



TransCape Skills Development Center Report Jan-June 2020

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Mankosi Skills Development Center

Introduction

The Skills Development Center was established to combat the youth unemployment rate in the rural area of the Eastern Cape in South Africa. Our village calls Mankosi and we have a souring youth unemployment rate of about 85%. No employment opportunities and very little industry are the main reasons for this dilemma.

An enthusiastic team of local and foreign volunteers has taken on the challenge to change this dire situation. The first 6 month of 2020 saw a lot of positive changes and progress of the project.

Adult Education and Training (AET)

Last year we engaged in negotiations with the Department of Higher Education to start up Adult Basic Education and Training, as part of the Skills Development center. This program entails the possibility to learn English, Mathematics and very important Health and Life Skills as an adult with the opportunity to achieve a diploma that entitles the students to further their education in TVET colleges in South Africa or get accepted in other educational institutions. 29 students enrolled in the program. 10 males and 19 females. They were giving an option to choose a variety of courses. Besides learning to speak and write in English and learn basic Mathematics they also focus on Economics and Management Science, Tourism, Ancillary Health Care and Early Childhood Development. The

Department of Higher Education gave us 4 very nice and competent teachers, who are now living with us in the village. They conduct the classes 4 days a week from Monday to Thursday for 4 hours a day.



The attendance rate is very good even if our students have to walk for 1 to 2 hours to get to and from classes.

We had the pleasure to welcome Mark, a teacher from the Netherlands to voluntarily help our ABT students to prepare themselves for the SDC. His research gave us a better insight about the students' thoughts and ideas and how they look at themselves now and in the past. During his lessons he did little exercises to teach the students about how to use creativity to look at the current tools in hand and use them to build a future with a job. The students were

positively triggered by his lessons and we were all sad that he needed to leave us after 5 weeks.



We realised we do not have enough classrooms at the education center to accommodate the AET classes. The TransCape office was rearranged to house half of the lessons. It made us realize that we need to emphasise on building our Skills development center next to our education center.

The AET program was put on hold when Covid-19 hit. The whole of South Africa had to lock down on the 27th of March. AET will reopen on the 6th of July. We have arranged PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and cleaning materials for the lessons to take place in a safe environment for teachers and scholars.

Sewing workshop

Since last year we have been busy training two women from the community to become our sewing skills teachers for the SDC. Nosphelele and Nomandla once again attended a private 5-day workshop in Mthatha, to expand their knowledge. They learned how to make smart long and short pants for men with pockets and zips. They also learned how to sew button-up shirts and casual shirts for men. There was a request for those items from the community. Furthermore, they make fancy bags with a cord to sell at the Backpackers together with the women trousers and crunchies.



Because the sewing businesses are doing well, we decided to take on our first student. Nolethu is a young woman from the northern part of our Mankosi community. She was unemployed and lived in poverty. Nosphelele started training her at the beginning of February and she is doing very well. She already had previous sewing skills and is learning fast. She has already created an income for herself, selling trousers in her village. We are happy to welcome this new enthusiastic member of our team. The sewing team of the SDC was also involved in a community project to sew masks for the elderly and sick in Mankosi. It was great to see how our sewing manager Khanyisa and the seem-stresses worked together as a team and completed all the orders without any problems.

Building a Skills Development Center

We started the first step of the building process! We have a very talented building team who are going to make sure we will have a beautiful and strong building for our sewing, AET and computer lessons. We would like you to meet David, our talented builder and his helpers from Mankosi community. Sandiswa, our constructional engineer from Mankosi. Sophie, Sven and Friender, three architects from the Netherlands, who designed the building and are helping us in every step of the building process. Daniel from Mankosi who is managing this building project. If you click on this link you can see a short video which gives you a nice impression. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SuGWIUTQy0>

So far, we have dug out the trenches for the walls of the building and started to fill them with concrete to lay the foundation. Water is a real challenge in the area. The municipality taps have been off since last year September. Every now and then they will have a little bit of water coming out. It has not rained in the area since the beginning of April as it is our dry season. All our water tanks are empty.

We managed to ask a building company to bring us water with a truck. We will need about 500 litres a day for the mixing of cement and concrete.



Driver Licenses

We are happy to report that Daniel, our community volunteer who has taken up the responsibility to head up the driver license endorsement program; has passed his official theoretical learner driver test. He received his certificate and attended practical driving lessons in Mankosi and also in Mthatha town. He is already a confident driver and he will go for his practical test as soon as the COVID-19 lockdown is over.

Computer Skills

We have got 10 laptops and fast internet established to start with the first course to transfer computer skills to students. A hiccup is that we still do not have electricity at our center, therefore we will have to charge the laptops with a generator. Eskom the power supplier is in the process to put the poles and cables up. We hope that we will have electricity by the middle of July.

Daniel and Khanyisa have started a Udemy computer course which teaches Excel, Word, Powerpoint and Internet skills. They find it quite difficult and have not completed it yet.

Agroecology

We established a relationship with an NPO calls Biowatch. They are our biggest advocates for agroecology in the country. Thulani, our agroecology volunteer, was supposed to go visit them and observe for 7 days as it is harvest time. Unfortunately, Thulani could not make it because he was very busy working as a lifeguard and at the backpackers. He will have more time after May 2020 and we will hopefully be able to observe planting season.

Covid-19 action

When Covid-19 arrived in South Africa the president decided on a harsh lock down to protect the people of the country. The SDC team asked Dr.Hart from Canzibe hospital to help with an awareness outreach to educate the people of Mankosi and Ncibe about the spread of the virus. We gave out information pamphlets, soaps and hand sanitizer.



Thank you very much for all of your support.

Without you, this would have not been possible.

Yours Mlrthe, Khanyisa, Daniel and Astrid