

# Boost for hopes of getting down to business

Mthetho Ndoni

SIX local entrepreneurs saw their dreams kick-started last week when they received donations aimed at helping them grow their own businesses.

Trained by The Hope Factory, a Port Elizabeth enterprise development centre, the entrepreneurs received items such as sewing machines, stoves and fabric to design clothes.

About 128 unemployed previously disadvantaged people receive entrepreneurial training every year through The Hope Factory. In its nine-year history, the venture has trained 700 people, of which 82% graduated and set up their own businesses or found employment.

Manager Maurita Odenaal said last week was the first time the centre had handed out items to provide graduates with a stepping stone to fulfil their dreams.

"These items are part of the centre's assistance to entrepreneurs who have been through training and met the required criteria to qualify for an investment in their business venture."



NEW HOPE . . . Port Elizabeth's entrepreneurial development programme trainer Patricia Esterhuizen helps Sinoxolo Hoboshe with her sewing during The Hope Factory Entrepreneur Day. Picture: BEVERLEY DARLOW

Through the job creation and training programmes The Hope Factory provides mentorships, evaluations and advice, and support to entrepreneurial careers."

Odenaal said the centre provide 20-week training programmes in technical, business and life skills and empowered entrepreneurs to be financially productive.

Trainee Mbasa Mzili, 21, of New Brighton, said he had attended The Hope Factory skills training because he had plans of establishing his own business.

"When I complete my training I'll be able to produce branded fabric and paper crafted products," he said.

He said he was currently being trained on the basic of paper products.

Sinoxolo Hoboshe, 23, said she had attended to gain information and skills to establish a tailoring business in the township. "One day I hope to have my own clothing label and I'm sure that is going to happen even if it takes me a year to own one," said Hoboshe.

Trainer Patricia Esterhuizen said staff trained people in sewing, pattern-making, paper products, beadwork, crochet, interviewing skills and time management.

"We have four trainers and each class has 17 entrepreneurs. She said most of the people they had trained were business oriented but the problem was getting funding.

The Hope Factory enterprise development initiative is powered by the South African Institute of Chartered Accounting.