



ON THE GROW PROFILE REPORT

www.onthegrownamibia.com





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WHO ARE WE?

On The Grow is a youth professional development training program with the mission to empower Namibian youth through professional skills development training. We use a self-designed, short curriculum which addresses the areas of public speaking, leadership, interview skills, professional opportunity identification & creation, meaningful social network building and design thinking. On The Grow insists on programming for young people, by young people.

The work of On The Grow is informed by the Namibian reality of the following:

- 1) lack of emphasis on the importance of professional and career development interpersonal skills in the national curriculum;
- 2) perpetual fear of professional inadequacy.

Objectives:

- to provide the Namibian youth with foundational professional skills to advance in the working world;
- to teach the invaluable skill of identifying and creating professional opportunities in an individual capacity;
 - to bridge the gap between formal education and self-induced creation of employment opportunities;
- to produce young people who are confident in their ability to manifest the value of their formal or informal education;
- to emphasize the importance of crucial skills; including but not limited to public speaking, leadership, interview skills, professional opportunity identification and creation, design thinking and meaningful social network building.



MEET BERTHA



I have been the scholarship kid all my life, with nothing but a smart mouth and a keen and teachable mind to vouch for me. I know that had it not been for the intentional efforts of the people who believed in me, life would not have spared me the brutal realities of poverty that have plagued people like me. Access to quality opportunity continues to insulate me. It is my tremendous gratitude for the transformative access I have experienced, that has implored me to use all the resources at my disposal to usher in the same reality for all other brilliant young people in Namibia.

My conceptualization of On The Grow stems from an intimate understanding of the power of taking initiative. In a world that increasingly places value on interpersonal competence, it ought to be at the top of all our priority lists to teach skills that reverberate beyond the walls of the lecture halls. We need young people to innovate sustainably and dare greatly. As such, On The Grow seeks to make active efforts to ignite young people to take charge of their professional future.

My hope for young people is the cultivation of a can-do attitude. The truth is that like most organizations with the aim to disrupt, our execution strategy is likely to change. What will not change, however, is our relentless mission to ignite hope, innovation and proactivity in the hearts and minds of young Namibians. Here at On The Grow, for as long as we have breath and capacity, our commitment to young Namibians, and Africans at large, is unwavering.

I am incredibly excited for On the Grow to expand beyond my initial conceptualization and to take on wings of its own.

Until then, our heads are down and we will be found in the arena, doing the work.

Best,

BT



MEET THRIVE



My life has been driven by an innate desire to create platforms and opportunities. Growing up, I attended high-performing and predominantly white schools. While these schools gave me certain privileges and opportunities to grow myself as an individual, they, by the nature of being predominantly white, secluded certain opportunities and platforms. Those experiences prompted me to create. From writing and self-publishing a book, to owning and running a tutorial business to coordinating and leading projects for feminist organizations, the desire to create is always the driving force.

The mission of On The Grow empowers young people with a skill set that I wish I had when I was younger. I was thrown in the deep end of the biggest student platform in the country and had to teach myself how to navigate and find ways to create meaningful impact.

This combination of my desire to create, coupled with my own professional struggles as a young person, intensified my mission to create a platform where young people could be taught how to navigate the professional world. In my search for support to execute this mission, I had discovered that another ambitious young person had identified the same need and had already begun the work. We combined our efforts to birth On The Grow and hosted our first seminar in July of 2021.

The heart of On The Grow is to capacitate young Namibians, to give them the opportunity to harness and broaden their professional skills.

This platform facilitates personal, intentional improvement, for the ultimate aim of sustainable and impactful innovation in Namibia, Africa and beyond.

As On The Grow expands and outgrows our conceptualization, its essential spirit of inspiring innovation remains.

I am immensely proud of what Bertha and I have been able to accomplish with nothing but our notebooks, phones and audacity and I look forward to the future of On The Grow as it stretches in community, resources and, most importantly, impact.

Here we are, young people rising.
Thrive Vinomaandero Mahua



2021 INDUSTRY EXPERTS

At On The Grow, we have identified a particular skill set, public speaking, leadership, network building, opportunity identification and interviewing, that we believe is crucial to professional success. This skill set remains severely undeveloped. Before our founding seminar in 2021, there had been minimal targeted programming encompassing the entire skill set.

Against this backdrop, we identified industry experts with valuable insight to share with our eager and driven participants. Hereby, our participants were provided with the opportunity to engage with and learn from the cream of the national crop. We share our industry expert profiles and key learnings in this section.



Pombili Shilongo – Public Speaking

Pombili is a well-known, renowned broadcaster, MC and TV host. Pombili, with over a decade long prosperous career, has hosted the Namibian National Music Awards (NAMAS), and has worked as a presenter for the National Broadcasting Channel on the popular television show, Whatagwan. Pombili remains one of the most recognizable faces in the Namibian entertainment industry.

Key Learnings

Pombili encouraged participants to find their niche, master it and pursue their ambitions relentlessly. She noted that the passions of individuals may differ but with dedication and commitment, anyone can thrive in whatever field they have chosen for themselves.

In terms of public speaking and the media industry, she emphasised that the participants should create the kinds of platforms that they want to see with what they have at the present moment. She encouraged them to take initiative and create impact through social media platforms and beyond. She noted that it is only through commitment and discipline that she was able to create her profile.



2021 INDUSTRY EXPERTS



Ester Kali – Leadership

Ester Kali is a well-established and seasoned banker in Namibia with a career in banking of over 30 years. She joined Letshego Holding Namibia as the Chief Executive Officer, the biggest micro finance institution in Namibia, towards the end of 2014. Under her leadership, the bank obtained a banking license from the bank of Namibia in 2016 and was listed on the Namibia Stock Exchange. In addition to being a mother and a career woman, Ester's personal and social responsibility is reflected in and supported by a project called Tukwafele, which means support. Ester has also served as the Chairperson of the Namibia Social Marketing Program (NASOMA), as well as the Chairperson of Ileni Tulongeni Fishing Investments (Pty) Ltd.

Ester holds a Financial Services Advanced Diploma as well as a Credit Diploma (Institute of Bankers South Africa). She also holds an MBA in Strategic Management (Maastricht School of Management). She holds an Honorary Doctorate from the University of South Africa (Financial Management).

Key Learnings

Kali's session was focused on establishing purpose and how to pursue and maximize capital from that purpose. She opened by asking participants to introspect on what the voice within them tells them and what it is that they wish to achieve in life. She states that establishing one's goals assists in creating a sense of direction for one's life.

She further encouraged participants to build self-discipline and that while establishing purpose gives one direction, it is discipline that allows for the successful manifestation of said purpose. Kali also told participants that nothing comes overnight and that success is best manifested step by step.



2021 INDUSTRY EXPERTS



Ndiilokelwa Nthengwe – Network Building

Ndiilo Nthengwe through their work, voice and actions serves as an advocate for marginalized groups in Namibia. Having served as an advocacy and communications officer for OutRight Namibia and communications associate for HCD Exchange Youth Leadership Hub, Ndiilo's relentless spirit for justice speaks for itself. Unknown to many, the fierce activist is a graduate of the AFDA School of Business Innovation and Computer Technology in Cape Town, where they obtained their bachelor of commerce in business innovation.

Working towards a better Namibia for sexual and gender minorities through human rights-based organization Out-Right Namibia, Ndiilo's work is of international impact in their previous capacity as the HERVoiceFund Ambassador under the Global Fund, which aims to include adolescent girls and young women in decision making platforms to advance and improve the quality of their lives.

Key Learnings

Ndiilo has, over the past few years, not only been able to build and sustain international networks, but they have also used these networks to create meaningful impact while pioneering policy intervention in the line of their advocacy.

Ndiilo shared their technical and principle insights at sustainable network building with our participants. They advise against "hot-wiring" networks to arrive at objectives as bypassing due process, will in the long run, negatively affect a good reputation, and thereby doing a disservice to one's talents. They centre integrity in their work and state that without it, nobody can trust you or your word. Ndiilo states that integrity transcends all other identity markers.



2021 INDUSTRY EXPERTS



Mavis Braga – Interview Skills

Mavis Braga Elias, a philanthropist at heart, is the Founder of EM Love Foundation, a Namibian charity initiative. She holds a bachelor degree in Civil Engineering attained from the Namibian University of Science and Technology (NUST). Mavis is also the co-founder of Ehaveco Events, an event organization group that focuses on organizing women empowerment functions and helping people and businesses realize the full potential of women. Having worked at Radiowave, Mavis is a seasoned master of ceremonies, and has hosted the Namibian Annual Music Awards, as well as other high-level events.

Mavis was awarded the vivid Philanthropist of the year in 2015 and represented Namibia in Washington DC as a researcher on the fight against Gender Based Violence. Most recently, Mavis has attained her Master's Degree through a Chevening Scholarship at the University of Namibia.

Key Learnings

Mavis, or as she likes to refer to herself 'Ms. Shoot Your Shot', possesses an admirable amount of audacity in everything she does. By consistently putting herself out there, she has attained impeccable interviewing skills.

During the On The Grow seminar Mavis shared practical skills on how to prepare for and ace an interview. Her presentation highlighted how to properly answer interview questions, frequently asked questions, how to make a lasting impression to interviewers and how to market yourself in an authentic way that makes you stand out from other candidates. Mavis encouraged participants to not be afraid to oversell themselves and to give every opportunity the best they possibly can by preparing themselves.



FOUNDING SEMINAR PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK



The COVID-19 pandemic impacted our capacity to operationalize our vision to its fullest extent. Nonetheless, we made the difficult decision to have our first seminar online, on the 18th and the 19th of June 2021. We insist on quality over quantity and, as such, our first seminar was an intentionally immersive training experience with 30 selected participants. We asked some of our participants about their experience with our founding seminar and this is what they had to say.

"Yes, they have, I now know more than I had and I've gained so much knowledge on the different topics we touched. All of which are a great deal in my life and will be using and needing to be the best version of myself in whatever I plan on doing from here forth."

"Yes, On The Grow was lowkey a wakeup call for me. I have so many talents and skills that I have been sleeping on. I have been putting myself in a shell in hopes not be noticed and not judged, however since Saturday I have made a decision to show up for myself and everything I do as whole, authentic and fully as I can."

"Personally, I am an outspoken person but there are areas where I fail myself due to low self-esteem. On the grow has somehow pinched my public speaking knowledge seeing my fellow youth present was a sparkle light that I can as well do it one day."



SUPPORT

The partnerships we have forged have facilitated our work, but they have also affirmed the need for and importance of creating a sustainable support base. In this section, we highlight and appreciate our sponsors and partners for their financial and other contributions. Their generosity has enabled us to offset our impact.

Go Make A Difference **Support offered: 1000 USD**

Go Make A Difference is a grant scheme that funds missions to transform problems into relevant solutions. This grant, which is only available to students from United World Colleges, was available to us as one of our founders is a graduate of a UWC!

Dinapama Manufacturing and Supplies **Support offered: 70 branded T-shirts**

Dinapama Manufacturing and Supplies is a 100% Namibian custom garment manufacturer, founded in 2009 and started with operations in 2010. With a staff compliment of about 387 of which 90% are women, with a potential to double when the market allows. The target audience of the company is corporate companies, public service, NGOs, schools and not limited to local and international brands.

The partnership between On The Grow and Dinapama Manufacturing and Supplies as well as Go Make a Difference centered the common goal of improving the lives of Namibians through skill based training.



CONNECT WITH US!

As we reflect on the importance of our work and its successes over the first seminar, we also look forward to creating more lasting and tangible impact in the lives of young Namibians and Africa at large. This will be manifested through fostering sustainable partnerships, the broadening of the services provided by the program and most importantly the audacity of the team to dream, create and impact.

We welcome collaborations, feedback and support. If you would like to get involved in the work to inspire youth innovation in Namibia and beyond, connect with us on Instagram, Twitter or email us!



onthegrownam



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