

# Black Umbrellas\* NEWSLETTER

DREAM

BELIEVE

CREATE

GROW

SHARE

## EMPOWERING ENTREPRENEURS. TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES.

### A Year of Impact, Growth and Shared Success

As 2025 draws to a close, we reflect on a year marked by innovation, resilience, and entrepreneurial excellence. Across our programmes and partnerships, Black Umbrellas-supported entrepreneurs have created jobs, expanded industries, and advanced South Africa's social and economic transformation.

## Organisational Highlights

### Strengthening Our Impact in 2025

Alongside the inspiring achievements of our entrepreneurs, 2025 has also been a year of significant progress for Black Umbrellas as an organisation. Our focus on operational excellence, strategic partnerships, and programme innovation has strengthened our ability to support 100% Black-owned businesses across South Africa.



### Strengthening Governance and Leadership

- Annual Financial Statements signed, demonstrating continued accountability and compliance.
- Staff development prioritised, including participation in the Women's Leadership Conference.
- Junior coaches allocated to the Masakhe 5 cohort, expanding our mentorship capacity.

### Empowering Women and SMEs Through Key Events

- Hosted a successful Women's Day Breakfast, celebrating and elevating women entrepreneurs.
- Participated in The Business Expo Africa, showcasing BU-supported enterprises and connecting them to opportunities.

### Deepening Strategic Partnerships

- YES Programme MoU signed, opening pathways for youth employment and SME support.
- Continued collaboration with the Sanlam Foundation, including grant support and women entrepreneur initiatives.
- Expanded donor engagements, strengthening long-term sustainability and impact.

## Organisational Highlights

*Continued...*

### Advancing Programme Delivery and Innovation

- Enhanced Applications and Selection processes to recruit strong, growth-ready entrepreneurs.
- Streamlined Programme Implementation, improving consistency across incubation centres.
- Siyakhula Programme enhancements: introduced Abridged Business Model development and Startup Plan changes for the Siyakhula 5 cohort.
- Rolled out Value-Added Services for Alumni, strengthening post-incubation support.
- Launching next quarter:
  - YES Youth Opportunities
  - CISCO Net Academy digital skills programme

### Monitoring and Evaluation Progress

- A major data clean-up project is underway to strengthen reporting, insights, and programme measurement-ensuring we assess impact more accurately and support SMEs more effectively.



## Entrepreneur Impact Stories

### Quinty Rabophala - Growing Opportunities Through Agriculture

Quinty founded Kenokatha Farms in 2018 on just 3 hectares of land. Today, it spans 11 hectares, supplying high-value crops locally and internationally.

Through Black Umbrellas' Siyakhula Programme, Quinty refined business systems, secured funding, and built a packhouse, increasing revenue by 35%. Her farm employs local staff, trains learners, and gives back through food donations to 75 households this December.

***"Sustainability is about building something today that benefits future generations." – Quinty***



**Tevin Memla – Driving Green Skills for a Sustainable Future**

Founder of Grace Artisan School, Tevin equips learners with renewable energy and green skills. Since joining BU's Siyakhula Programme, the school secured its first B2B contract, expanded to 18 staff, and trained 88 learners over two years.

The YES4Youth Programme supports youth interns with hands-on experience across sales, marketing, and operations-building skills for the green economy and local employment.



**Sbusiso Manqa – From Local Roots to Global Stages**

Founder of SA Books Online, Sbusiso empowers African authors to publish and distribute their work globally.

In 2025, he represented South African youth at the Y20 Pre-Summit, engaging on inclusive economic growth, AI, digital innovation, and education.

*“Expose yourself to progressive environments you wouldn’t typically be in — and when you get there, participate and engage. Some solutions lie outside your environment.” – Tevin*



## Entrepreneur Impact Stories continued

### **Rene Mokoena – Redefining South Africa’s Communications Landscape**

From selling sweets outside a school in her childhood to leading a thriving boutique communications agency, Rene Mokoena has crafted a journey defined by resilience, cultural pride, and exceptional storytelling. Today, as the founder of Kgosigadi Communications, she is recognised as one of South Africa’s voices reshaping how brands speak to their audiences.

Rene’s entrepreneurial spirit emerged early. What began as a simple hustle quickly evolved into a passion for understanding people—what connects them, what inspires them, and what moves them. This instinct later became the foundation of Kgosigadi Communications, an agency built on the principles of authenticity, creativity, and community-centred messaging.

Her firm has since worked with leading corporates, including Sanlam, delivering campaigns that blend strategic communication with narratives that honour South Africa’s diverse cultural identities. Rene believes that storytelling is not just about content creation, but about honouring lived experiences and reflecting them with dignity and accuracy.

***“We must always work for the highest standard, no matter the size of the project. That way your practice becomes your habit, and you end up setting the standard.” – Rene Mokoena***

Beyond business, Rene is deeply committed to empowering young creatives and women entrepreneurs. Through mentorship and industry collaborations, she advocates for more inclusive opportunities in media, communications, and the broader creative economy.



## Women Entrepreneurs Leading Change

### G20 Empower Alliance 3 South Africa

Under the banner of UHURU Women: Building Sustainable Income and Financial Independence, Black Umbrellas women entrepreneurs Tsholofelo Nyahuye and Onkgomoditse Motaung were invited by Sanlam to participate in the G20 Summit and the G20 Empower Alliance 3 – South Africa on 20 November 2025.

Their participation provided a platform to

showcase their businesses, gain global insights, and engage with leaders committed to advancing women’s economic empowerment.

***“And we also commemorated Professor Keolebogile Motaung, who was pivotal to the success of the Summit...” – Tsholofelo***

This impactful initiative is supported by strategic partners-ABSA, Sanlam, The Global Fund, and ABSIP-who continue to champion the growth and success of women-owned enterprises.





## Black Umbrellas At The Business Show Africa – August 2025

In August 2025, Black Umbrellas participated in The Business Show Africa, a premier platform for SMEs, entrepreneurs, and investors. Our entrepreneurs showcased their businesses, networked with industry leaders, and explored new growth opportunities.

Workshops and panel discussions offered insights on scaling businesses, accessing funding, and leveraging networks for sustainable growth.

The event reinforced BU's commitment to creating opportunities for SMEs to thrive and empowering a new generation of business leaders.



## Supporting Women Entrepreneurs

Black Umbrellas continues its longstanding commitment to empowering women entrepreneurs across South Africa. Recognising that women-led businesses are a vital driver of economic growth, this partnership seeks to provide structured support, mentorship, and access to markets for growth-ready women entrepreneurs.

Through initiatives such as the Siyakhula and Asindize Programmes, Black Umbrellas aims to strengthen business systems, improve strategy execution, and unlock new opportunities-ensuring that women-led enterprises can scale, create jobs, and contribute meaningfully to the economy. Supporting women entrepreneurs is not just about business development; it's about nurturing economic resilience and fostering inclusive growth for communities across South Africa.

Applications are open for women entrepreneurs looking to take their businesses to the next level:

**Website:** [www.blackumbrellas.org](http://www.blackumbrellas.org)

**Email:** [info@blackumbrellas.org](mailto:info@blackumbrellas.org)

**Phone:** 010 003 3100



## Black Umbrellas Co-Working Spaces

South Africa's economic landscape is evolving rapidly. Digital transformation, rising competition, and structural challenges mean SMMEs must operate in environments that foster collaboration, innovation, and shared access to resources. Co-spacing is emerging as a strategic, high-impact solution and one that aligns perfectly with the national goal of building a resilient, job-creating entrepreneurial sector.

### Why Co-Spacing Matters

SMMEs are central to South Africa's economy, contributing 34% of GDP and providing around 60% of employment. Yet many businesses face challenges: high failure rates, limited access to capital, and gender disparities. Co-spacing addresses these challenges by offering:

- Lower Cost Barriers: Flexible, affordable memberships free up capital for growth.
- Access to Infrastructure: High-speed fibre, meeting rooms, business support, and mentorship opportunities.
- Built-In Network and Collaboration: A diverse community sparking innovation and peer learning.

- Professionalism and Well-Being: Distraction-free workspaces and a registered business address for credibility.

### Experience the Black Umbrellas Co-Space

Currently located at 6 Melville Road, 13th floor, Illovo Point, Johannesburg, our co-space is more than a place to work—it's a community where ideas grow and businesses scale. Entrepreneurs can enjoy:

- Flexible membership options
- Access to mentorship
- Workshops and events
- A network of ambitious, like-minded peers

***"Working here has connected me with amazing people and boosted my productivity! Oh, and there's free popcorn every Thursday—it's a cherry on top," -Sbusiso***

### Book a Tour Today!

Call 010 900 2869 or click on this link <https://blackumbrellas.co.za/co-working/> to learn more or arrange a visit.

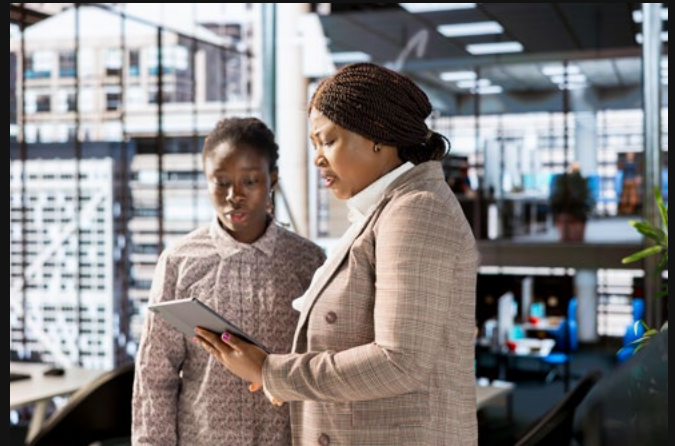


## Support Our Mission This Year-End

As we close 2025, we invite you to join us in empowering more entrepreneurs. Your donation helps us provide mentorship, training, and resources for emerging businesses that create jobs, build skills, and strengthen communities.

Donate Today: <https://blackumbrellas.co.za/donate/>

Thank you for being part of our 2025 journey. Together, we are creating sustainable change, building opportunities, and transforming communities across South Africa.



### Contact Details:

Black Umbrellas

Address: CRF House, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, 18 Acacia Road, Chislehurst, Sandton, 2146

Tel: 011 592 6401

Fax: 011 234 4020

Email: [Help@blackumbrellas.org](mailto:Help@blackumbrellas.org)

Web: [www.blackumbrellas.co.za](http://www.blackumbrellas.co.za)

DREAM



BELIEVE

CREATE

GROW

SHARE

Black  
Umbrellas\*

