

Hope Factory hits eight-year mark

Bay corporates urged to support self-help project

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COMPANIES were urged yesterday to spend some bucks with a Nelson Mandela Bay social investment programme – and save the country billions of rands in the years ahead.

There would be a double payback in buying items, including locally designed and manufactured corporate gifts, said Hope Factory chief executive Liz Zambonini.

Providing statistics at the eighth anniversary celebration of the award-winning training and self-help organisation in North End, Port Elizabeth, former fashion designer Zambonini gave details of the programme's multiplier effect.

In its eight-year history, she said, 672 previously unemployed people had been trained by the Hope Factory, with 82% of those having found employment or having set up their own businesses.

This provided a total of 550 economically active people.

Using the developing countries multiplier of seven members in a family being affected, that took the total number of beneficiaries to 3 850.

Projecting that over the next 20 years, Zambonini said, Hope Factory

projects would assist 185 000 people.

This would result in tax income and savings in areas such as welfare of R180-billion in the next 20 years and to a cost-to-benefit ratio of a "staggering" R972-billion through more than 800 000 beneficiaries 20 years later, using the multiplier effect.

"And that will be achieved at a cost of about R70-million over the period," said Zambonini.

She did admit that members of one of the project's main backers, the SA Institute of Chartered Accountants, might query the numbers.

Recalling the history of the Hope Factory, she said its funding for the first year was R12 000 and it broke even on sales of items made by trainees and staff.

Today its funding had increased considerably but its turnover had risen even more to R4-million, all of it self-generated.

Board member Nombini Mehlomaku lu appealed to companies to use the Hope Factory as a provider of corporate gifts. She stressed that this would not only help the training, employment and entrepreneurial of the programme but also help companies with their empowerment scorecards, as the Hope Factory was a level four supplier.



RISING HOPE . . . At yesterday's eighth anniversary function were (from left) staff member Khosi Ngqinambi, Hope Factory chief executive Liz Zambonini, staffer Vuro Mvinjelwa, board chairman Ernest Carelse, and staff members Marion Pearce and Ntomboxolo Miliho. Picture: SAM MAJELA