

Draft minutes of the 23rd Biotrade Stakeholder Forum meeting held virtually on 23 October 2023

1. Virtual Arrival

2. Welcome and Purpose of meeting

The Chairperson welcomed the participants.

The purpose of the meeting was focused on marketing in the biotrade sector. Generic marketing presentation was shared by Proof Africa with contributions from both Brand SA and Proudly SA.

The draft agenda was adopted with no changes

3. Minutes of the 22nd Biotrade Stakeholder Forum meeting held on the May 2024

The minutes of the 22nd Biotrade Stakeholder Forum Meeting were presented and no changes were recorded.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Presentations by Proof Africa

Jonathon Rees from Proof Africa presented on generic marketing. The following is a summary of the main points of the presentation.

- Generic marketing is more than raising awareness and needs a strategic plan that should address the needs of the provider and consume.
- One of the important aspects of generic marketing is telling the story behind a product/service. For example, there are trends towards biodiversity conservation, gender empowerment, environment and most of the biotrade products touch on those trends can be used as part of marketing.
- The benefits of generic marketing are raises awareness, communicates the benefits, dispel myths, stimulates demands.
- List of criteria for a generic marketing strategy:
 - Unified message that is supported by evidence
 - Messaging must be supported by strong images and video
 - Ability to deliver against the marketing promise
 - Alignment with recent trends
 - Understanding of the target market
 - Budget
 - Monitoring and evaluation plan
- Successful sector case studies
 - PhytoTrade Africa promoted Baobab in response to high production and low sales.
 - The Buchu sector recently have developed a [website](#) for its generic marketing.
 - The rooibos sector has been doing generic marketing for nine years through the SA Rooibos Council (SARC) Their generic marketing is proactive, structured and it's a mandate of the council to market rooibos for the sector. It is pushing rooibos as a

lifestyle and with a five-year plan. SARC sends information to other international tea bodies to publish therefore is important that generic marketing is not an individual work.

Question and Discussion

- History of the species can be used but needs to be packaged/structured depending on the target market based on the regions. For example, Baobab will be advertised differently in Limpopo to Western Cape or international.
- Health claims need to be supported by strong evidence.
- Generic marketing of products with different sub-species (e.g honeybush can be approached by developing a common story that ties together issues common to all sub-species e.g rooibos flavor wheel
- Research is expensive and time consuming, so partnerships with research institution can ensure that evidence-based marketing is achieved.

2. Presentation by Proudly SA

Alicia Logan, the Proudly SA Membership Manager, presented on the mandate of Proudly SA and becoming member and the benefits. The following is a summary of the main points of the presentation (see annex 1):

- Proudly SA is the national advocate for the buying local campaign to the public, private and consumer.
- Buying local products contributes towards economic development, job creation, infrastructure development, skills development and empowerment.
- The focus of Proudly SA is to educate the consumers about locally-produced products and promote accessibility of - products.
- Proudly SA has a membership that can be joined by any registered organisation (ie. SME, commercial, NGO, government entity etc) that provides products or services that are locally produced.
- There are principles that need to be met to become a Proudly SA member:
 - Local content – at least 50% of the product must be produced/manufactured in SA
 - Quality - product needs to be compliant, for example, for human consumption or use. Proudly SA can refer to a reputable institution to assist with compliance.
 - Environmental Standards
 - Fair Labour Practices – the organization needs to be compliant with the Labour Act of SA.
- An annual membership fee is required to be a Proudly SA member and is structured into different levels depending on the organisation turnover.
- The benefits of becoming Proudly SA members includes:
 - The product/ service gets to be endorsed and recognised by Proudly SA as local content and the organisation get use of the Proudly SA logo.
 - Proudly SA members get exposure on different market platforms.
 - Become part of the B2B opportunities through supply chain workshops and Proudly SA's import replacement project.
 - Participates at the Buy Local Summit and Expo at no cost - hosted by Proudly SA including other international and national trade shows.
 - Be exposed to business and sector specific forums

Question and Discussion

- The membership fee is a R500 once off fee for the year to cover the admin fee and all the benefits are provided for free, but the membership has different levels for enterprises/SMEs based on the company turnover.
- Proudly SA exposes its members to access to new markets so it is important the company is able to supply/provide the products/services.
- However, before exposing a company to markets Proudly SA enrolls them into a retail readiness programme at Consumer Goods Council Of South Africa (CGCSA) to assist with packing, labels etc. It assists with how to manage shelf space, how to talk to a buyer, how to negotiate, trading terms, how to market products etc.
- Proudly SA members are individual companies not associations
- Proudly SA works in 26 sectors and the quality certification for compliance can be from the relevant accredited bodies based on the sector. It was clarified that ISO is not only applicable to industrial manufacturers but can be applicable to small enterprises and can provide an opportunity to access retail.
- SEDA can aid with Quality Management certification.
- The vetting process of products that are imported to SA is managed by the dtic.

3. Brand SA

Lefentse Nokaneng, General Manager for Research, gave a presentation titled: Advancing Biotrade: Leveraging South Africa's Global Reputation - Perspectives for SA's Biotrade Sector. The following is a summary of the main points of the presentation (see annex 1):

- Brand SA is the official marketing agency to South Africa. The purpose of Brand SA is to drive investment into SA and encourage global markets to buy local products/services.
- Brand SA also encourages tourism and manages the reputation of the country.
- Brand SA has conducted a global reputation study on export, tourism, investment, working/studying in SA (talent) and general reputation to ensure relevant target markets are identified.
- Seventeen target markets (countries) were part of the study: America, UK, Germany, France, Netherlands, Switzerland, Japan, China, India, UAE, Saudi, Australia, Botswana, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya. Nine countries were benchmarked against competitors.
- The purpose of the study was to determine the countries' affinity towards SA and survey the desired perception where the SA can be considered to have a strong brand.
- The outcome of the global reputation study is the following:
 - The general reputation of the country has improved significantly. Export and investment indicated improvement since 2022 while tourism and talent have declined slightly.
 - The regions that indicated a strong affinity towards SA are Africa and Middle East followed by America and Europe.
 - SA was ranked third in the export and investment dimension among countries that were benchmarked against.
 - The key market perceptions of the country are culture/heritage, sports & art, natural assets and economy and business systems
 - The USA indicated a strong affinity in the export and investment dimensions (metals, agricultural products, products that manufactured locally) and India indicated a strong affinity in tourism.
- SA's competitive advantage is biodiversity and integration of agro-processing in the global value chain.
- China is the key trading partner for SA being the largest consumption market and their annual per-capita spending indicated that the young generation spend more than the older generation.
- Brand SA has established a business association in China that can assist connecting businesses for trade

- China Country Head: Tshepiso Malele, tshepiso@brandsouthafrica.com
- Strategic partners that Brand SA works with are dtic (export and trade promotion), universities, CSIR (research development), SABS.

Question and Discussion

- A strategic way for SMEs to be part of the trade platform could be the formation of organised businesses or associations.
- Baobab generic marketing in the UK was based on an intensive process of getting market access and approval as a food ingredient in the European Union and US.
- It was highlighted that there are trade opportunities in the international market (EU, China, US) however the countries have long term tariff measures for novel food to ensure consumer safety which are costly to overcome.
- To address these measures a systematic approach is needed
- Pharmaceutical/medicinal claims cannot be made but nutritional claims can be made based on local laws.

Marketing budget constraints could be overcome by partnering with organisation that benefit throughout the value chain

4. Closure

The chairperson thanked presenters and participants.

Stakeholders were encouraged to submit topics for discussion or to present at the next Biotrade Stakeholders' Forum meeting which will be held on the 25th February 2025, 10:00 – 12:00, virtual hosted by the UNIDO:GQSP project.

Appendix 1: Proudly SA presentation by Alicia Lagan Alicia@PROUDLYSA.CO.ZA

Appendix 2: Brand SA presentation by Lefentse Nokaneng lefentsen@brandsouthafrica.com

Appendix 3 List of attendance and apologies

	First & Surname	Organisation	E-mail	Signature
1.	Serole Mketsu	GIZ:ABioSA	serole.sehona@giz.de	
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3.	Jonathon Rees	Proof Africa	jonathon@proofafrica.co.za	
4.	Elsie Mentjies	UNIDO:GQSP	E.MEINTJIES@unido.org	
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16.	Lefentse Nokaneng	Brand SA	lefentsen@brandsouthafrica.com	
17.	Katedi Mantso	DFFE	kmantsho@dfpe.gov.za	

18.	Motlalepula Matsabisa	University of Free State	MatsabisaMG@ufs.ac.za	
19.	Hester Kinnear			
20.	Julien Coron			
21.	Malembe Mtsweni	SEDA	mmtsweni@seda.org.za	
22.	Nomusa Dlamini	CSIR	NRDlamini@csir.co.za	
23.	Michael Tchana Njikeu			
24.				
25.				