



Addressing the need for early childhood development in Khayelitsha by providing access to quality ECD training and resources

**CELEBRATING 20 YEARS**

## 2021 TOY LIBRARY MAKEOVER



The main Toy Library space hosted in Harare Square underwent a complete makeover at the start of the year. This bright and engaging space is used to encourage children's development and provide a friendly facility for the preschools and creches who use the Toy Library as part of their own programs.

Thank you to the Toy Library Team who put in lots of effort and showed great creativity in this project. We're hoping to see more ECDs make use of this space in Q2 as schools move back towards a less-restricted "normal".

## PARTNERING WITH FAMSA



A warm welcome to our partner Families South Africa (FAMSA) who are providing parenting skills training to young parents in our caregiver program. The first FAMSA training took place at the end of March for 40 caregivers. The attendees learnt about developmental milestones, nutrition, attitudes and behaviours, and went home with new toolkits of parenting skills to practice.

### Q1 IMPACT

#### EMTHONJENI PLAYGROUP OUTREACH TO CHILDREN NOT IN SCHOOL

*Reaching out to 237 families in Mew Way, Enkanini, Khunkqu, UT Gardens, K2 Section, Monwabisi A Section, Site C, Taiwan*

**257 new children registered in Emthonjeni playgroups & preschools**

**71 children began formal schooling at local primary schools**

#### FAMILY COMMUNITY MOTIVATOR PROGRAM

*Working in UT Gardens, C Section, A15 Section, Taiwan, Khunkqu, Enkanini*

**Support for 186 families**

**48 new babies & 4 pregnant moms**

## GOVT STIMULUS PACKAGE FOR ECDS

ECD facilities were invited to apply for the government stimulus relief package fund in February.

This was not quite as simple to do as we anticipated and our offices were inundated with principals needing assistance with the online application process.

We immediately assigned some of our young and more technologically-inclined team members to the job and they dived in with great enthusiasm and patience!

Thank you to Yamkela and Makhosazana for leading the charge and colleagues Abongile, Wandi, Xola, Ntombovuyo, Papama and Nomathemba who were also very involved. You went above and beyond the call of duty in making sure that all 48 applications were properly filled in and submitted on time!





**Warm greetings to you all from Harare Business Square and the Sikhula Sonke Early Childhood Development Child Protection Zone Offices!**

I'm reminded that it was exactly a year ago as we ended the first quarter of 2020 that South Africa experienced the huge health crisis that is COVID-19. The unexpected and unprecedented pandemic changed our lives and turned the country upside down in such a way that we were forced into a national lockdown.

While things are looking up in 2021, 2020's legacy includes ongoing impact on our communities, including a disrupted economy, loss of jobs, health issues, corruption, increased gender-based violence as well as more cases of child neglect, abuse and other social ills.

As we enter Year 2 of COVID-19, we have implemented a differentiated strategic approach in our programs towards providing services to the most vulnerable.

We are glad to report that none of our programs and services have been hugely compromised this year. Our team has worked hard to find ways of turning pandemic-related challenges into opportunities to serve our communities for the better.

### REVIEWING STRATEGIES

In these first months of 2021 the Sikhula Sonke team has devoted much time to thinking and planning - including exploring and referencing the sustainable development goals - in order to improve our programs and contribute to the countrywide strategy around development.

The resumption of face-to-face learning for preschools has been heartening. COVID protocols are still in place, with some impact on learning. It's hard for children to hear a teacher wearing a mask, and some children are struggling with word formation as they cannot see how mouths shape words. Social distancing for small children is also difficult and unnatural and we have seen lots of creativity in play and preschool activities.

### SUPPORTING LITERACY

We continue to push literacy at home: our thanks to BookDash for continuing to provide lovely books in Xhosa so that families can read together and bond with their children.



*The 2021 Sikhula Sonke ECD Team*

### TACKLING THE FOOD GIANT WITH THE HELP OF OUR PARTNERS

One of the biggest challenges families in Khayelitsha faced during lockdown and continue to face is food insecurity due to loss of income, ill health and rising prices of food. Sikhula Sonke has taken a two-phased approach to meet this need. Our first response is to support vulnerable families with food parcels, whilst encouraging job seeking and assisting with grant applications. Our strategic long-term response to food insecurity is to plan and campaign for partnerships around nutrition programs.

One of the ideas we have explored is setting up community vegetable gardens. Although this idea is still young and in its initial stages, we are excited to see how food gardens can be used as both a nutrition strategy (providing fresh healthy food for families) as well as a poverty alleviation strategy (selling excess produce to generate income). We are currently lobbying for resources around this project.

Joint Aid Management, our long-term nutrition partner who provides nutritious porridge for Early Childhood Development facilities and our playgroup programs, is now part of our community vegetable garden venture. We so appreciate having them on board as we work together towards seeing this new project become a reality.

Our greatest appreciation to Ikamva

Labantu, Redisa, Cocare and the Department of Social Development for donations of food vouchers and parcels to our projects. This has returned dignity to many families who have the choice of collecting prepared food when they fetch their kids from our Emthonjeni education and stimulation spaces or taking food parcels home to cook themselves.



## SOCIAL WORK UPDATE

The SISO Social Work team continues to use a family-centred, strengths-based and solutions-focused approach in providing psycho-social support. This approach is premised on the belief that no matter what their situation, all parents/caregivers have some ability and desire to care for their children. The family-centred approach identifies the family as the entry point for addressing child abuse, neglect, exploitation and delivering services.

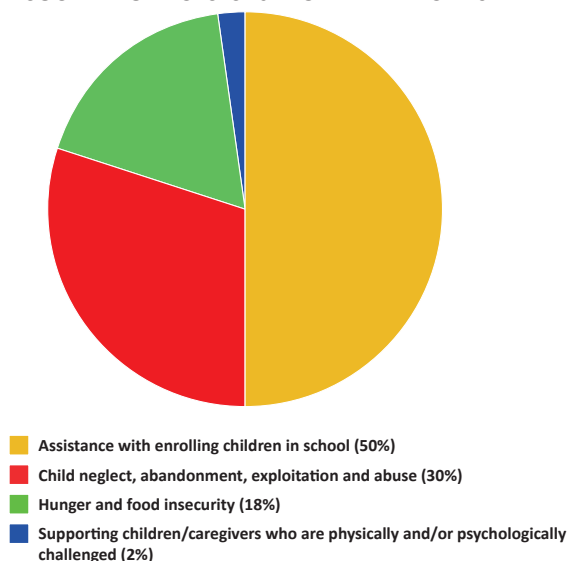
Due to the high volume of child abuse, neglect and domestic violence cases which were reported this quarter the Social Work team have been very busy with counselling, facilitating family conferences, mediation, prevention and early intervention services, family reconstruction and rehabilitation, behaviour modification and referrals.

At the beginning of the year we are always busy with school admissions. 50% of cases were focused on ensuring children have access to education: assisting with birth certificates, fees, dealing with abandonment/neglect and advocating for school placements for those who left it too late. Many local schools are full and we wait on the Department of Basic Education for provision of teachers.

30% of cases were related to neglect, abandonment, exploitation and abuse. This included misuse of Child Support Grants, hygiene issues and lack of appropriate clothing for children. Grant abuse cases are reported to SASSA and Grants reassigned to new identified responsible caregivers.

18% of cases were related to hunger: many caregivers lost jobs due to COVID-19 and chronic poverty has increased. Families often do not have the necessary documentation to apply for Child Support Grants. The team handed out food parcels to identified families and

SOCIAL WORK CASES: JANUARY - MARCH 2021



assisted with obtaining official documentation.

Children and caregivers with psychological and physical challenges were referred to the relevant government departments for support.

The Social Work team is also very excited about a new partnership with Families South Africa (FAMSA). FAMSA will be running several parenting skills programmes over the next months and has great material we can use.

## EXECUTIVE REPORT CONT.



When we were able to reopen our programs during 2020, we were very grateful for the support of the Masked Heroes Campaign, coordinated by DG Murray Trust. This Campaign assists community heroes with personal protective equipment and ensured that our staff were fully-protected with masks, gloves and other equipment.

In February 2021 the Masked Heroes Campaign again provided personal protective equipment for all our staff members for the start of the first school term, so that we could begin fieldwork with confidence. Thank you!

### CELEBRATING 20 YEARS AND THE PEOPLE WHOSE COMMITMENT DEMONSTRATES OUR VALUES

As we celebrate 20 years of service to Khayelitsha's children, it's important to recognise and reward the people who make what we do possible through their dedication, hard work and input.

Congratulations to the following 2020 Sikhula Sonke ECD Annual Award winners:

**Creativity & Innovation Award:**  
Makhosazana Padi and Wandisiwe Mzinyathi

**Best Volunteer of 2020:**  
Phelokazi Moyikwa

**Epitome of Teamwork Award:**  
Papama Mateza

**Impressive First Impression Award:** Xola Magwa

**Highly Exemplary Employee Award:** Mphokazi Malangeni

**Diligent Employee Award:**  
Noluvuyo Makeleni

### MEET OUR NEW PLANNING, ASSESSMENT, MONITORING & EVALUATION OFFICER

Papama Mateza has been with Sikhula Sonke for more than 8 years. He has served in a number of roles including Child Protection Ambassador, Early Learning Outcomes Measure (ELOM) Assessor, Networker, and the Children & Youth Officer in the Khayelitsha Youth Desk.

We are confident that he is going to make an excellent undertaking in his new position. We wish you all the best in your new role!





## IMPROVING LITERACY

As part of our Literacy drive, Sikhula Sonke fieldworkers participated in World Read Aloud Day by visiting various centres: 42 children enjoyed the day.

BookDash, in partnership with Solon Foundation, very generously donated 1500 books to Sikhula Sonke. These books have been distributed to families to improve literacy at home, as well as through the ECDs.



## TEAM TALK

As team leaders, we have a fresh thankfulness this year for each other, for the work of Sikhula Sonke and for the small freedoms we took for granted before the pandemic. We also appreciate our leaders and our teams in deeper ways.

As we sanitise and social distance, we realise how important our work is. From talking with caregivers, helping little people, playing games that help small brains develop properly, monitoring growth and dropping off food or toys, we see that we are contributing to the health, mental wellbeing and sustainability of our nation.

Our many small tasks have a big impact - we are thankful to be able to serve and help wherever we can.

The SISO team is standing strong together, with our hand sanitiser ready and our masks on!



**OFFERING QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND SUPPORT TO THE PARENTS, CAREGIVERS AND PRESCHOOL TEACHERS OF YOUNG CHILDREN IN KHAYELITSHA SINCE 2001**



### IMBEWU TRAINING COACHING & SUPPORT

Actively training and supporting ECD practitioners to achieve full government registration and meet the standards required for running early childhood development centres.

### FUNDA UDLALE TOY LIBRARY

Providing a range of educational toys and books, individually and through ECD centres, also using a Toy Library bus to take the library to remoter areas.

### IMBIZA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY MOTIVATORS

Taking ECD interventions into individual households and reducing the number of young children who have no access to early childhood development services.

### EMTHONJENI - MEETING AT THE WELLS

A community-based programme which offers ECD services to children and reaches out to parents and caregivers at the safe open areas of the communal water taps in informal settlements.



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## SUPPORT THE WORK OF SIKHULA SONKE TODAY!

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