

## INTRODUCTION

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*“Owing to the existing growth appraisal systems, SMEs pay more attention to ‘quantity’ growth and neglect the improvement of ‘quality’, they are keen on “big”, while ignoring the ‘strong’. This provides the best explanation of many cases where SMEs perform well today but go bankrupt tomorrow” Gao and Banerji (2015:176).*

The use of entrepreneurship is advocated by governments all over the world, as a strategic tool in eradicating poverty and unemployment, due to the belief that the establishment of Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) will enable job creation. Various studies support the fact that these enterprises are pivotal in changing the lives of local communities through the creation of jobs, in addition to relieving poverty and being a key factor in the improvement of overall living standards. With many who reside in rural and under developed areas predominantly basing their livelihood on income sourced from selling goods/services, research shows that these goods/services are either made locally or bought elsewhere and sold in local markets. Nonetheless, concern is expressed by various stakeholders regarding the development of the entrepreneurship sector in rural and underdeveloped areas. In most part, it appears that the entire industry shows a definite lack in rural entrepreneurship promotional strategy, with marketing strategies used by rural entrepreneurs seemingly disjointed and disorganised or in some way neither well-organised nor useful at all.

In this book the underlying message expressed is that the rural enterprises sector should modify and improve its entrepreneurial marketing orientation. I do believe, though, that basic marketing theories and models of the entrepreneur and entrepreneurial process can be applied and practiced, wherever entrepreneurs operate in the rural areas. In dissecting the physics of marketing, it is found possible to minimise the same, blanket approach that rural entrepreneurs and their urban counterparts make use of, through the encouragement of different marketing strategic approaches by the marketing professional. It is, nevertheless, important to acknowledge the significance of the socioeconomic context in which rural entrepreneurs operate, in addition to the effect that various aspects, such as, for instance, green marketing, social media and social network technologies, have in developing and sustaining rural SMMEs, while also establishing an understanding of financial, technological and educational constraints faced by rural enterprises, in order that solutions and frameworks for referencing are put forward.