

## Company Brings Hope to African Entrepreneurs

News reports often tell of the struggle to lift Africans out of poverty. One entrepreneur is doing her part to bring hope to that continent through a business endeavor that is now bringing its products to the world market. The desire to help others is what originally led South African Elmare Lombard to leave her successful psychological practice after 15 years to start a natural aromatherapy line. From experimenting with essential oils and plant-based oils in her kitchen to eventually seeking international markets for the line, Lombard has made her dream a reality today. Her Molo Africa line is now being distributed in the U.S. by BioPharmetics Inc. But her company, founded with family members and community leaders, also helps establish farming projects for disadvantaged people in her native South Africa. Molo Africa has a proactive employment policy that helps single parents get jobs with the company or affiliated businesses. This initiative is designed to promote self-sufficiency and brings a sense of pride for individuals. Molo Africa supports [jim pratt haney](#), the independent farmers of Africa through advice and assistance; the purchase of raw products at fair market prices; and through education initiatives that help impoverished South Africans develop skills in agriculture, basic education, entrepreneurship and computer training. The company's product line includes pure essential oils, natural aromatic room sprays, massage butters, shea soaps and scented candles. Molo is an African greeting meaning "hello." Bearing evocative African names such as "Hamba Suka" and "Sefako," the products contain essential oils that were extracted from exotic plants farmed and processed naturally in African countries. Gertrude Mewy is an example of the kind of success story Lombard's company helped to create. The single mother from Guguletu, Cape Town, was raising her four children on a small salary as a domestic worker. But she dreamed of being an entrepreneur. With the help of the Foundation for Economic and Business Development, she started her own pottery business. Her hard work paid off when she became a supplier of ceramic beads to Molo Africa. Its contract with Gertrude enables her to employ two full-time workers, both of whom are single mothers. Her business now supports nine people and there are plans for more business deals between Gertrude and Molo Africa.