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Yearly Report 2008

Ikhaya Loxolo



032-852-NPO

Bank Account Details: Ikhaya Loxolo, Nedbank Malmesbury. Account No: 12850 77970-1000

Happenings and Developments

As you all are aware- it is and has been extremely difficult to establish Ikhaya Loxolo due to two reasons: Firstly, of course, shortage of funds, and secondly, access to anything and everything, the nearest town being so far away and service being so poor in this rural Transkei area.

Nevertheless, through your help, we have managed again quite well:

We have not only finished most of our buildings, but we have even built one more- a little traditional guest cottage; which is actually meant for guests and visitors, but is presently being used by an overseas volunteer.



**Little Guest Cottage with newly established Herb Garden
in front and Mango Tree to the left**



The now limed kitchen/dining/launch rondavel with new mill field in front and bathrooms/toilets in the background.

Our four permanent local volunteers have now had one year of training in the work with people with special needs, in organic gardening and farming, in managing this whole project/organisation. Their training will carry on for at least another year; I myself am very proud of these locals, they are doing a wonderful job and have developed and grown immensely. Let me tell you about them in just a few words:

Mamlungu ('the white mother'), who is our closest neighbour as well as-how we like to call her now- our assistant manager. She is 40 years old, with three children but no husband. She is not only hard working within her shift, but also reliable, thinking and

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caring. Whenever we need her to jump in, she jumps in. We could only do half as well without her!



Mamlungu with her hands full of 'plaster'- made out of mud and water. She is taking a break from 'plastering' the new guest cottage.

Nowelikham ('No' is a prefix for a married woman and 'welcome' is her name, given to her by her parents in law. It is not the name to be found in her ID), also 40 years old, has six children while her husband has unfortunately passed away.

Nowelikham has to walk to and from Ikhaya Loxolo one hour every day. Although she had difficulties in the beginning to understand why one actually needs training to work with people with special needs (due to her being uneducated but managing life very well nevertheless. We often find uneducated people don't really see a need and a use of education/training), she is now one of the most caring and loved Co-workers to be found at Ikhaya Loxolo!



Nowelikham in the kitchen, cooking with Sicelo-our youngest resident.

032-852-NPO

Songelwa is our youngest and latest permanent local volunteer. She is 26 years old with one child, no husband. Songelwa comes from Nkhanya, which is a community 2 hours drive away by car and about as many hours by foot-although by foot Songelwa takes the shortcut. She sleeps over from Monday to Friday, and from January on she'll even stay the weekends, except the one weekend a month we are closed.

Songelwa only joined us in August this year, but I am happy to say that she came with such a great sense and good feeling for people with special needs, that she is not behind in her training and knowledge at all.

She joined Ikhaya Loxolo and immediately became an important part of the Ikhaya Loxolo family!



Songelwa in the middle, with two of our female residents on her sides. Two temporary volunteers are 'liming' the big rondavel in the background.

Thandisizwe is our only permanent male volunteer-he is 35 years old and comes from Nkhanya like Songelwa does. He is staying with us Monday to Friday, and his jobs are too multiple to mention them all but some: He is sleeping over in the building together with our residents and responsible for them at nights. He is also very experienced with life stock and is the only one besides Michael and myself who knows to milk the goats. In fact, we have actually learnt it from him.

To tell you the very truth: Without Thandisizwe Ikhaya Loxolo wouldn't be functioning the way it does, and Michael and I could never even take a day or more off! We feel so lucky and privileged to have him with us.



Thandisizwe is ploughing with our new power hoe, which we could purchase through funding from the Donald Woods Foundation.

Pothelwa is only 19 years old and one of our most permanent volunteers. Her job with us is different, though, as she still completes her education and only works with us Saturdays as well as in school holiday. Nevertheless, she has been with us for 2 ½ years and mainly works in the garden- which is what she loves to do and what she is brilliant at. Because of her schooling she is unable to participate in the local volunteer's training, which is why she is not involved a lot in caring for and teaching our residents with special needs. Although, of course, she learns a lot by just seeing us 'others' working with the residents and one day (if we get lucky) Pothelwa might be one of our full time volunteers.



Pothelwa on the right hand side, planting onion seedlings with Funeka, who has recently learnt to plant the right way.

*All our permanent local volunteers (with us are many more volunteers on a temporary - if work needs to be done- basis) are brilliant, reliable and trustworthy (we went through many and chose well!). I wish and hope that we will be able some time soon to pay them more pocket money then we do right now. At present they are 'paid' only R 460-560 = about 50 Euros per month (including all of us, also Michael and myself)!!!!
But as you know, this depends very much on your support!*

More has changed: The General Consulate of the Netherlands has donated four more Solar Panels including six batteries. They have been installed very recently, and after our short Christmas holiday the residents will come back to lights in their sleeping rooms and bathroom! Thank you so much Thessa Bos and the Consulate of the Netherlands!

Another great development has taken place at our farm (although there is very sad news, too):

Earlier this year we purchased 8 pregnant Saanen goats, of which 4 have given birth to very healthy kids- 9 altogether but we lost two. They are a joy and fun to be with, and it'll break our hearts to sell most of the male ones.

The very sad news is that of our eight original mothers we've only got 4 left, the other four died one after the other.

The problem (as anticipated) seems to be our sub-tropical climate, whereas we purchased these goats at the only available place (that we found) in the semi desert, the Great Karoo.

These Saanen are battling now with the local sicknesses, fungi and especially huge amounts of ticks.

We have done and do everything possible to keep them as healthy as possibly, sparing no expense! We are hoping that the kids, who are already growing up in this climate, will be stronger and tougher and be able to start new herds with local females.

Nevertheless, we've got two goats left that give a lot of milk, and we are grateful for it.



032-852-NPO

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The residents

Our six residents are very well, have settled in wonderfully and have easily learnt to accept some rules and boundaries (which they haven't been used to from home).

I am not going into detail, since individual reports about our residents will be available on request from February 2009; the sponsors will certainly get these reports anyway.

Some pictures only:



Nandi and Funeka at our Christmas-beach-outing

Sicelo-woodworking with Elke



Wele with ex-volunteer- Ntmbozuku, our dog Bob and Saanen Goat Kids.



**Nosiphenathi (from left),
Funeka and Sicelo at a
beach outing**



Ngcambaza and Siniko unfortunately dropped out.
Ngcambaza - because she delivered a baby who she now stays at home with. Her family never ever paid Ikhaya Loxolo's fee, which is why we can't keep her and her baby with us.
Siniko was taken out of Ikhaya Loxolo the moment his Governmental Grant came through, which we had organised for him. Money talks and money is what his family is most interested in.

032-852-NPO

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Comings and Goings

Songelwa: a very warm welcome to you- please stay with Ikhaya Loxolo forever!

Hamish: Hamish is from New Zealand and stayed with us for 3 months. It was a pleasure working with you; whenever we needed you, you were there for us. All of us miss you!

Elke: Elke, a volunteer from Germany, arrived in the beginning of October when Hamish left. We welcome you and hope you love working with us as much as we love working with you!



Phumza: Unfortunately, we had to let Phumza go, as she didn't proof as trustworthy as she had to be in order to take responsibility for the running of Ikhaya Loxolo (all our local volunteers have to be able to run this project even alone, should it be unexpectedly necessary).

Ntombozuku: A very lovely girl, who worked the weekend shift but suddenly proofed unreliable and didn't turn up for work. GOODBYE!

Akhona: Stayed with us for a very short while before she decided to go to Cape Town. GOODBYE!

Introducing our latest and smallest 'volunteer': **Tiger**- grow fast and catch as many mice as you possibly can (once you are bigger then they are!)



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A tiny look into the next year:

- Two more residents, Lungiswa together with her baby, as well as Thembisa, are going to join Ikhaya Loxolo in January 2009.
- With the help of the Donald Woods Foundation, we are hoping to receive funding for the establishment of a vegetable seedling nursery. At the same time, the Hobeni Community will hand over more land to Ikhaya Loxolo for the same reason.
- The farm will expand (starting new herds of goats) and cheese will be made.
- More plans are going to be made, but are not certain enough yet to mention them here!

Dear reader/sponsor/donor, please remember that all you have read above has been and is only possible because of you!!!

Have a lovely Festive Season and a good start into the New Year!

This report will be available at our web-site in German latest by February.

Yours,
Alexandra Guenther