

Preliminary findings from the Karoo Crafts study

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What is it?

- Karoo crafts an unknown entity
- How many? Who/where are they? What do they make? How are they faring? If badly, what can be done to help? What are their felt needs?
- Survey as a scoping study to get a grip on these imponderables
- Questionnaires administered by local 'champions' across the Karoo (30+ towns)
- +/- 140 questionnaires returned completed
- Is this an adequate sample? Who knows?
- Typical demographics gathered eg. Age; education level; race; gender; length of residence; nature of enterprise; type of premises; skill qualifications; what advertising (if any); number of staff etc plus more open-ended questions.

How far have we got?

- Coding still underway (too dull a task safely to delegate)
 - Tedious and exacting work but excellent (only?) way to 'get under the skin' of a survey
 - Arguably more revealing than analysing the final polished outcomes because one runs up against factors that may be 'masked' by an aggregation.
 - So what are Karoo crafters producing?
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Range of products

- Sewing – clothes, handbags, embroidery, felt, knitted goods, potholders
 - Toys, dolls, teddy bears
 - Ostrich eggs
 - Paintings and sculptures
 - Graphic design
 - Jewellery, beads
 - Mosaic
 - Iron and wire and steel and metal, including windmills
 - Furniture, furnishings, upholstery and carpets
 - Stone art and tombstones
 - Signwriting
 - Decorative items, cushions, wall hangings, beads, photo frames, screenprinting, key holders, decoupage, boxes, serviette rings
 - Candles
 - Bottled goods, preserves
 - Wool
 - Leather and horn
 - Cards and scrapbooks
 - Material – sheets, duvets, pillows, curtains, tablecloths
 - Pottery and ceramics
 - Handmade Paper
 - Wood products, carvings
 - Glass
 - Shoes and footwear
 - Cosmetics
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Areas of concern

- About 90% of respondents report **turnover** of <R1000 a month. Can this be? If so then something is seriously wrong (although quite often obviously a sideline)
 - Municipalities have actually done quite a bit in modest ways – not always acknowledged
 - Expectations of municipalities often totally unrealistic (e.g. must provide funding; tools; materials; premises; training etc.)
 - Not much in the way of craft regarded as ‘art’
 - Big first/second economy divide
 - In second economy cellphones very prevalent (on *those* turnovers?) but e-mail or web presence notably absent.
 - Foreign competition – overt mentions of ‘Chinese’
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A (sneak preview) analysis

- Suspect opportunity cost of time set at near zero. Suspect next to no knowledge of how customer base reasons.
- Question of value setting for product. For example: Do crafters who recycle waste consider building a 'social responsibility premium' into their prices or do they price their artefacts as though they were just reconfigured junk?
- What kind of costing goes on?
- Very clear that NGOs/municipalities can (at virtually no cost) provide enormous boost by facilitating *access to* funding; materials; premisses; training etc. (e.g. with training - LED Officers should have the sort of birds-eye-view needed to aggregate sufficient numbers of prospective trainees to warrant SETA-type training).
- There is a parallel to socio-economic rights discourse in the misperception of State responsibilities e.g. the right to health vs the right of *access to adequate health care* (and then only to be *progressively* realised, as and when circumstances permit). "The right to land" – DLA DG in KZN.
- No need for massive roll-out of ECON101 but crying need for personalised one-on-one mentoring and 'hand-holding' and for a 'supervisory' type perspective to optimise divisions of labour.
- **Small unsophisticated crafters cannot be all-in-one administrators/producers/marketers/distributors**

CRADOCK ROCKS!!

