A case study
Imbali’s beginnings

• Founded 1988
• Deep apartheid context
• State of art education in black schools
• Post apartheid: Curriculum 2005/OBE, NCS, RNCS, CAPS
Early workshops at JAG
Visual Literacy – an integral part of Imbali’s approach
Imbali’s approach

- Developing creative teaching and learning
- Open-ended, exploratory, discovery based
- Developing a questioning and critical understanding of the visual world
Teachers and self portraits
Corporate funded programmes
The Imbali Art Book
Imbali’s shift to crafts training

• Need for skills geared to income generation
• Funding landscape (job creation prioritized by gov.)
Early Days

- Youth Detention centre on the West Rand
- Facilitators garage
- Kagiso MPCC
Formalization of crafts training, move to Newtown

- Create SA
- MAPPP SETA
- CATHS SETA
Integrating visual literacy with craft skills training
Ceramics

- Coil
- Pinch
- Slab
- Mould making
- Wheel work
- Painting and glazing
Textiles

- Screen printing
- Block printing
- Batik
- Hand embroidery/applique
- Sewing
- Patchwork
- Weaving
Craft and income generation

- Museum Africa 2007 – temporary display
- 2008 – present Imbali shop
- Shop used as a teaching tool
Early days of incubator: tensions between training and production

• Requirements of craft production
• Vs. requirements of training
• Experimentation/following rules
• Developing skills towards income generation
The Imbali incubator – now fully functional
Success of Imbali’s products and approach

- Unique, hand made and designed products
- Artisans learn to be designers and product developers as well as makers.
- Products appeal to a discerning ‘arty’ audience.

The other side of the coin....

- Labour intensive, many of the techniques and materials don’t lend themselves to large orders.
- Need to work on audience development and new market outlets
Graduates

- 80% continue with craft
- Start own enterprise
- Form collectives
- Continue training in the field
- Find employment in related industries
The Future: Partnerships and collaborations

Keiskamma/Imbali skills exchange, 2016
Skills exchange
Product development
New range of Joburg textiles shown at Joburg Fringe Art Fair, Sept. 2016
• Block print collaboration with SSMI in New Delhi
• Development of production facility at Imbali
Thank you