



**NDA**

National  
Development  
Agency

# BEST PRACTICE PUBLICATION

## BA'ONE VOCATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATIVE

November 2017

### Background

The above named cooperative is a second phase of BA' ONE intellectual disability centre which was registered NPO in 2010. The cooperative is operating in Seoding village under John Taolo Gaetsewe district municipality of Kuruman in the Northern Cape province. The existence of the cooperative was to anchor the intellectual disability centre for sustainability purposes. The centre was initiated and found by three retired ex-teachers who during their practice dealt a lot with special needs education. The centre intake is from 18 - 35 years youth. It started with 12 youth in 2009 and to date it has an enrolment of about 97 youth. It focuses specifically in training vocational skills such as woodwork, welding, beadwork, knitting, crocheting, cooking and baking, tapestry, leather work, needle work, paper mache and recycling. These were programmed in order to give these trainees a wide variety of appropriate skills type they would manage.

The cooperative focuses on production in order to generate funds that can sustain the training center. Some of the well trained kids with disability are appointed to volunteer working in the cooperative and are getting some stipend on a monthly basis.

In 2008, the government of South Africa embarked on an anti-poverty campaign of profiling the poorest households and providing them with government services. The main aim of the program was to provide integrated government services in the most deprived wards over the next five years [2009-2014]. Based on the Index on Multiple Deprivation (PIMD), the most deprived wards were identified in all provinces. For the Northern Cape Province, sixty-one wards were identified.

The intensification of the War on Poverty Programme culminated in the development of the Balelapa Program to profile all households in the Northern Cape Province. The Balelapa Household Profiling Project was launched in John Taolo Gaetsewe in October 2010. The municipality was identified as one of the mostly impoverished as per the Balelapa survey findings. The Seoding village was then identified as one of the project Mikondzo areas. Project Mikondzo was established by the Minister of Social Development, Mrs Bathabile Dlamini as a special service delivery improvement initiative. The project Mikondzo targeted 1300 wards in 23 district municipalities identified by Cabinet as priority.

## Objectives

The objectives of the cooperative are to empower kids with intellectual disability through skills programme that will ultimately result in being capacitated in the arts sector. The programme also ensures that the training of these beneficiaries, they should be employable thus improving their livelihoods. There are vocational skills that are offered at the centre, which are: cooking & baking, knitting, needlework, woodwork, recycling, welding, beadwork, gardening, leatherwork and arts & crafts. This cooperative thus:

- ❖ Investigate the total number of kids with intellectual disability that can benefit from this program;
- ❖ Provide a platform for skills transfer especially to the kids with intellectual disability;
- ❖ Enhance future competitiveness of the within the job market; and
- ❖ Enable job creation as well as develop entrepreneurs.

The South African Education system caters for all learners between ages of 7-18 years. Learners with physical disabilities are able to further their tertiary studies after their secondary schooling. On the contrary, learners with intellectual disability, including those who are released from special schools when they reach the age of 18 years, they end up being at home doing nothing or on the street, which exposes them to being preys of abuse and violence. Intellectual disability is often ignored hence the formation of this cooperative.

## METHODOLOGY/APPROACH

In John Taolo Gaetsewe Municipality, there is Learamele Special School and Emmanuel Day Care Centre which are the feeder institutions to the cooperative as they only deal with specialised academic tuition and social skills training. When the children reach teenage years they are enrolled at Ba'one Centre, where they are trained in different vocational skills on Arts and Crafts.

The educators at the centre get this kids from Learamele special school in Kuruman as well as from normal schools. From the special schools are the kids that are exiting the formal schooling age system and from normal schools are the kids that have a very low intelligence quotient (IQ) levels and are struggling to pass their grades, regardless of the efforts and interventions of the teachers. A general realisation has been that whenever the community talk about disabilities, they would mostly refer to physical disability (from 7 – 18 years), and exclude the intellectuals of 19 years and above group.

The educators at Ba'one cooperative do not use the transfer letters from principals but rather an assessment form, where they then do an assessment of each child. Information from pre-natal, during and after of the kids is also requested from parents, though it is sometimes a challenge as most parents do not really keep records neither do they remember the prenatal stages of their kids.



Even though the cooperative has done so well over the years in keeping the kids with intellectual disability from the streets, there are still challenges and support that they require to sustain this community development initiative. Some of the challenges they face is the fencing of the premises, kitchen equipment, proper infrastructure etc.

The goals and dreams of the cooperative is to have a proper palisade fencing and 24hr guard to keep the kids, products and machinery safe in the premises; proper infrastructure to build hostels where they can accommodate the kids within the centre as well as a kitchen equipment for training the kids on baking and cooking.



When you support  
small business,  
you're supporting  
a dream



"Alone we can do  
so little; together  
we can do so  
much."

Helen Keller

## **TALENT BEHIND THE KIDS AT BA' ONE INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY COOPERATIVE**



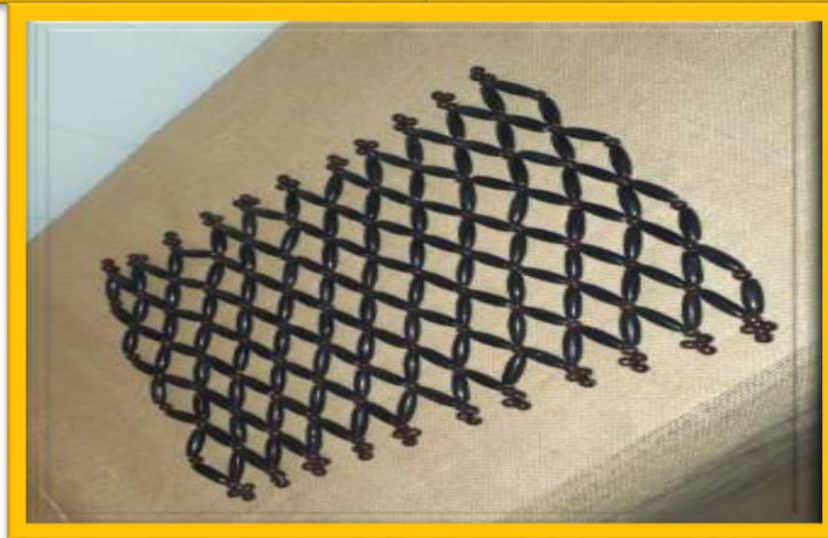
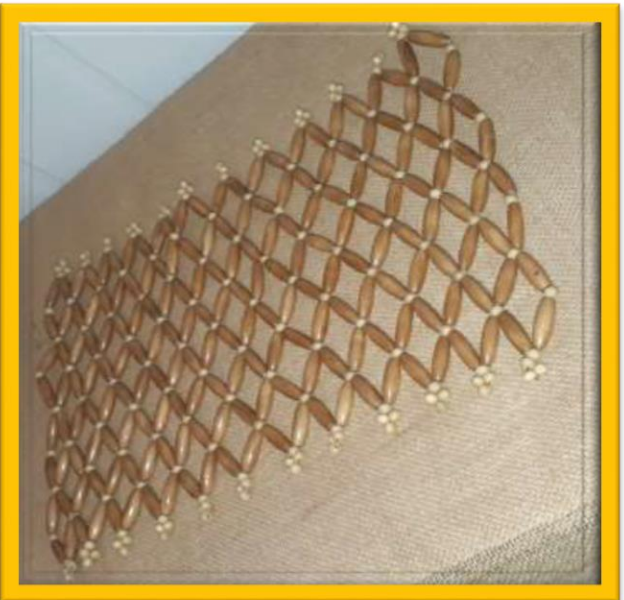
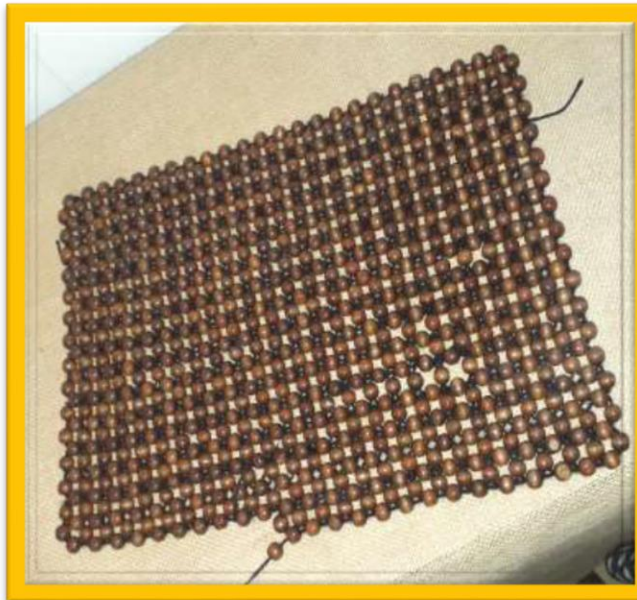
**A soft and comfortable stool made out of recycled plastic bottles and with a hand knitted wool cover.**



**A beautiful hand knitted Bed throw**



**Beaded and Weaved Fruit Baskets**



**Bead wood Placements**



**Paintings**



**Papier-mâché projects from composite materials such as newspapers, water, glue etc..**



**Patch work from recycled materials**







**Recycled drums and covered with leather**



**Pallets**



**Welded Garden Chairs**



**Wooden Chairs and Table for kids**



**Trainees working**



**Compiled by: Nthabiseng Kraai**

Development Management and Research Division  
National Development Agency  
26 Wellington Road  
Parktown  
Johannesburg  
2193

Tel: 011 – 018 5500

Web: [www.nda.org.za](http://www.nda.org.za)

Email: [nthabisengk@nda.org.za](mailto:nthabisengk@nda.org.za)