1 The Legacy and Indigenous Cannabis Framework (LICF)

1.1 An African-Centred Community Ownership Model for Cannabis Sovereignty, Wellness and Economic Transformation

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2 Executive Summary

The legalisation and regulation of cannabis is not simply about building a new industry. It is a historic opportunity for African communities to reclaim our relationship with the land, our indigenous knowledge, and our rightful place in the economy.

For generations, cannabis has been woven into the fabric of African life through our cultivation, healing traditions, agricultural wisdom, and deep connection to the land. Yet, prohibition targeted and criminalised the very communities that safeguarded this knowledge. Today, as legal markets emerge, we must guard against repeating the patterns of exclusion that marked colonial and apartheid economies.

The Legacy and Indigenous Cannabis Framework (LICF) proposes a new approach:

Cannabis development must go beyond creating markets. It must restore ownership, dignity, and self-determination to our communities.

The framework establishes community-owned Cannabis Wellness Hubs built around three interconnected pillars:

1. **Grow Hubs** - community cultivation, farmer development and agricultural sovereignty.
2.
3. **Processing Hubs** - value creation, manufacturing and economic participation
4.
5. **Wellness Hubs** - indigenous knowledge, education, health and community wellbeing

This framework is built to ensure that legacy farmers, indigenous knowledge holders, and rural and township communities are not left behind as the regulated cannabis economy takes shape.

3 1. Philosophical Foundation: Cannabis and African Self-Determination

Too often, African development has been shaped by outside forces that separated our communities from our land, our knowledge, and our economic resources.

The Legacy and Indigenous Cannabis Framework is grounded in the belief that real transformation happens when communities become active decision-makers in shaping their own futures.

As Steve Biko, South African anti-apartheid activist, wrote:

“The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.”

For cannabis development to be truly just, our communities must move beyond seeing ourselves only as laborers, consumers, or passive beneficiaries. We must recognise ourselves as:

- Innovators
- Entrepreneurs
- Owners
- Custodians of African botanical knowledge

The framework aligns with the principle of African self-reliance expressed by Thomas Sankara, a Burkinabè revolutionary leader, who emphasised that African societies must build solutions rooted in their own realities rather than dependency on external systems.

The future of the cannabis economy must be shaped by African knowledge, African participation, and African ownership.

4 2. Vision

To build a network of Indigenous and Legacy Cannabis Wellness Hubs that return ownership of cannabis production, processing, knowledge, and wellness systems to our communities.

5 3. Mission

To create sustainable community-driven cannabis economies where:

- Legacy farmers transition into regulated markets.
- Indigenous knowledge is protected and respected.
- Communities’ own productive infrastructure.

- Young people gain skills and opportunities.
- Women become key participants in the cannabis economy.
- Wellness and cultural knowledge are preserved.

6 4. Why the Legacy and Indigenous Framework is Necessary

The global cannabis industry shows us that legalisation on its own does not guarantee justice or inclusion.

Without deliberate inclusion mechanisms, communities that carried cannabis knowledge through generations risk being excluded by:

- High licensing costs
- Regulatory barriers
- Capital requirements
- Lack of infrastructure
- Limited access to markets

The LICF responds to this challenge by creating a pathway for informal and traditional knowledge systems to enter a regulated, community-owned economy.

Cannabis Wellness Hub Model

Each participating community will develop a Cannabis Wellness Hub consisting of three connected centres.

7 Pillar One: Indigenous Cannabis Grow Hub

7.1 Purpose

To support legacy farmers and communities in becoming owners of sustainable cannabis cultivation systems. Recognise that agricultural knowledge exists within communities and must be strengthened rather than replaced.

7.2 ACTIVITIES:

7.2.1 Legacy Farmer Inclusion

Each community will identify:

- Experienced cannabis farmers
- Traditional growers
- Agricultural knowledge holders
- Community farming networks

The process will document:

- Cultivation practices
- Environmental knowledge
- Historical relationships with cannabis
- Community agricultural systems

7.3 SUSTAINABLE CULTIVATION DEVELOPMENT

Training will combine:

African ecological knowledge with modern agricultural practice.

Areas include:

- Regenerative agriculture
- Soil health
- Water conservation
- Organic cultivation
- Quality standards
- Compliance pathways

7.4 COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Grow Hub will operate through community-based structures such as:

- Cooperatives
- Community trusts
- Farmer associations

The objective:

Our communities must own the means of production.

8 Pillar Two: Indigenous Cannabis Processing Hub

8.1 Purpose

To ensure our communities do not remain only suppliers of raw materials.

Economic transformation requires movement from:

Plant → Product → Market → Community Wealth

The Processing Hub creates local value chains.

8.2 Functions:

- Drying and curing facilities
- Storage infrastructure
- Product development
- Packaging
- Quality management
- Research partnerships

8.3 Economic Opportunities:

Processing creates pathways for:

- Youth employment
- Women-led enterprises
- Local manufacturing
- Skills development
- Entrepreneurship

9 Pillar Three: Indigenous Cannabis Wellness Hub

9.1 Purpose

To create spaces where cannabis is understood through the lenses of wellness, education, science, and The Wellness Hub will serve as a cornerstone institution within the community. community institution.

It is much more than a retail space.

9.2 Wellness Hub Programmes:

9.2.1 Cannabis Education

Including:

- Plant history
- Responsible use
- Cannabis science
- Traditional knowledge systems

9.2.2 Indigenous Knowledge Archive

The Wellness Hub will support:

- Elder interviews
- Oral histories
- Knowledge preservation
- Community storytelling

9.2.3 Community Wellness Services

Through partnerships with:

- Wellness practitioners
- Researchers
- Community organisations

10 6. Implementation Model

10.1 Phase One: Community Engagement

Before implementation:

- Community consultations
- Farmer mapping
- Knowledge holder identification
- Land and resource assessment

Outputs:

Community Cannabis Development Plan

10.2 Phase Two: Establishment

Development of:

- Grow Hub
- Processing Hub
- Wellness Hub

Training and governance structures established.

10.3 Phase Three: Expansion

Each hub becomes a regional centre supporting:

- Nearby farmers
- Youth programmes
- Research
- Economic development

11 7. Role of AfuRaKa Institute

AfuRaKa Institute provides:

- Indigenous knowledge research
- Cultural documentation
- Community engagement
- Policy development
- Education programmes
- Future-focused African development frameworks

AfuRaKa places cannabis at the heart of a broader conversation about African futures, land, knowledge, and sovereignty.

12 8. Role of Impilo Green

Impilo Green will support the implementation of Wellness Hub models through:

- Wellness programming
- Community education
- Operational systems

- Industry expertise
- Community-facing cannabis development

Together, AfuRaKa Institute and Impilo Green connect:

Policy → Community → Industry → Wellness

13 9. Policy Recommendations

For cannabis reform to succeed, South Africa requires:

1. Dedicated inclusion mechanisms for legacy farmers
2. Community ownership pathways
3. Support for indigenous knowledge holders
4. Accessible licensing pathways
5. Public investment in community infrastructure
6. Protection against the extraction of indigenous knowledge

14 Conclusion

Cannabis has always meant more than just a plant.

It represents the deep relationships between people, land, healing, and knowledge.

The Legacy and Indigenous Cannabis Framework is committed to ensuring that Africa's future cannabis economy does not repeat the painful histories where resources left our communities and wealth accumulated elsewhere. As African liberation thinkers have consistently argued, development must be connected to dignity, ownership and self-determination. The future of cannabis must be built by the very communities who carry its knowledge, for the benefit of generations still to come.

A community that owns its knowledge can build its future.