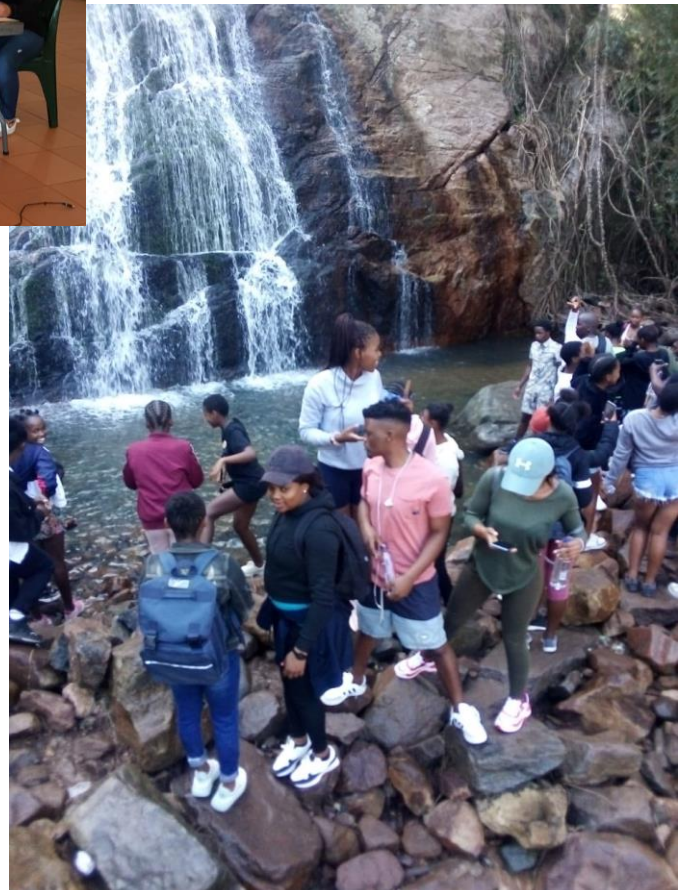




Report March – June 2022



Report from Sipho, Lindo and Andile

We are so excited to be sharing once again about what has been happening in the Valley, the schools and all our places of connection as an organization. We have continuously seen God's faithfulness over our lives and our work. Even with the terrible flooding experience we had in April we are still grateful for how He does not leave nor does He forsake us. During the floods disaster, Ikusasa lethu and Hillside church were able to reach out to the community and provided clothes, cooked meals, school uniforms and exercise books.



Classroom activity

It has been so exciting to facilitate the Goal Pro Solution programme (GPS). I can proudly say that over the few months in schools facilitating this programme we have seen a great improvement in the lives of the learners. We are starting to see learners taking ownership of their lives as to what direction they want to take for their future. We also are starting to see learners opening up about unhealthy situations they are experiencing in schools, society and in their homes. This programme is a great platform for all young people to take ownership of their future through goal setting and planning for success in their lives.



Andile taking a Goal Pro session

Through our classroom sessions we have discovered some personal issues with some of the learners that are related to family background disputes. Arising from our engagement with these learners we have had an opportunity to start connecting with the parents about some of the issues. Through doing home visits we discovered there is a lot of substance abuse and domestic violence, but we have an opportunity to encourage, bring hope and pray for these families, and families are willing to work with us in restoring the family relationship,

We are facilitating the Goal Pro programme three schools:

Kwantebeni High school has two classes at Grade 8, both of 60 learners.

Thabela High school has two classes at Grade 8 classes, both with 77 learners, making a total of 154.

IkusasaLentsha High school is based in Inanda. There are 7 classes at grade 8, but at this stage we are engaging with only 3 classes, consisting of 44, 49 and 53 learners, making a total of 146.

Youth outreach

We are currently running three youth groups. Kwantebeni youth club has 61 members and takes place on Thursday at school premises, straight after school from 14:00 – 16:30.

IkusasaLethu youth club has 11 members. It happens at Hillside every Friday 14:00-17:00 and Khabazela youth club has 32 members and takes place in the school premises every Friday 13:30-15:00.



Some members of Khabazela Youth Club

We are so thrilled to say that lives are being transformed. There has been so much growth we have noticed over the past 5 months.

We also have an Alpha course that takes place at Hillside premises on Wednesday after sewing classes from 12:00 - 13:30. All is going well and lives are continuously being transformed.

In April we had an opportunity to host YWAM students from Bethlehem, and we were so blessed to have them come and minister at all our youth clubs. They played games with them and held group discussions about what we can do as a group to help each other grow spiritually and personally. They also shared a lot of their testimonies which I found helpful and impactful because these guys are also young so they related well with our members.

Community members are grateful for our involvement in their lives.

IkusasaLethu is still involved in running morning talks with the following schools, Vusimuzi Primary School with 562 learners, Gwadu Primary School with 913 learners and Khabazela High School with 1200 learners. In the month of May we did not do morning talks due to Covid and other obstacles but they are looking to reconsider morning prayers because they have seen the impact of morning prayers in schools and they are grateful that we offer this service.



We had the honour to be invited by Vusimuzi Primary School to enlighten learners about their rights in celebration of Human Rights Day, that shows that what we carry as IkusasaLethu is recognized. Lindo spoke about their right to be loved and to protect their identity.

Embo ministries still continue and Mrs Shan is playing a very important role in preparing kid's church material and we are grateful for the growth and change that is happening in the lives of young people. We currently have 36 children attending kids church on Saturday.



In June after the school break up we had an opportunity to take our youth club members for a hike at Giba Gorge.

We had so much fun walking the bush with the youth, so many stories and laughs, they also got to know more about nature. The tour guide did an exceptional job in explaining everything during the course of the walk. The youth paid for their transport and entry fee and we are grateful to those who generously donated money towards the lunches.

Altogether the day was a great success, a new exciting experience which will be remembered for a very long time.

Training

In April we were able to train 3 candidates to qualify as baristas and we are so excited to say that all 3 candidates have now got jobs working as baristas. Two ladies are now employed by The Peoples Coffee Company and the guy is employed at the BP garage coffee bar in Pinetown.

Jean Meikle-Braes ran a Business Training course which was attended by the iKusasaLethu team and some others.

Sport

iKusasaLethu is also involved in sports. Our players have been representing iKusasaLethu very well. We have 51 football players ranging across all soccer divisions and 21 netball players. Our junior team participated in the tournament held at Nazareth sport field. Without the support of our donors our team wouldn't have been able to participate. Even though they did not qualify for the finals it was a great experience for them..



Our senior team is doing well and some of our senior players are also doing well with their studies in their tertiary institutions.

Here is a message of gratitude from one of our senior players Percy Shabalala:

Kunina nonke ngiyabonga for your support from the team and management. I got the golden medal for top goal scorer of the tournament. iKusasaLethu had a big impact. Now I see that we are a big team. Please keep on supporting us and not forget to always put God first.



Our netball team participated in the ward 8 tournament. They played very well even though they couldn't qualify for finals.

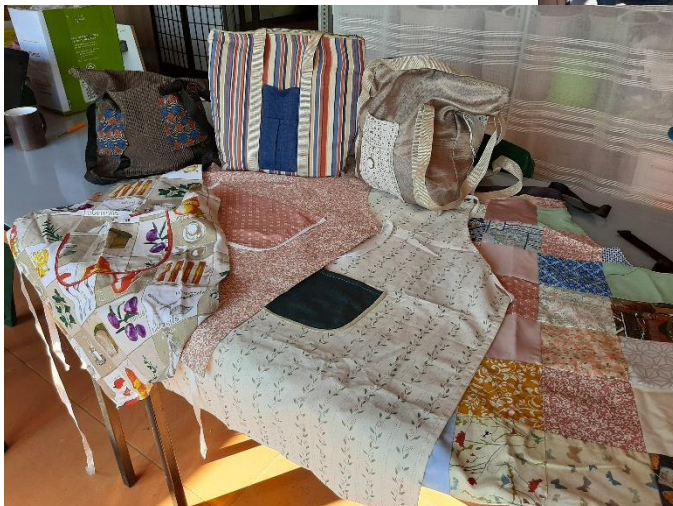
Many thanks to all our supporters and donors, without whom none of this would be possible,

Sipho, Lindo and Andile

iKusasaLethu Sewing Project

Summary

Despite floods, erratic electricity, no water for over two weeks, frequent sickness and, sadly, two episodes of gender based violence affecting our students, the sewing classes continued and our students have learnt a lot.



Our need for additional facilitators has been met, with new volunteers who bring skills greatly exceeding our expectations.

Suné Charlton is an established dress designer with a wealth of creative talent and Gerty Kruger has long been involved in production. Tracey van Staden

assisted us at a time when we really needed it, and Kim Duncan has recently joined our team. Thanks to this additional expertise we have been able to be more flexible in our basic curriculum and also to introduce sessions on Thursdays for our graduates. We have continued to receive donations of fabric and haberdashery, so much that it has been necessary to install additional shelves in the sewing room, thanks to a donation to iKusasaLethu.

Class 4

One of the four students we selected was fortunate to get a job after the first month, and we replaced her with a young man whose ambition is to help grow his mother's sewing business.

Another young man requested access to use a sewing machine as his was in need of repair. After attending a couple of times on Thursdays we took him on to the course, as another of the students appeared to have dropped out – to our great delight she returned, and as a result we now have five students.



Now that we have three young men on the course we have made some changes in the curriculum, such as offering a Madiba shirt as an alternative to the wrap skirt. The class is progressing slowly but steadily, and we are impressed by the creativity our students are showing.



Graduates

At the beginning of May we started our Thursday sessions for Graduates. At these sessions we are focussing on dealing with issues they are facing in their fledgling enterprises and also introducing projects that have the potential to earn some cash. Already they have made fluffy bunnies and scrunchies which we hope to be able to sell at markets.

Gabi unfortunately lost everything, including her home and her sewing machine in the floods in April. It is in response to her suggestion that we are starting overlocker training in July, as sewing jobs often require this skill.

Nosipho continues to produce imaginative creations. She accepted the challenge to make a 'memory quilt' out of bandannas for a commission and produced a beautiful souvenir for her client. This has led to other commissions.

Qiniso has been doing alterations for friends and neighbours, and told me with pride that the money she earned had enabled her to buy grapes as a special treat for her small son.



And on 19 June Sphe, one of our graduates from our very first course, gave birth to a beautiful baby boy.

Finances

As always we are immensely grateful to our donors, without whom it would be difficult to keep the school going. Our running costs are quite low as all our facilitators are now volunteers and much of our fabric is donated. Our main recurrent expenses are sewing machine parts and servicing and haberdashery and fabric which we cannot source from our 'stash'. We do, however, want to see

each of our 'graduates' in a position where they are able to use their new-found skills to improve their lives and that of their dependents, which they can only do if they have their own machine and basic equipment. This costs on average about R1 750 per graduate. So far we have been given four sewing machines and three overlockers and have bought 12 machines using donated funds. Our nine graduates have all been given machines, and we have paid to renovate machines inherited by two of our students.

We are always delighted to receive donations, whether they come in the form of machines, fabric, haberdashery or cash. Our graduates are very happy to take on commissions, and we have fluffy bunnies, gift bags and scrunchies for sale.

For more information please contact Jean Meikle-Braes on 082 442 9509 or Ann Braine on 082 802 9683.

Ann Braine
July 2022

Goods for Sale

Contact us if you would like to view any of these or request a quote for a specific item.

