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“Community Partners Joining Hands”

As a community grant-making organisation working closely with individuals and leaders at the coal-face of inequality, poverty and unemployment – we get to experience first hand how the ability to connect the DOTS can so often be life-changing and we feel strongly that this is exactly what community philanthropy should be about. It is not always about the size of a grant but more importantly the relationship with the people who receive the grant and how through this relationship so many other possibilities and opportunities come to the fore!!



We told the story of the Hobeni Village in October last year – you may recall the long and winding nightmare trip that had a happy ending and the story continues. Subsequent to this trip – 3 members of Ikhaya Loxolo Organisation

attended an ABCD workshop and our end of year Festival in Port Elizabeth. It was at these sessions that they were connected to Kwenzekile Community Development Centre's founder, Bongi Ndakasi. KCDC is a long-standing community partner of Ikhala Trust and recently took a leap of faith and decided that they would use their accredited computer training skills to teach others and in this way ensure that individuals and communities who otherwise will not be able to access accredited computer skills training courses would also be able to benefit. So Bongi and Esihle (her colleague) offer mobile computer skills training courses – going to where people are instead of expecting them to travel to their offices in Tsolo. When Malusi chatted to Bongi about the need to get young people from his village computer literate there was no hesitation.

This requires a heck of a lot of planning and because KCDC does not have all the equipment needed, were kindly supported by Thembekile Kanise, an Ikhala associate and colleague who availed some laptops to them to use in Hobeni Village. All of this happened without Ikhala Trust getting involved except to provide a small grant made possible through our on-granting programme with LEGALWISE SA. This also proves that people like Bongi and Malusi can make things happen and just require the space and confidence to do so.

Malusi set about identifying 30 people who showed interest in learning computer skills and Bongi and Esihle spent 10 days altogether in the village (out of their own comfort zone from their own village) training very enthusiastic participants, many of whom had never seen a key board or worked on a computer before. In Bongi's words to me "I thought I lived in a village until I arrived here – this is deep rural village".



There were some participants who were so eager that they worked well into the night to complete their assignments. (Like these two ladies to the left who are involved in the Agriculture Project.)

Fortunately the Ikhaya Loxolo Centre has solar energy that was installed a while back that

enabled them to have electricity on a regular basis.

There was much fanfare and excitement as the graduation ceremony was to be held on the 2nd March 2018. Preparations for the ceremony started 5 days before with the erection of the marquee tent and all the necessary equipment that had to be brought to the village.



The 2nd March finally dawned and despite a late start was a huge success. According to Bongi “the community was just in awe of the whole thing – they say they were not expecting something this formal and organised. They Municipal Mayor was the guest speaker and he was very good and promised to help the organisation. The Chief said he will be having a community meeting and he is going to

boast about the training so we must be prepared to come back”

Hobeni Village is +- 50kms from Elliotdale where 2 new stores will be opening i.e. A Spar and a Boxer Store and the purpose of training 30 participants in computer skills is to ensure that at least some of them have an opportunity to find employment as the rate of unemployment in the village amongst young school leavers is very high and there are not many opportunities for them.

Aside from the computer training, Ikhaya Loxolo also runs a school for children with disability, a successful agriculture project and more recently an after-care facility for home-work supervision well as an Early Childhood Development facility.



We are inspired by the vision of these young leaders from Hobeni Village who are determined to turn the tide on poverty, unemployment and inequality by

exposing members of their community to what is POSSIBLE and affording them OPPORTUNITIES of this nature!!



In Malusi's words – the village will never be the same again – this was the first time they ever experienced anything like this and they are hungry for more in order to motivate others – you don't have to travel to big cities at great expense to receive valuable skills – it can happen right here with what we HAVE!!

Well done to Ikhaya Loxolo and KCDC for stepping up and making all of us proud.

CONGRATULATIONS, SIYAVUYISANA NANI!!!