. Another potential issue is weak customer segmentation or data inaccuracy, which could reduce the effectiveness of tailored messaging. This will be mitigated by starting with basic customer categories and refining them over time based on actual interactions logged in the CRM, with quarterly reviews to improve segmentation quality.

Inconsistent application of brand guidelines presents another risk, as teams may continue to use outdated logos, fonts, or messaging that does not align with the refreshed brand identity. To prevent this, templates will be stored in a centralized shared folder, staff will be trained on proper use, and brand compliance will be included in performance review processes. Additionally, there is a risk that the go-to-market (GTM) strategy may be documented but not implemented. Ikhwezi will mitigate this by tying GTM milestones to CRM calendar reminders, reviewing progress during monthly meetings, and assigning specific outreach tasks in the task tracker. Finally, the risk of a neglected digital presence will be addressed by assigning a quarterly content update schedule, using low-maintenance web platforms, and monitoring form submissions and inquiries monthly. These mitigation strategies will help ensure that Ikhwezi's market positioning reforms are consistently applied, stay relevant, and effectively support customer acquisition and long-term commercial credibility.

Creating Value Together

5.10 Sustainability

Ensuring the long-term sustainability of Ikhwezi's market positioning efforts requires that tools and systems introduced—such as the CRM, segmentation framework, GTM strategy, and brand assets—are embedded into daily operations, regularly updated, and owned internally. These interventions must evolve from one-time projects into ongoing business functions that support customer engagement and revenue growth.

The first pillar of sustainability is integration into team routines. The CRM should serve as the default tool for all customer and partner communications. Outreach activities from the GTM calendar must be entered and tracked within the CRM or task board, and performance metrics tied to conversion rates should be reviewed during monthly commercial meetings.

Second, branding governance must be maintained. Ikhwezi's brand identity toolkit—including templates and messaging guidelines—should be centrally stored and updated annually to reflect new services, success stories, or stakeholder requirements. All external documents should be reviewed for compliance with the brand standard before distribution.

Third, a dedicated internal custodian should be assigned responsibility for maintaining the CRM database, updating the segmentation logic, and coordinating GTM rollout. This role ensures that systems are consistently used and refined over time. It can be held by the operations or business development lead, depending on internal capacity.

Lastly, lightweight review cycles should be implemented. Quarterly checks on CRM usage, brand alignment, and website traffic ensure the tools remain active and relevant. These reviews also offer an opportunity to refresh materials and adapt engagement strategies based on evolving customer insights.

Creating Value Together

SECTION 6
Governance

info@ikhwezi.co.za

6.1 Introduction

This section addresses Ikhwezi's governance and compliance environment, with a focus on formalizing oversight mechanisms, managing institutional risk, and building credibility with funders and partners. The 2025 As-Is Analysis confirmed that Ikhwezi holds valid legal registrations and sectoral licenses, such as its CIPC registration and water license, but lacks structured governance systems, board protocols, compliance documentation, and risk management frameworks.

Currently, the organization operates with informal governance practices. There is no documented board of directors, no internal policies covering data protection, procurement, or ethics, and no formal risk register. These gaps pose potential barriers to external funding and limit Ikhwezi's ability to participate in public procurement or large-scale partnerships. In addition, without a clear governance framework, internal accountability, role-based decision-making, and escalation procedures remain unclear.

This chapter outlines interventions that institutionalize governance at a level appropriate to Ikhwezi's current size and growth ambitions. The proposed reforms include the formation of a governance advisory board, finalization of core policy documents, creation of a risk register and mitigation matrix, establishment of basic compliance monitoring tools, and documentation of a delegation of authority framework.

The aim is not to over-engineer compliance but to build lightweight structures that demonstrate maturity, reduce risk exposure, and satisfy investor due diligence standards. Where feasible, templates and frameworks will be adapted from SME-friendly toolkits and customized to Ikhwezi's operating model. These interventions will lay the foundation for ethical leadership, internal control, and long-term institutional resilience.

Creating Value Together

6.2 Intervention Details

To strengthen governance and compliance, Ikhwezi will implement five targeted interventions that institutionalize oversight, manage risk, and align with funder expectations. These reforms are tailored to Ikhwezi's current scale and level of readiness, ensuring practical adoption and signaling maturity to potential partners and investors. The first intervention involves forming a Governance Advisory Board made up of internal leaders and 2–3 external advisors with expertise in agribusiness, finance, or rural development. Although not a statutory board, this advisory body will operate under a simple charter to offer strategic direction and demonstrate institutional maturity.

The second intervention focuses on finalizing and disseminating core governance policies, such as procurement protocols, data protection, conflict of interest, and HR conduct. These policies will be adapted from SME toolkits, simplified for accessibility, and acknowledged by staff through signed compliance forms. The third component is the creation of a risk register and mitigation matrix, which identifies key risks across operations, finance, compliance, and reputation. Each risk will be scored, assigned an owner, and paired with mitigation measures, with quarterly reviews conducted by the governance lead or advisory board. Fourth, Ikhwezi will introduce compliance monitoring templates—simple tools like checklists, reporting logs, and escalation forms—to track adherence to policies and regulatory requirements. Finally, a Delegation of Authority Matrix will clarify who is authorized to make decisions on spending, contracts, and HR matters, thereby enhancing accountability. Collectively, these actions establish a robust, funder-aligned governance framework for Ikhwezi's sustained growth and credibility.

"

**Creating
Value
Together**

6.3 Priority Justification

The governance interventions have been prioritized according to their potential to enhance institutional credibility, ensure compliance, and strengthen risk management. Each action specifically targets a capability gap identified in the As-Is Analysis and contributes toward meeting funder due diligence requirements. High-priority initiatives include the formation of a Governance Advisory Board and the finalization of core policies. Establishing the advisory board early provides a visible sign of maturity, encourages disciplined decision-making, and instills strategic oversight at minimal cost. This intervention also reinforces ethical leadership and boosts investor confidence. Likewise, core policies—covering areas such as procurement, HR conduct, and data protection—are essential to demonstrate compliance with legal, procurement, and donor frameworks. These policies not only form the ethical and legal foundation of operations but also act as training and reference tools for staff.

Medium-priority interventions include the development of a risk register and mitigation matrix, the creation of a Delegation of Authority Matrix, and the introduction of compliance monitoring templates. The risk register enables Ikhwezi to systematically identify and manage operational, financial, and reputational risks. However, its effectiveness depends on prior policy finalization and board oversight, which is why it is sequenced later. The Delegation of Authority Matrix helps establish clear decision-making boundaries for expenditures, contracts, and staffing—an essential step for accountability and agility, but best introduced after team structures and roles are clarified. Lastly, compliance templates such as audit logs and issue escalation forms support the consistent enforcement of policies but are most effective once governance structures are in place. This phased approach ensures that Ikhwezi installs essential oversight mechanisms early on, with supporting tools rolled out in alignment with organizational capacity and readiness.

Creating Value Together

6.4 Budget Estimation

The budget estimates for governance interventions are based on prevailing consulting rates, facilitation services, and SME governance support tools in South Africa. The focus is on lean, one-time setup of oversight structures, policy institutionalization, and basic risk/compliance systems that internal teams can maintain thereafter. The budget that we propose for this Domain is R48,000 – R76,000 broken down as follows:

Intervention	Estimated Cost Range
Establish Governance Committee	R18,000
Finalize and Circulate Organizational Policies	R25,000
Develop Risk Management Framework	R15,000
Implement Compliance Monitoring System	R10,000
Create Governance Charter	R8,000
Total (Governance Domain)	R76,000

Table 2: Financial Systems Assessment

Creating Value Together

6.5 Budget Justification

The score for this Domain was obtained by scoring the top five priorities of this domain and adding up their scores. This Domain has a 0.25 weighting (out of 1.0) towards total company score.

Establish Advisory Board

R18K

Justification: Covers board recruitment, charter development, and advisor onboarding.

Finalize Organizational Policies

R25K

Justification: Funds customization and rollout of procurement and ethics policies.

Develop Risk Register

R15K

Justification: Covers a scored risk register and mitigation workshops.

Implement Compliance Monitoring

R10K

Justification: Includes compliance checklists and reporting logs for enforcement.

Create Governance Charter

R8K

Justification: Supports a governance charter defining board roles and cadence.

Domain Budget =R76K

6.6 Return on Investment

Governance and compliance interventions yield significant indirect returns by bolstering Ikhwezi's institutional credibility, minimizing operational risk, and enhancing access to external funding. These systems not only build internal discipline and transparency but also position Ikhwezi as a reliable, investment-ready organization. One major benefit is improved funder and partner confidence. The establishment of an advisory board, the adoption of formal policies, and the implementation of a risk register collectively demonstrate professional oversight, which is critical for passing due diligence assessments. This credibility can unlock opportunities for grants, blended finance, or supplier agreements that require adherence to governance standards.

Additionally, these interventions help reduce institutional risk exposure. A well-maintained risk register allows the business to proactively address operational, financial, or reputational threats, minimizing downtime, legal risks, and unforeseen expenses. Internal decision-making is also strengthened through the delegation of authority matrix, which defines clear approval pathways for spending, staffing, and contracts—reducing confusion, curbing overreach, and enabling efficient yet accountable decisions. Compliance with regulatory and sector standards is further ensured through well-drafted policies in procurement, ethics, and HR, aligning Ikhwezi with agricultural industry expectations and donor requirements. Lastly, the documentation of procedures and use of compliance logs preserve institutional knowledge, ensuring continuity during leadership changes and supporting long-term planning. Collectively, these benefits far exceed the modest cost of implementation and provide a strong foundation for sustainable growth and operational resilience.

**Creating
Value
Together**

6.7 Implementation Timeline

Governance and compliance interventions at Ikhwezi will be rolled out over a six-month period to ensure adequate time for consultation, adoption, and integration with existing organizational systems. The implementation will follow a phased approach, beginning with foundational governance structures and progressing to risk and compliance tools. During Months 1 and 2, the focus will be on establishing the Governance Advisory Board by identifying and confirming 2–3 external advisors, developing a simple governance charter outlining board responsibilities, and conducting board induction sessions. An internal governance lead will also be appointed. Simultaneously, existing policy templates will be reviewed and customized to suit Ikhwezi's operational context.

In Months 3 and 4, core governance policies—covering procurement, ethics, HR conduct, and data protection—will be finalized and formally adopted. Staff will be introduced to these policies through internal sessions, and signed acknowledgments will be collected to confirm compliance. The delegation of authority matrix will be drafted in line with the updated organizational structure, and the development of a risk register and mitigation matrix will begin through a facilitated workshop. By Months 5 and 6, the risk register will be completed, with each risk scored and assigned to a responsible individual. Lightweight compliance monitoring tools such as reporting logs and audit checklists will be introduced, and quarterly compliance reviews will be scheduled. The process will conclude with a summary review of all governance tools and the preparation of a governance report for internal reference or funder submission. This timeline ensures that governance reforms are not only implemented but also tested and embedded within Ikhwezi's operational and financial systems, with clear accountability and documented outcomes.

**Creating
Value
Together**

6.8 Monitoring Indicators

To evaluate the effectiveness and institutionalization of its governance and compliance reforms, Ikhwezi will monitor a core set of indicators focused on board functionality, policy adoption, risk oversight, and overall compliance discipline. These indicators will be reviewed quarterly by the internal governance lead and, where relevant, shared with partners or funders to demonstrate progress. One key metric is

- **Advisory Board Functionality-** which tracks the number of governance meetings held each quarter, with the target of at least one advisory session per quarter starting from Month 3, supported by recorded meeting minutes.

- **Policy Acknowledgement Rate-** measures the percentage of staff who have signed and received the core policy documents, with a goal of 100% compliance by Month 4.

- **Risk Register Coverage-** assesses the proportion of identified strategic and operational risks that have been scored and assigned appropriate mitigation actions, aiming for 100% coverage of initial risks by Month 5 and ongoing quarterly updates thereafter.

- **Delegation of Authority Implementation-** will monitor the extent to which procurement and staffing decisions follow the established approval matrix, targeting 90% compliance by Month 6.

- **Compliance Log Utilization-** will track the frequency of internal compliance checks submitted to the governance lead, with monthly reports expected from Month 5 and one full quarterly summary by Month 6.

- **Governance Documentation Readiness-** will ensure that all governance records—including meeting minutes, policy versions, risk logs, and compliance forms—are stored digitally and maintained in an audit-ready format by Month 6.

Collectively, these indicators will reinforce institutional accountability and confirm that reforms are not only implemented but actively enforced and contributing to Ikhwezi's operational maturity.

Creating Value Together

22

6.9 Risks Measures

The governance reforms introduced at Ikhwezi bring new structures and operational routines that may encounter resistance or delays during implementation. To ensure smooth rollout and sustained compliance, several potential risks and corresponding mitigation strategies have been identified. One key concern is that governance may be perceived as bureaucratic or unnecessary by the team. To address this, Ikhwezi will emphasize the strategic value of compliance in securing funding, enhancing credibility, and managing risk, while also using simplified tools and relatable examples to build staff buy-in. Another risk is advisory board inactivity, where external advisors may lose interest or fail to attend scheduled meetings. To mitigate this, the board size will be kept small for efficiency, meetings will be scheduled quarterly in advance, and a board coordinator will be appointed to maintain engagement and manage agendas.

Staff non-compliance with policies is another risk, particularly where policies are acknowledged but not integrated into daily operations. Mitigation measures include embedding policies into standard operating procedures (SOPs), providing refresher training sessions, and using checklists and role-based responsibilities to enforce adherence. Additionally, there is a risk that the risk register may become static, with risks identified initially but not updated or acted upon. To prevent this, Ikhwezi will hold quarterly risk review sessions, assign specific mitigation responsibilities, and link updates to leadership or board meetings. Lastly, there is a chance that the Delegation of Authority Matrix may not be followed in practice, with staff reverting to informal decision-making. To counter this, delegation thresholds will be incorporated into financial, HR, and procurement SOPs, and transaction reviewers will be appointed to ensure compliance. By proactively managing these risks, Ikhwezi can embed its governance reforms as a practical, respected, and sustainable system that supports organizational growth.

Creating Value Together

22

6.10 Sustainability

Sustaining governance and compliance reforms at Ikhwezi requires embedding structures into organizational culture, assigning internal ownership, and maintaining light but disciplined review cycles. Governance should not be treated as a one-time project but as a recurring business function that evolves with the enterprise.

The first sustainability lever is the ongoing functionality of the advisory board. This body must meet regularly, with minutes recorded, and serve a real purpose—such as reviewing risk exposure, guiding strategy, or vetting funding proposals. A designated internal liaison should prepare agendas, distribute materials, and follow up on board action items. This cadence ensures the board remains relevant and not symbolic.

Second, policies must be kept alive through usage. Policies should be stored digitally and made accessible to all staff. As new team members are onboarded, they must receive orientation and sign acknowledgment forms. During quarterly reviews, any gaps in compliance should trigger a policy refresher or adjustment, reinforcing internal accountability.

Third, the risk register and compliance tools must be maintained as working documents. Risk scoring should occur quarterly, ideally led by the governance officer or operations lead. New risks—such as scaling logistics or data privacy—should be documented as they emerge. Compliance logs should be reviewed as part of management reporting, not in isolation.

Finally, delegation of authority must be institutionalized within operational systems. This includes SOPs, procurement templates, and approval forms. Clearly linking daily actions to governance structures ensures adoption without added burden.

These practices will ensure that governance at Ikhwezi becomes an enabler of responsible growth building credibility, resilience, and long-term value as the organization scales.

Creating Value Together

SECTION 7
Conclusion

7. Conclusion

This Growth Plan provides Ikhwezi with a structured, evidence-based roadmap to address key institutional gaps and position the enterprise for scale, sustainability, and investment readiness. Grounded in the findings of the 2025 As-Is Analysis, the plan outlines targeted interventions across five strategic domains—Financial Position, IT Infrastructure, Operational Capacity, Market Position, and Governance & Compliance. Each intervention has been prioritized, costed, and sequenced to ensure feasibility within Ikhwezi's current capacity and alignment with its long-term vision.

The plan begins by stabilizing the organization through budget discipline, documented workflows, basic digital tools, and improved team coordination. It then expands toward market-facing infrastructure—formalizing customer engagement, branding, and digital presence. Parallel governance and compliance reforms embed accountability, ethical oversight, and institutional maturity, ensuring that internal systems support not hinder external credibility and funder engagement.

A total implementation budget of R387,000 to R579,000 is proposed, distributed across once-off setup costs and light advisory support. Interventions have been intentionally designed for operational absorption, with all tools selected to be affordable, cloud-based, and manageable by internal leads after onboarding.

Quarterly monitoring of KPIs and milestone indicators will ensure delivery momentum and allow for timely adjustments. This adaptive structure ensures that Ikhwezi does not merely install systems, but operationalizes them—linking internal process discipline with external growth opportunities.

As Ikhwezi moves forward, leadership commitment, timely execution, and performance monitoring will be critical. With this plan, the organization is positioned to transition from a promising early-stage venture into a reliable, fundable, and scalable agri-enterprise serving inclusive markets across the Eastern Cape and beyond.

**Creating
Value
Together**