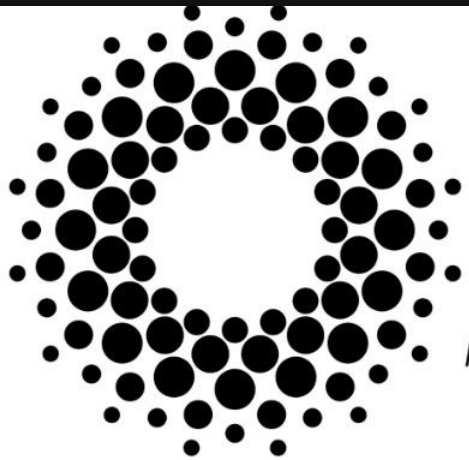


Eswatini
PachiPanda
Challenge
Likhambi lemvelo

MTN

Likusasa Letfu

How to pitch without dying trying

Who is teaching you today

1. Colombian, in Eswatini since 2008
2. Co-founder and CEO of Black Mamba
3. Teaching since 2007. Trained and judged pitches at AWE and Technoserve.
4. Pitching since 2008. Trained and judged pitches at AWE and Technoserve. Last pitch: Africa Start up Night in The Hague (Netherlands in 2025)



I tripped getting onto stage and was so nervous afterwards that I couldn't start my pitching and they didn't even stop the clock

The day

9:00

Warm-up

9:30 to 11:00

Six slides

Build your pitch sheet and your numbers.

11:30 to 13:30

Delivery: Best tips to pitch

14:00 to 15:00

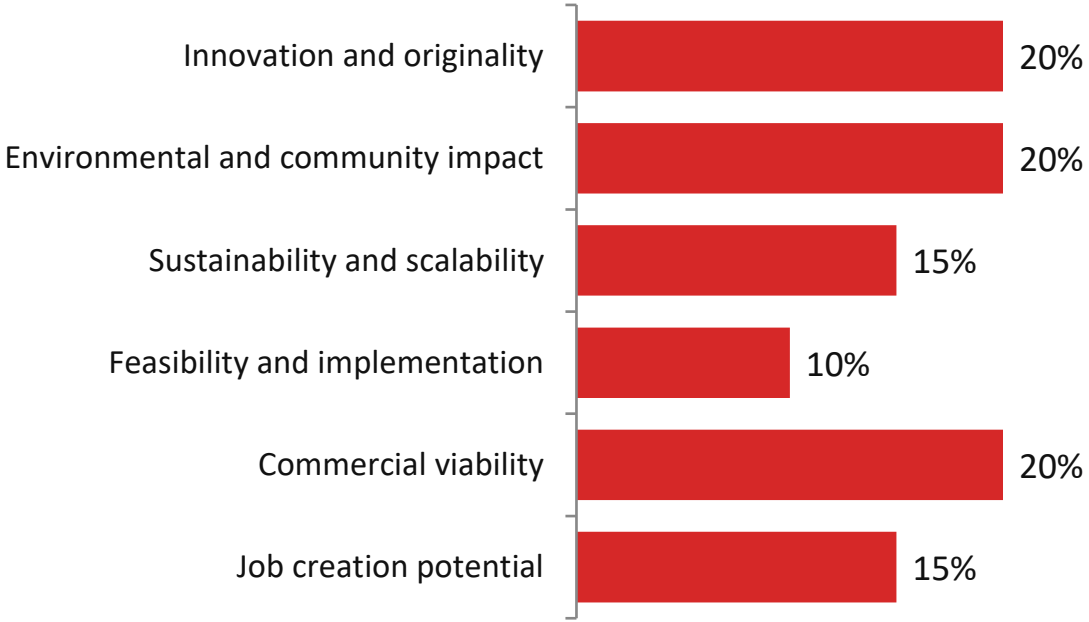
Pitching and scoring

15:00 to 15:30

Recap and questions

Breaks: 11:00 to 11:30 and 1:30 to 2:00. Finish at 3:30.

What the judges score



60%

of the score is innovation, impact and commercial viability.

What is a pitch

A business pitch is a presentation of a business idea to a group of people who can help turn your idea into a reality.

Judges are people. Make one of them smile.

Who do you pitch to?

A panel of industry experts decides who wins the prizes.

Customers pay for your product,
Investors pay for your idea

Advocates open doors for you.

Six slides, 180 seconds

1 Problem

Who struggles, how badly, one number

20 s · sets up impact

2 Solution and what's new

What you do, what exists, what is different

35 s · innovation 20%

3 Impact and jobs

A number and how you got it, jobs and what kind

50 s · impact 20%, jobs 15%

4 Who pays, how it grows

First customers, price, next step

40 s · commercial 20%, scale 15%

5 Team and proof

Why you, and one thing already real

15 s · feasibility 10%

6 The ask

Amount, first three uses, what it unlocks

20 s · feasibility, commercial

Slide 1: Problem

One person, one story, one number.

Your turn

- Who struggles? [name them]
- What does it cost them: money, time, health, land?
- One number: how many people, how much?



Example: Black Mamba, Africa Startup Night, slide 3. The shopper's problem and the farmer's, side by side.

Slide 2: Solution and what's new

Say what exists today. Then say what you do differently.

Your turn

- Today, people [...]
- Unlike [...], we [...]
- What is genuinely new here?

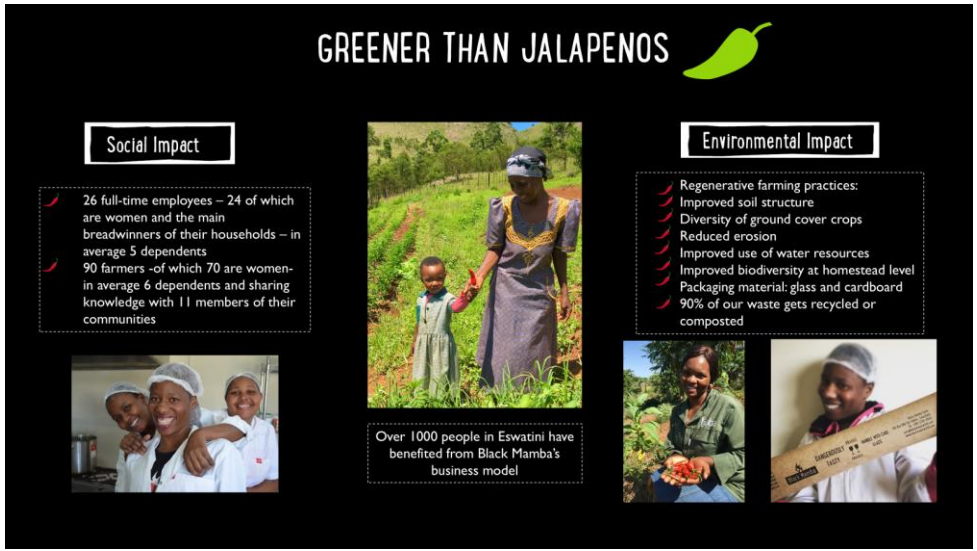


Slide 3: Impact and jobs

A number, and how you got it.

Your turn

- I estimate [X] because [A] × [B]
- Jobs by year 2: [number], and what kind
- Who else benefits: people, land, water, waste?



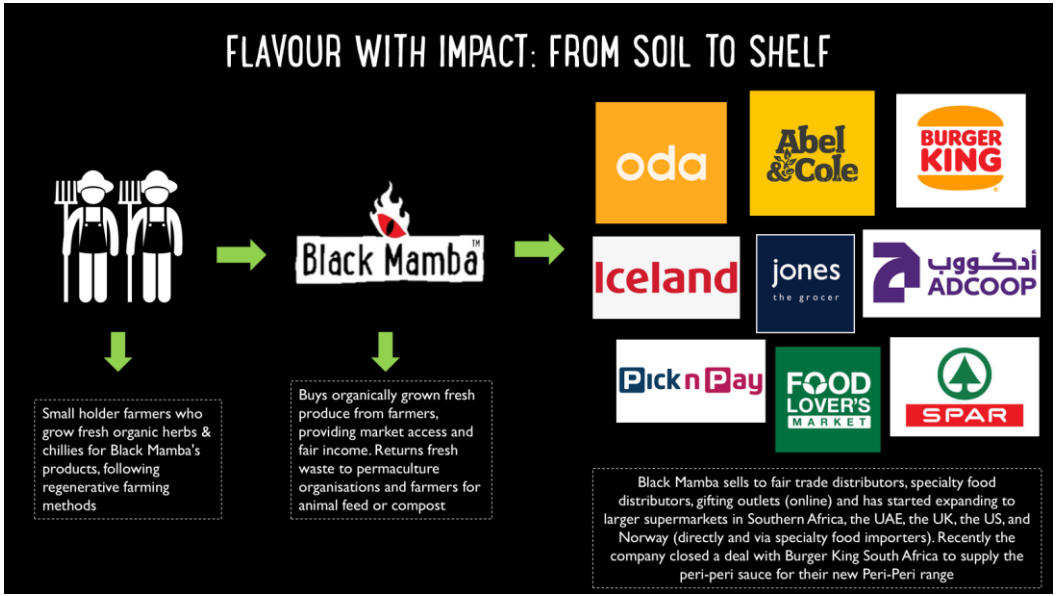
Example: slide 7. Jobs, farmers, and 90% of waste recycled or composted.

Slide 4: Who pays, how it grows

First 10 customers, the price, the next step.

Your turn

- Who pays? [...]
- How much, how often? [...]
- After the first 10, what next? [...]

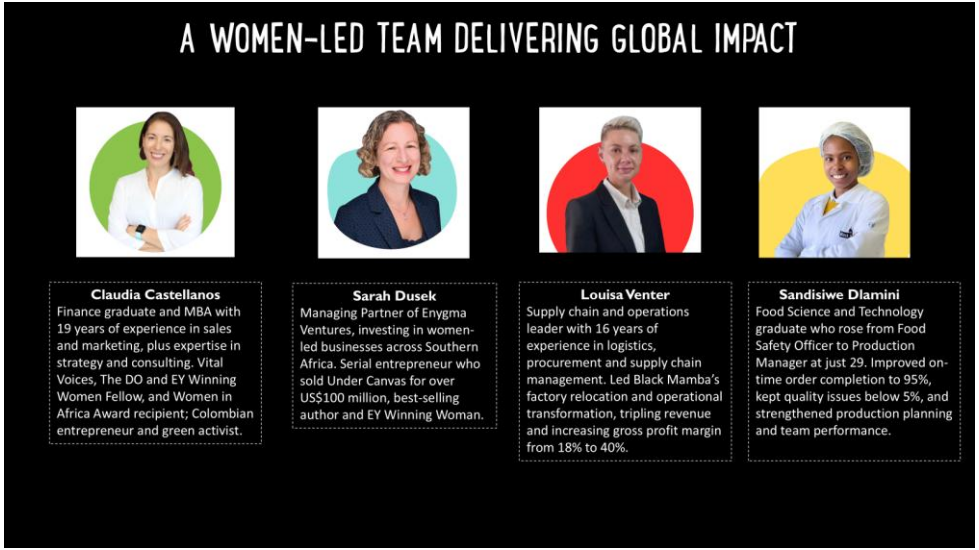


Slide 5: Team and proof

One line per person. Only what shows you can deliver.

Your turn

- Me: [one line]
- Who else does the work? [...]
- One thing already real: [...]



Slot 6: The ask

The amount, the first three uses, what it unlocks.

Your turn

- I'm asking for [amount]
- First three uses: [1] [2] [3]
- It unlocks [...]



Invented example: $5,000 = 60% equipment, 30% first wages, 10% marketing. It unlocks our first 10 customers.

The pitch sheet: 20 minutes

1. [Who] struggles with [problem], and it costs them [number].
2. We [what you do], so that [result for them].
3. Unlike [what exists today], we [what's different].
4. In year one we'll [impact number] and create [number] jobs.
5. [Who pays] pays [how]. We're asking for [amount] to [first spend].

30-second version first

About 75 words. Say it out loud with a timer. Then stretch it into six slots.

Idea stage? "I estimate" is allowed.

No traction yet?

Say you are at idea stage, then show the proof you do have.



A customer conversation

Who you spoke to and what they said



A prototype or sketch

Something people can look at



A pilot or first sale

Even one customer counts



A letter of support

From a buyer, farmer or community leader

Number plus method

The formula

I estimate [X] because [A] × [B].

No data? Say "I estimate" and show the sum. A rough number with logic beats a blank.

Example

2 tonnes of waste a month

10 farms × 200 kg × 1 pick-up a month.

Jobs: 3 collectors in year one.

Your turn: [your number] because [A] × [B]

Two rules of thumb



Judges are human

Connect first. Humour works.



Story beats data

One person, one story, then one number.

Delivery tips

Aim for a steady first 20 seconds.

Stance

Feet apart, hands free, end on a full stop.

Pause

Two silent seconds after each sentence.

Eye contact

One sentence, one person. Finish, then move.

Fillers and pace

Exercise: practice with a partner who taps every um.

Breathing to calm nerves

In for 4, out for 6, three times. Learn your first 20 seconds by heart.

Blank-out

Breathe, repeat your last line.

Practice. And Practice again

Leave enough time for questions and prepare for them

You have 3-4 minutes, leave at least 2 minute for questions

Be enthusiastic

Q&A drill: six hard questions

What is actually new here?

Innovation · 20%

How did you get that number?

Impact · 20%

What happens when the prize money is spent?

Sustainability and scale · 15%

What have you done so far, and who does the work?

Feasibility · 10%

Who pays, how much, and why you?

Commercial viability · 20%

Which jobs, paid by what?

Job creation · 15%

Answer shape: the answer, one fact, stop. "I don't know yet, but this is what I plan to do to find out" is allowed.

You've got this.

