



destea

department of
Economic, Small Business Development,
Tourism and Environmental Affairs
FREE STATE PROVINCE

Media Statement

To all media houses

29 November 2023

From humble beginnings--Free State young female entrepreneur built her business from nothing.

Ms Bokang Lehloenya from Thandanani, 2010 Thabong, Welkom, the founder of *WA RONA FOOD ENTERPRISE PTY (Ltd)*, established her business in March 2021 with nothing in the bank but managed to rise above all odds by starting to produce 20 X500ml bottles of *WA RONA-MOTOHO WA SEBELE*, (traditional soft porridge) and sell around the area.

The Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEA) provided her with the necessary financial support, a grant to procure a delivery vehicle so that she can reach her clients and grow her business.

Lehloenya approached the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), which assisted her with nutritional value. Thereafter, she went to the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), where she attended a one week training and attained a certificate to apply for further assistance.

The said Agency managed to assist her with the two doors fridge and a Wendy house to operate her business.

Furthermore, Lehloenya continued to approach local supermarkets around Welkom to allow her products in their shelves. About three of the mainstream business outlets agreed to her proposal but could not meet their demand supply because each



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requested a minimum of 500 bottles per day and could only supply 100 bottles due to transportation challenges and insufficient stock.

Due to her passion in business, she then applied and approached the DESTEA for further assistance. The department responded positively by providing her with the value amount of R300 000.00 to procure NP 200 bakkie, additional stock, and payment processes to ensure that her product is SABS approved.

Lehloenya is currently working with five employees and is able to meet the demand supply by producing 500 bottles of motoho per day and envisaged to employ more people as soon as other mainstream economic players come on board.

"It takes a brave, courageous, and young unemployed graduate willing to work hard instead of complaining by doubling the efforts to grow and sustain my business. The fact that I hailed from the very downtrodden and disadvantaged family I was under the impression that only middle-class people are considered, but today, I learned that perseverance leads to success. I would like to thank MEC Thabo Meeko and the entire DESTEA team for advancing and improving the local businesses so that we can also contribute to the economy and the creation of job opportunities," Lehloenya added.

On 18 November 2023, Lehloenya scooped an amount of R100 000 at 2023 National Presidential SMME and Cooperatives Awards when winning startup business of the year category.

This category celebrates SMMEs based in the township, newly formed businesses that display vision, creativity, and innovation in breaking ground within their respective operating markets.

DESTEA MEC Thabo Meeko is calling on private and public institutions such as local schools, hospitals, police stations, inclusive of correctional facilities, to continue participating in growing the township economy by supporting SMMEs.



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MEC Meeko explained that Bokang Lehloenya is one of the young, hard-working business people contributing immensely to creating an inclusive rural economy in line with the provisions of the National Development Plan (NDP), particularly in translating its job creation objectives into reality.

"Our departmental programmes sharpen our plans to grow township economy and commit on value chain beneficiation to positively respond to the world's economy that is on a trajectory of slow recovery. This makes it difficult to generate growth and bridge the gap between what is required from the government and what can be offered. Therefore, we urge our communities, especially young people, not to worsen the situation by committing to drugs and alcohol abuse, crime, and unplanned pregnancies," MEC concluded.

Issued by DESTEA

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ENTERPRISE (PTY) LTD

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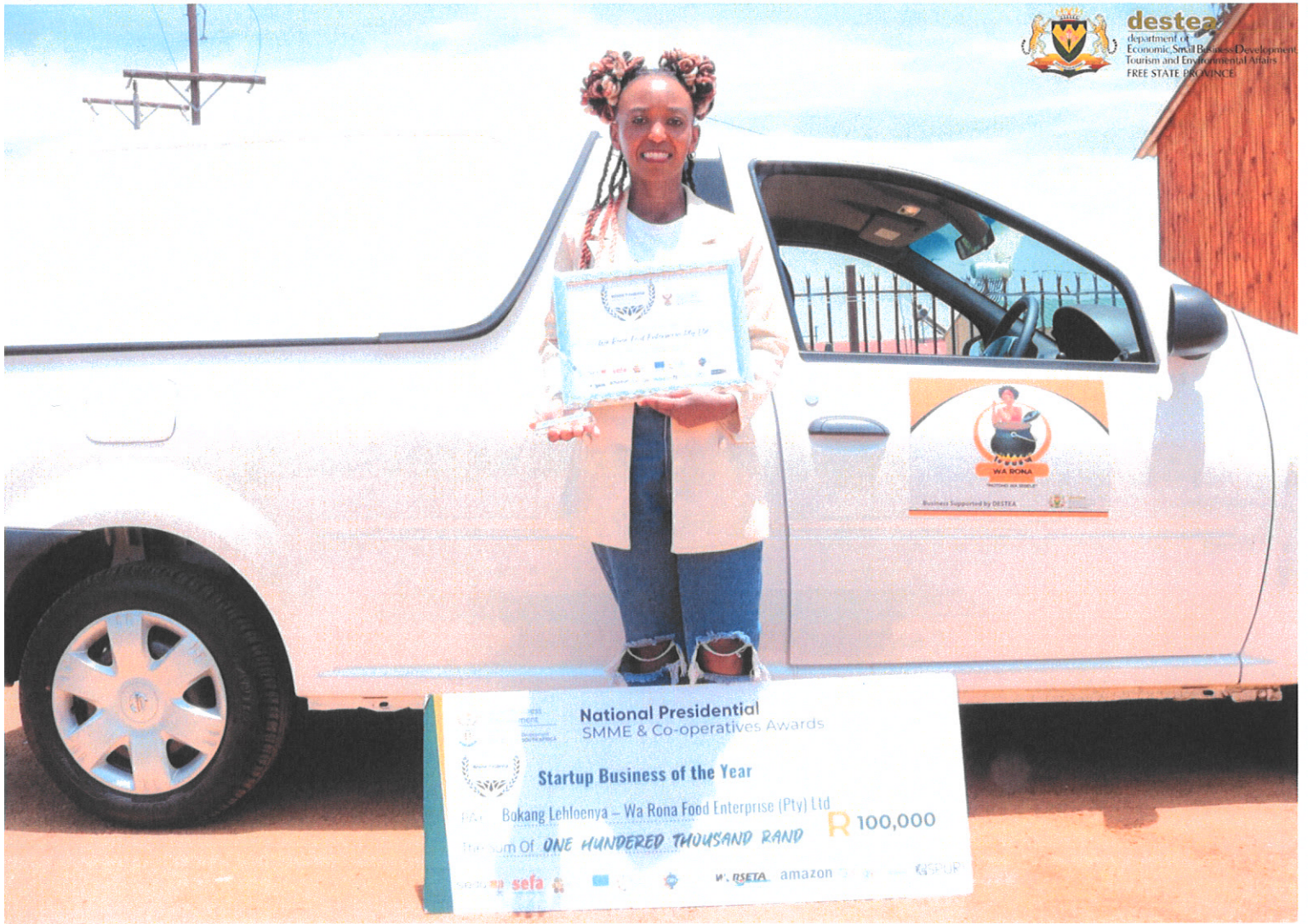
**National Presidential
SMME & Co-operatives Awards**

Startup Business of the Year

PAY Bokang Lehloeny - Wa Rona-Food Enterprise (Pty) Ltd

The Sum Of **ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND RAND R 100,000**

SPESBOS, SPSA, W. EKETA, amazon, ESPLUR



**National Presidential
SMME & Co-operatives Awards**

Startup Business of the Year

Bokang Lehloenyana – Wa Rona Food Enterprise (Pty) Ltd

Prize sum Of ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND RAND R 100,000

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