

Wealth Creation

Assessment Task

Wealth creation through SMMEs (Individual activity) (LO4 AS5)

Read the case study below and answer the questions that follow.

Ten years ago, Meisie Ndlovu lived in a corrugated iron and metal shack of 3x3 meters in the Soshanguve area North West of Pretoria. She was a domestic worker at first who later became a trainer for hairdressers. Her husband had left her for another woman and she had to fend for herself and their three kids as well as two kids from her brother's broken marriage. With her entrepreneurial spirit Meisie wanted to do better for herself and her extended family. She sent her one son to law school and the other for training in information technology, saying "I will get a pain if my children could not go to school, so I will work for the rest of my life for a better future for my children."

That same shack she lived in initially is now her tool shed. She still lives on the same stand, but now in a three-bedroomed brick house. She built the house by herself and thought that she could do that for others too. Inspired by Soshanguve's reconstruction, she joined a women's construction co-operative called Bakgoni – Tswana for "we can do it". In the meantime she registered her own company, Meitho Construction. Lacking a truck, she hand-carried tools, cement and poles to her first job and hand-wrote invoices. That is how Meisie started her building career in 1999.

She joined South African Women in Construction in the same year. For three months she hitchhiked 150km to Nelspruit in Mpumalanga to study construction management and skills. She received training on the N4 toll road, a project where women contractors tendered and participated successfully after preparatory workshops facilitated by SAWiC and the DBSA. A training budget was built into the contract package of the concessionaires. Meisie did paving and erected guardrails at the toll plazas and underpasses on the freeway project. Her evaluator wrote to SAWiC about her impressive work: "Excellent". It is therefore not surprising that the DBSA nominated Meisie with other women contractors for the prestigious Pan African Broadcast and Heritage Achievement Award for women builders in Africa during 2000 and that, together with two other women contractors, she emerged as a winner.

Subsequent to that Meisie worked on the Bakwena Platinum Highway, having had contracts with the Platinum Joint Venture. She was identified and sponsored through the Platinum Joint Venture's participation SMME programme in November 2003 to attend an Entrepreneurs workshop presented by the South African Excellence Foundation. The workshop involved three days of seminars, workshops and group work on entrepreneurial principles. At the end of the workshop, Meisie Ndlovu was awarded a certificate of recognition for an emerging company.

(Source: Case studies on how women entrepreneurs in construction experience the entrepreneurial process and manage growth by Ingrid Verwey: www.dbsa.org.za)

- a) Name three ways in which Meisie created wealth. [3 marks]
 - b) Prove from the article that Meisie showed entrepreneurial spirit even before she won any accolades. [3 marks]
 - c) Did Meisie complete the whole Bakwena Platinum Highway by herself? How was she part of it? [2 marks]
- [Total: 8 marks]