



TRANSLATE RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

Pulane Nkhabutlane (PhD)
National University of
Lesotho



SADC - Lesotho faces numerous economic and social challenges.

Serious challenges are:

1. High unemployment rate
2. Low industrial growth, and productivity
3. High levels of migration of skilled labour out of the region
4. High poverty rate
5. High Malnutrition rate
6. High level of disease



NUL MISSION STATEMENT

To advance human development and to respond to national and regional needs through **knowledge creation, dissemination and community engagement**, employing technologically innovative strategies. Staff and students of **NUL** shall demonstrate a commitment to: Client-centeredness.



RESEARCH INTO BUSINESS : RELEVANT EDUCATION



CEREALS and INDIGENOUS FRUITS FOUND IN LESOTHO

- Wheat



- Maize



- Sorghum



Pomegranate fruit



Prickle pear/ Cactus pear



Quince



Value addition

- i. Make more money
- ii. Improve physical & Chemical characteristics
- iii. Package benefits:
- iv. Food labelling



RESEARCH TURNED INTO BUSINESS

SANBIO-BIOFISA II provided seed funding to a consortium of southern African universities (NUL, UP & BUAN) to commercialise research based on healthy and SMA²RT snacks.

With this project those well researched portfolio of snack products finally had to opportunity to be commercialised.

HOWEVER,

“Too many universities jump on to the spin-off idea without the ability to necessarily produce good-quality businesses.

Consequently many are burnt when their spin-offs fail to take off or deliver any returns”

Glenn Crocker



1. Bureaucratic nature of institutions (the University)

With its policies and procedures wrapped in a one-size-fits-all model—can often be **hindrance** to startup businesses, they can create a series of **road blocks** that **hampers** their success.

Many processes require signatures:

- i. MOU between universities
- ii. MOU with entrepreneurs
- iii. Purchasing materials and equipment
- iv. Incubation space
- v. Financial matters
- vi. Behind schedule on expected deliverables



CHALLENGES Cont....

2. **External funding:** Completely relying on grants and sponsors. No guaranteed financing of businesses in the real world

3. **Lack of Entrepreneurial Skills:** There is considerable evidence that entrepreneurs should have entrepreneurial skills, technical skills, management experience, and an entrepreneurship background to develop their businesses

4. **Limited time:** The manager (Lecturer) is supposed to provide creativity innovation and marketing skills within the business yet:

- **Required to publish**
- **Required to teach**
- **And lacks business skills**

5. **Use of University Facilities:**



IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ???

- Who is supposed to benefit from royalties obtained i.e the institution or the research team?
- What does the institution say about who owns IP on the inventions created?

Many universities rush into startups before figuring out their policies regarding these matters



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is important that the **university have the IP policy** for innovations and R&D in order to protect the inventions.
2. be aware of the **bureaucratic obstacles** and learn to maneuver around them
3. Introduce **a programme** within the university curriculum that equips students with **entrepreneurship skills** from early stages of their education
4. Build **communication channels** and **establish partnerships** in multiple areas of stakeholders to bring in mentors and service providers, connect with investors to support your out-going start-ups.



- i. **Dr Makoala Marake** - Director Agribusiness Incubation center of the Faculty of Agriculture NUL
- ii. **Dr. Timothy Thamae** - Coordinator of NUL Science, Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- iii. **Dr. Mosotho George** - Chemical Analysis – Food Analysis
- iv. **Dr. Mpho Liphoto** - Crop Scientist
- v. **Mr. Henry Ababio** - Business and Enterprise specialist
- vi. **Mr. Victor Ntuli** - MicroBiologist



TEAM



Dr Pulane Nkhabutlane
Project co-leader



Prof Riëtte de Kock
Project leader



Dr Rosemary Kobue-
Lekalake
Project co-leader



Dr Melodi Botha
Business Management &
Entrepreneurship



Prof John Taylor
Scientific advisor

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



BICSA
Bakery & Food Technology Incubator

DENMAR

Mziwakhe Boniface Makhaya
Designer



**THANK YOU
SO..... MUCH**