

Baphumelele Newsletter August 2013

Welcome again to our newsletter – containing lots of information, photos and updates on all the Baphumelele projects. We hope you enjoy it!

Child Headed Homes

Winter in Cape Town has always been very problematic for our young families as they have to fend for themselves in the cold and the rain, often in very poor conditions. The majority of our children live in shacks – homes put together from board and tin – which are frequently not watertight at the joints, or have rusted badly or are simply not made from waterproof materials.



So with this in mind, our mission has been to try and replace the worst of the shacks with prefabricated homes, made from a properly designed and cut wooden frame, with corrugated zinc cladding. These are built by professional builders and are much more robust, and also waterproof. This winter we have been able to replace shacks for three of our families:

Sibongile and his friend Zukile, teen-aged boys who have lived together alone for four years. They have helped each other greatly with Zukile in charge of the cooking, while Sibongile going to school. It is not entirely sure who is in charge of the tidying up! Being boys alone, they have really suffered without a mother figure to help them, but having a new home has changed their

lives forever. Zukile is now attending the Learn to Live program in Cape Town where he is learning how to do welding, while also being given basic tuition in maths, English and isiXhosa. He is enjoying taking the train into town and becoming more independent, as well as meeting other boys at the training centre.

Athenkosi and her little brother have lived together alone ever since their parents passed away a few years ago. Their home until now has been falling down, and they have struggled to live normally. Athenkosi is being mentored by our team to help her deal with the heart-rending issues that she has had to face alone.

Our final family is made up two teenage brothers, their little sister aged 8, and their big sister with her young baby (aged 1). They have been living in terrible conditions for some years now, and without their parents. While trying their best, it has been a losing battle with no money coming in, and the big sister being ill and bed-ridden for some time. With the new home, they have new hope, and are being fully supported by our team to help them attend school properly, and care for themselves.

This project is very close to our hearts. It is very painful to see these children living in such awful conditions, when they are trying to deal with the trauma of losing their parents, often living with illness, and wondering how they are going to eat each day. For those who want to help, please contact Rosie.

Bringing the Child Headed Homes families together is a very important part of making sure they feel part of a community. Working with our friends at South Point and North Point churches, a week-long program was organized during the winter holiday. This included motivational sessions for people facing adversity, as well as practical training on health issues including first aid (they each also received a first aid kit which is invaluable in their communities where they can't often reach a clinic quickly if something goes wrong). Lots of fun was also had with movies and a trip to the bowling alley. The week ended with a two-day camp where the focus was on spiritual matters, as well as very long hikes up big hills!



For many of the heads of households, this was the first time attending a group event like this, and they left it knowing that they were now part of a wider family supporting each other and sharing their experiences. It was a new beginning for everybody.



Orphaned and vulnerable children in the community

While our Child Headed Homes program has helped children who are orphaned and vulnerable since 2009, 2013 saw the expansion of our community outreach programs to include Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVCs). As a result of receiving some major funding from an international government donor, an outreach team has been established which provides support, guidance and action to children who are considered vulnerable or at risk, as well as their family and the wider community. Their main priority is to strengthen the family structure and to reduce the risk of it collapsing thereby creating an even greater burden for the community. Key priority areas are HIV prevention as well as access to proper treatment and care (we use our sister outreach project Hospice in the Home to help with this); child protection especially those children in child headed homes, reproductive health, as well as access to relevant government services and support.



This project kicked off in May and we already have 450 people in 170 families that have received help in some way or another. While the funding focuses primarily on the outreach team, we have felt very strongly that the families should also be given interim assistance with clothing, food and bedding. Following drives by

our passionate supporters, we received lots of donations of these winter necessities and we were able to gladly hand them out in July and August to help at least to alleviate some of the extreme poverty and terrible sadness that this project has uncovered.



Hospice in the Home

This outreach project which is led by Sister Adam, the nurse, with Ntutuzelo and Nombulelo has been working in the community for some years now, focusing on people suffering from HIV/AIDS or TB who are not able to access the clinics or who are struggling with the treatment or the impact of the disease. The team is now working closely with the other outreach projects so that they can provide the expertise that they have gained over the years to the new families joining the programs.



A case that comes to mind is a young mother and her baby who were both on treatment but because of a lack of food and of understanding, the baby was not receiving the treatment properly. Sister Adam and her team visited the small family together with the OVC outreach worker to help mentor the mother and support her in understanding her responsibilities. They also helped provide immediate care. However after a series of monitoring visits, it was decided that the mother was not able to care properly for the baby, and working with the government social workers, the baby has been placed into short-term emergency care. Hopefully with the proper medical intervention and care, the baby will survive and grow strong. In the meantime ongoing support is being given to the mother to ensure she can also grow strong and care again for her own baby one day.



Clemens Cares for Kids

Meanwhile at the Clemens House, the young patients are being cared for by a team of 12 carers working on a shift system. With all of the patients now being between 0 and 3 years old, it is intensive but rewarding work. We are also delighted to welcome John, a paediatric charge nurse, to the team – his experience working in children's homes and with children with HIV/AIDS and TB has already been put to good use with our patients.



In the past months, we have seen the great impact this project has made on two children who were struggling to grow and to develop – they stayed at Clemens House for some months and received dedicated support and attention including physio as well as a special diet.



One child who is 2 and couldn't yet even crawl, is now charging about as fast as his little legs can carry him. The other child who suffers from a genetic syndrome that causes developmental delays is now a bonny, fat toddler, crawling around trying to get in all the cupboards!



Respite Centre

We were very sad to say goodbye to Marion earlier in the year and were very worried about who would be able to fill her shoes. We were very pleased and grateful that Bridget, our long-standing nurse, accepted our offer to take over the supervision of the Respite Centre especially its existing nursing team, as well as the Hospice in the Home and Clemens teams. As Bridget has been volunteering and then working at Baphumelele for almost a decade, she knows extremely well both the challenges and positives of working in this community especially with regards to HIV/AIDS and TB. With Bridget taking on this new role, we have taken the

opportunity to review all the projects now under her wing to make sure we are delivering the best possible service within the financial constraints that we have. We are also working hard to join up the various services so that Baphumelele can provide a truly holistic approach to helping people in community with HIV/AIDS. A key part of this is ensuring the services offered by the two residential respite centres, the outreach programs, as well as the child protection services offered by the Children's Home, and the youth training program at the Fountain of Hope are working together so that everybody in need has some form of help



Fountain of Hope

Lots of work has been done in recent months on the agricultural side of this project. With the help of Melissa, a planting plan has been implemented to ensure that there is a variety of vegetables ready to be picked each week – this follows an exciting couple of weeks last year when we had over 200 cabbages ready in one week! At the same time we have diversified in what is being grown – we know that beetroot,

spinach and green cabbage grows very well, but we are also now growing beans, turnips, onions as well as a range of herbs such as parsley.





While we continue to supply Baphumelele with lots of fresh veg, we are also now working with a new health food café called Pure Good in Cape Town. This is run by Shannon who is not only the daughter of a long-term supporter of Baphumelele but also a former MasterChef contestant. Pure Good will work hand in hand with the Fountain of Hope buying vegetables and herbs including parsley for their famous parsley relish!. They will also deliver back to the farm all the pulped fruit and veg that go into making all the smoothies and juices, which will be used in the compost heap. We also hope that the young people training on the farm will get the opportunity to intern at Pure Good in the future.



Helping our young people

In the meantime at the Fountain of Hope we are piloting a training program for our Child Headed Homes families. These are teenagers who have often dropped out of school or who have finished school and haven't been able to find work. They are coming to the Fountain of Hope on non-residential basis to attend the short program – this includes a week of computer training where they will learn the basics of computer use as well as learn how to type. They will also learn how to find work including preparation of the CV, attending an interview, how to dress in the workplace, and the importance of reliability and punctuality.



Finally they will also be taught over a two day workshop how to grow their own food – using our farm land to learn how to prepare the soil, practice planting, water and harvesting the vegetables when they are ready. As these children have no land themselves, they will actually grow the vegetables in movable containers (such as bread or milk crates) which can be used in very small spaces. Ten youth will start this week on this training, and we aim to roll it out across all our Child Headed and OVC families in the community in the next months.



Finally for the animal lovers at Baphumelele, it has been very nice to welcome to the farm two very important new members –



Zoe the cat (mouse-catcher) and Diamond the dog (guard dog to be). Both are still very young, but they are learning their roles when they feel

like it. Zoe is mainly to be found on top of the filing cabinet in the office, while Diamond stays outside guarding things (in this case our new bore-hole). Hopefully if there was a mouse or a stranger, they might even leap into action!



Educare & Grade R

Our oldest project continues to provide a really great service to local young children, all 240 of them! Downstairs in the Educare, the 7 classes start the day with porridge, and then focus on learning (for the 4-5 year olds) and playing (for the toddlers). Counting, doing basic sums, learning the days of the week and months in the year, and storytelling are all part of the morning session. Lunch is provided to everybody making sure that each child is fed properly, followed by an afternoon nap.

The Grade R continues to flourish too although they are now very short of space – a new fundraising initiative is being launched to try and expand the space available by extending the second floor area. This hopefully will start to

take shape in the next year. The children meanwhile are looking forward to graduation at the end of the year, and starting Grade 1 Primary School in January.

Throughout the school year, Monica is very keen to ensure that the children go on outings to learn about life. Last week, the two Grade R classes paid a visit to the Fountain of Hope. There they were welcomed by Joseph and Gerome into the farm area, and shown how vegetables grow from seed all the way to being a tasty plant to eat. The children also met the various animals, and enjoyed seeing the farming area of Schaapkraal which, with its horses and carts, cows, sheep and tractors, seems a world away from the busy life of Khayelitsha!

Children's Home

Always at the heart of Baphumelele, the Children's Home has settled into a steady routine caring for the 106 children in its care. The one big change has been the introduction of an extra team of care staff to ensure 24 hour care 364 days of the year to the highest standard. They are well supported by our two new senior

caregivers – many of you will know Phelisa (routinely voted star caregiver!) who has been promoted to this role, alongside Noxolo. They provide extra supervision and direction to the now very large team of carers as well run many of the extracurricular activities for the children.

There has always been involvement in football of some sort, but the children are now taking part in a netball league, two teams of boys are playing 11 a side football, there's a dance troupe, a choir, art classes hosted by Mpumelelo, and finally the scout troupe. These activities run alongside the group counseling sessions and life-skills groups every week. On Sunday, the focus is on church, and spending time together as a (very big!) family.



Rosie's Bakery & Soup Kitchen...and Sewing

Mama Nosiseko has been in the driving seat for many years for our income-generating projects. Under her supervision and with the support of the office, **Rosie's Bakery** is now breaking even – great news and something which we have all been working hard towards. Our main clients are other NGOs as well as other churches, who use the bread to feed their beneficiaries, be it terminally ill children or for food parcels for poorer members of the congregation – in other words, other people in need from a range of communities in the Cape Town area.

The **Soup Kitchen** is also doing a great trade in amaqwinya (vetkoek.....or savoury doughnut) served up with a tasty filling of mince meat, chicken livers or chips!

Last but not least the **Sewing Project** has been the lucky recipient of a donation of high-quality

thick winter fleece from a local clothing manufacturer. Mama Nosiseko and her team of qualified seamstresses and apprentices have been turning out the most amazing fleecy tops for winter.



Quick Bits

- If you would like ideas on how to help, we have a 'live' wishlist on our website which gets updated regularly through the year – www.baphumelele.org.za/wishlist
- Baphumelele has updated its legal structure to comply with the updated SA Companies Act. It is now registered as a Not for Profit Company (NPC) and is now referred to as Baphumelele Waldorf Association (NPC). More details of this and our registration numbers can be found on our website www.baphumelele.org.za/aboutus
- For those of you based in Switzerland who wish to make donation, we are pleased to be working with the Helios Life Association. Please have a look at our website for further information – www.baphumelele.org.za/howtodonateviaswitzerland

Gallery



For more details on all our projects, please contact Rosie on rosie@baphumelele.org.za

Thank you so much for all your support – without you we would not be here today