

Increasing employment through development

Targeted, demand-driven training...

CLOTEX is a sector specific NGO (a Section 21 'not for profit company') operating in the clothing and textile industries in the Western Cape in South Africa. Initially set up in 1994, CLOTEX's current role is to mainly focus on increasing employment through the development needs of entrepreneurs operating small, medium and micro enterprises (SMEs). This has been mainly achieved via a sector focused service offering that provides SMEs with access to training, mentorship, information (advice, counselling and referrals), trade contacts and project management.

Vision statement

CLOTEX has established itself as a reputed representative organisation of the SME sector of the South African clothing and textile industries, and is known for its active role as a facilitator in the upliftment and growth of these industries, which includes primarily strengthening the sustainable competitive positioning of these SME manufacturers (domestically and globally). By facilitating sustainable competitive manufacturing and business opportunities, employment opportunities will be sustained and created for those established and new entrepreneurs and employees wishing to enter these industries.

Activities

A selection of the types of activities undertaken by CLOTEX include the following: mentoring; training programmes and seminars; community projects and linkage programmes; project management; sector tender advice bureau.

Operational model

To undertake its varied work programmes, CLOTEX's operational model is to have a small administrative core staff, and then outsource the



CLOTEX personnel

activities to suitably experienced and qualified people for each specific type of programme.

To maintain the high levels of service required by the target market and funders, the organisation's activities are monitored by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, an Executive and then by a Board, which consists of stakeholders, funders and industry representatives.

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Current and future programmes

During the period January 2004 to March 2005, CLOTEX activities included the following: company (SME) assessments (100); companies mentored (32); jobs retained (1,104); SMEs counselled, advised or referred (411); people trained (763); community projects (seven).

New projects that are due to be implemented in 2005 include a dedicated website, enhancement of business services and training, and the formation of clusters of SMEs to benchmark their businesses on a balanced scorecard basis, and thereby facilitate targeted, demand-driven training to upgrade each cluster's operational and entrepreneurial skills.

A separate Trading House division has started to help selected SMEs to become direct suppliers to corporate and retail chain store buyers, by providing limited bridging finance and marketing services for their products.

People commitment

The success of CLOTEX over the past 10 years has been due to the loyalty and commitment of all its staff members to the organisation and its vision, coupled with a passion for these industries and all its participants. This commitment has been supported by the various elected office bearers and committee members over the past 10 years, all of whom have given time voluntarily to help the upliftment of SMEs in this sector of the South African community.



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