

10

YEARS OF
CARING



WELKOMELA

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

WHO WE ARE

Hlokomela was established in 2005 in response to research findings that highlighted the need for health care among farm workers in the greater Hoedspruit area. Guided by ongoing research and development, Hlokomela remains a prominent and respected role player in the health and well-being of a significant portion of the local community, reaching about **25 000** people annually (direct and indirect beneficiaries).

The most important objective which Hlokomela seeks to contribute to, is the reduction of HIV prevalence and the impact of AIDS among farm workers and their families through an integrated programme of prevention, treatment and care.

AREA WE WORK IN

We do most of our work in the greater Hoedspruit area, a major centre of the Maruleng Municipality, which is situated in the Mopani District of the Limpopo Province. We now also work in Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga where the focus is mainly on HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT) as well as sex worker education and health awareness.

Tourism, government services and farming are key to the economic activities in these areas. The farming sector supports a significant section of the local population of seasonal and migrant workers.





OUR MISSION

To empower and create a collective culture of caring with farm workers and local communities from the Kruger to Canyon Area with respect to health, social and educational issues.



OUR VISION

To support local communities towards stable and informed family units, empowered to take responsibility for health, social and educational issues and improve their quality of life.



FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE TRUST

In a recent planning session, the Hlokomela Staff and Board reflected on its key values. We decided that we stand for a "Collective Culture of Caring", which we adopted as our organisational slogan.

This Annual Report celebrates Hlokomela's exemplary achievement of TEN YEARS OF CARING. This achievement was guided by our Director's, Christine du Preez's, vision, embracing the African Proverb: "If you wish to go quickly, go alone. If you wish to go far, go together."

As Hlokomela's Board, we are extremely proud of our organisation's achievements. These achievements would not have been possible without the contributions of our community, funders and staff. We would like to express sincere gratitude to you all. We invite you to walk the next ten years with us to further ingrain and build on this collective culture of caring.

Chairperson: Marié-Tinka Uys,

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



L TO R Chairperson: Marié-Tinka Uys, Deputy chair: Dr John Gear,
Ex official: Christine du Preez, Secretary: Vicky-Lohanzi Jansen van Vuren
Board member: Doris Malepe

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Looking back over the past 10 years I can't believe how much this organisation has grown! In 2005 we started with only Antoinette Ngwenya (Programme Manager) and myself. Today our family has grown to 56!

Of the 18 Nompilos we started with on the farms, most are still with Hlokomela and that family too has grown to almost a hundred.

Looking ahead, 2016 is going to be a challenging year due to various funder contracts coming to an end, and securing new funding will definitely be a main focus for all of us.

It warms my heart to know that Hlokomela employs so many people. Job security is however an ongoing concern for us due to the limited nature of funding contracts. We value the support and caring of our community but without sufficient funding the future sustainability of the organisation hangs in the balance.

My deepest thanks go to the farmworkers, farmers, our funders and staff without whom Hlokomela would not be possible.

This New Year has a lot of exciting things in store for us and Hlokomela is right in the middle of it.

"Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, but today is a gift."

I am hopeful for the year that lies ahead because we have taken the first steps in realising one of my life long dreams for Hlokomela - establishing an assisted living home with frail care and hospice facilities in Hoedspruit. It is still early days for Gracious Living but I trust that funding will fall into place for this project to flourish.



DIRECTOR

CHRISTINE DU PREEZ



**CHRISTINE
DU PREEZ**

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR



**ANTOINETTE
NGWENYA**

PROGRAMME MANAGER



**ALBERT
MATUMBU**

FINANCE MANAGER



**SPHIWE
MAZIBUKO**

**HR MANAGER &
SITE COORDINATOR**



**TEENAGE
RAPATSA**

HTA MANAGER



**ROSLYNE
NXUMALO**

CLINIC MANAGER



**SOLOMON
NGEBENI**

**HERB GARDEN
MANAGER**



VOLUNTEER

**M.J.
DU PREEZ**

MEDIA COORDINATOR

VODACOM CHANGE THE WORLD



**DR. LOUW
DU TOIT**

MEDICAL DOCTOR



**DR. MARK
BLAIR**

MEDICAL DOCTOR



VOLUNTEER

**DR JOHN
GEAR**

MEDICAL DOCTOR



**GLENDA
VAN WYK**

**PROFESSIONAL
NURSE**



**NOMSA
MASHILE**

**PROFESSIONAL
NURSE**



**JULIE
MORIRI**

**PROFESSIONAL
NURSE**



**MINAH
THULARE**

**PROFESSIONAL
NURSE**



**MERRIAM
NDLOVU**

NURSING ASSISTANT



RACHEL MALAPANE

NURSING ASSISTANT



MODERN MNISI

NURSING ASSISTANT



PATIENCE SELE KANE

NURSING ASSISTANT



VOLUNTEER

LYDIA TRUPE

**BREAST CANCER PREVENTION RESEARCHER
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY**



VOLUNTEER

BRIGITTE LIEBERHERR

STAFF COUNSELLOR



LUCY MAILE

LAY COUNSELLOR



DORIS MALEPE

LAY COUNSELLOR



CONSTANCE NGO BENI

LAY COUNSELLOR



LUNGI MATHEBULA

LAY COUNSELLOR



JUNIOR MOGAKANE

LAY COUNSELLOR



OLIVIA MOGAKANE

ARY COUNSELLOR



DAPHNEY MHALENI

HDC COORDINATOR



CHRIS SEBUYE

HTA COORDINATOR



CONSTANCE RAHLANE

SITE COORDINATOR



DESIRE WRIGHT

PA TO THE DIRECTOR



SINDY NKUNA

CLINIC DATA CAPTURER



**GIFT
NYAMBE**

GENERAL ASSISTANT



**WINNIE
SERAGE**

GENERAL ASSISTANT



**THAPELO
NAMANE**

DRIVER



VOLUNTEER

**EIKE
STEINWACHS**

OFFICE ASSISTANT

VEREIN FÜR SOZIALE DIENSTE



**TEBOGO
MODIPANE**

GARDEN ASSISTANT



**LAWRENCE
MALAPANE**

GARDEN ASSISTANT



**AMINA
NKGOGO**

GARDEN ASSISTANT



**MARIA
SEKGOBELA**

GARDEN ASSISTANT



**MPHO
MALATJIE**

GARDEN ASSISTANT



**NECIA
SERAGE**

GARDEN ASSISTANT



**MELVIN
MAKHUBELA**

GARDEN ASSISTANT



**JAN
KOBENE**

GARDEN ASSISTANT



VOLUNTEER

**EVA
BEHNKE**

GARDEN ASSISTANT

VEREIN FÜR SOZIALE DIENSTE



VOLUNTEER

**LARA
FIEDLER**

CRÈCHE ASSISTANT

VEREIN FÜR SOZIALE DIENSTE



BHEKI MALOMOLA

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



STEPHEN LEHLOANE

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



EUGINIA MODISE

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



EUNICE MAFUWANI

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



TINAH MASHEGO

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



JOYCE MANGHENA

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



ANNICKY KGOHLOANE

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



NORMAN MAFUNA

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



JULIE MALOPE

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



FAITH MAWELA

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



VALENCIA DUBE

HCT LAY COUNSELLOR



TSHEPO LEWELE

HCT DATA CAPTURER

FORMER 2015 STAFF

EMMANUEL MALATJI • GARDEN ASSISTANT

MPHO CHILOANE • HCT DATA CAPTURER

ANGIE ROWLES • HERB GARDEN MANAGER

INNOCENT SIBUYI • HTA COORDINATOR

MARIA MTHOMBOTI • SITE COORDINATOR

LEBOGANG SAMBO • HCT DRIVER

REFAH MOGAKANE • ART SUPPORTER

LEA SWART • CLINIC MANAGER

WHAT WE DO

- ✗ Working with farm management to assist in developing a healthier work environment, and to develop and implement workplace HIV and AIDS policies and programmes;
- ✗ Providing peer education;
- ✗ Providing Primary Health Care by training and mentoring workers as caregivers (Nompilos);
- ✗ Sensitising, training, and mentoring male role models with the aim of addressing issues such as Gender Based Violence, transactional sex, and poor health-seeking behaviour in men;
- ✗ Developing and implementing an integrated Social Change Communication programme, such as billboards and pamphlets and other materials, to promote behavioural changes to reduce high-risk behaviour;
- ✗ Organising and implementing recreational programmes to increase social participation and improve the quality of workers' and their families' lives;
- ✗ Establishing and running wellness clinics to provide information, condoms, and health care services and referrals, including HCT and ART, to workers and their families;
- ✗ Improving the nutrition of sick workers by monitoring their nutritional status and providing them with e-pap and food donated by farmers;
- ✗ Growing and selling herbs and running a charity second hand clothing shop for income generation;
- ✗ Organising and running social interest tours to Bavaria Crèche/Gorutha Toy Library, Hlokomela Herb Garden and Hlokomela Clinic to raise additional funds for the organisation;
- ✗ Selling high quality compost as part of our fund raising initiatives to become self-sustainable & enable us to continue health service delivery to farm workers & their families in the Kruger to Canyon area;
- ✗ Operating a wellness programme to provide health services to mining-sector employees, sex workers, truckers and general community members at Hlokomela Clinic;
- ✗ Running a Cervical Cancer Prevention Programme through which nurses are trained to detect early signs of the disease and then treating malignant cells with cryotherapy.



WHO WE SERVE

- ✘ Farm workers, including seasonal workers, in the Kruger to Canyon Area.
- ✘ Migrants from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South African provinces; notably Mpumalanga, Gauteng and the Free State.
- ✘ Sex workers in the Hoedspruit, Phalaborwa, Acornhoek, Bushbuckridge and Hazyview area.
- ✘ Farm owners and managers in the Kruger to Canyon Area.
- ✘ Our partners in Government, the Maruleng Municipality, Mopani District and Limpopo Departments of Health and Department of Agriculture, Limpopo.
- ✘ Our donors and funders; PEPFAR, USAID, IOM, Anova Health Institute, Global Fund through Right to Care, NACOSA/SWEAT, Farmers and Discovery Fund.
- ✘ Our staff and Board of Trustees.



Image courtesy of Discovery Fund



THE PROGRAMME

HEALTH CARE ACCESS

CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Hlokomela facilitates the development and implementation of work place policies for HIV and AIDS. At present, we assist 70 enterprises (55 small and 15 large) to set out a management and worker endorsed policy that also includes a peer education programme.

Activities may include signing a memorandum of co-operation, setting up HIV/AIDS committees, HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT) and social communication initiatives to reduce HIV transmission. During the year under review, Hlokomela reached **31 000** people at their workplace.

WE FACILITATE ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES, PROGRAMMES AND MEDICAL PRODUCTS

Hlokomela runs wellness clinics on a rotational basis at Richmond, Hlokomela, Bavaria, Klaserie Private Nature Reserve, Ngala, Waterside, Phelwana, Singita Lebombo, Thornybush, South African Wildlife College, Beretta School and Timbavati Foundation.

Doctors and professional nurses provide health care services and referrals, information and condoms at the wellness clinics. In addition, Hlokomela provides confidential HCT on farms to accommodate workers who cannot visit the clinics.

DURING THE YEAR UNDER REVIEW HLOKOMELA HAD

31 000

Clients provided with HCT

1145

Patients on ARVs

1675

HIV positive clients

SUPPORT GROUPS

Clients discuss health related subjects during support group meetings held at the wellness clinics. In 2015, change agents reached **16 996** people through one-on-one or small group discussions.

HOME BASED CARE

Care givers, also known as Nompilos and change agents, attend to patients on farms. During the year under review, 20 Nompilos took care of 95 patients. Interventions range from primary health care to disseminating social and educational information.

Many of the patients are on ARV and TB treatment. During the year, care workers referred **292** individuals to hospitals through the clinic.

CONDOM DISPENSERS

Hlokomela maintains condom dispensers at 92 locations, including high transmission areas such as truck stops, shebeens, taxi ranks, hawker's markets, hotels and lodges. During the year under review, we distributed **1 114 100** male and **45 500** female condoms.

SEX WORKER EDUCATION

Hlokomela has three sites, one in Hoedspruit, another in Phalaborwa, and one in Bushbuckridge, to educate an increasing number of sex workers in these areas. Each site has 10 peer motivators, Phalaborwa has 5. The programme aims to empower sex workers with skills that will enhance their capacity to speak for themselves, to address human rights concerns, to make informed choices and provide opportunities for them to test for HIV and AIDS.

During the year, peer group motivators reached **10 267** sex workers at the three sites.

CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAMME

During February and March 2015 Dr Omara Afzal, from Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, launched the Cervical Cancer Prevention Programme at Hlokomela by training nurses on how to do Visual Inspection with acetic Acid (VIA) and cryotherapy. The VIA screening method shows areas in the cervix that are affected by Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) which is the virus that causes cervical cancer. Positive VIAs can be treated immediately with cryotherapy which freezes and destroys the affected cells. This one-stop screen-and-treat method is perfect for the migrant nature of Hlokomela's patients who are not always able to attend multiple follow up visits.

CHANGE COMMUNICATION

DIALOGUE THROUGH FOCUS GROUPS AND DAILY DISCUSSIONS

During the year under review, change agents facilitated creative discussions in which 32 367 people took part. Gender dynamics are often highlighted in these dialogues. The dialogues explore quarterly themes and monthly topics during lively sessions where participants are encouraged to discuss relationships and interactions, and social and cultural issues that affect their health.

The sessions are embedded in ongoing efforts to build trust and confidence to deal with the impact of the issues at hand.

THE QUARTERLY AND MONTHLY TOPICS WERE:

"A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE FOR MY COMMUNITY" (THEME)

"LET'S TAKE MEASURES TO AVOID MOSQUITO BITES"

"EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF HIV INFECTION EMPOWERS US TO TAKE ACTION"

"CARE FOR THE MOST AT RISK POPULATION IN OUR AREA"

"UBUNTU HAS NO BORDERS" (THEME)

"LET'S KICK TB OUT OF OUR COMMUNITY"

"SAY NO TO XENOPHOBIA"

"ARE YOU MEDICALLY CIRCUMCISED?"

"UNDERSTANDING MIGRATION" (THEME)

"MIGRATION"

"LET'S UNITE AGAINST XENOPHOBIA"

"LET'S WORK TOGETHER WITH MIGRANTS"

"LET'S PROTECT OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS" (THEME)

"WE ARE ALL EQUAL"

"LET'S UNITE AGAINST GENDER
BASED VIOLENCE"

"#ABUSE MUST FALL"



OUTREACHES

During the year, Hlokomela reached more than **178 762** farm workers and migrants through various outreach activities that included awareness campaigns and regular health information sessions on farms. Topics ranged from hygiene, TB, malaria, cancer, nutrition and condom use, to migration rights, sexually transmitted diseases and community capacity growth.

We link appropriate activities with special days, such as World TB Day, Worldwide Candle Light Memorial, World Aids Day and 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children.

MEDIA INFORMATION MATERIAL

During the year we distributed **8 602** pamphlets from IOM and Soul City at events and activities on farms.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL AND OTHER MEDIA

T-shirts with messages about migration and condom use were distributed to create awareness about the importance of practicing safe sex. 1 100 T-shirts carrying the "10 Years of Caring" and Hlokomela logos were also distributed.

PUBLICITY

In 2015 Discovery Fund sponsored the production of a mini documentary about the organisation which succeeds in accurately conveying the messages of the organisation and presents the interventions and work done by Hlokomela over the past ten years.



The video, is entitled "Sprawling farm clinics winning the war on HIV/AIDS in Limpopo" is available on YouTube. The video already has almost 700 views.



On 1 December 2015 the organisation had some of the best publicity ever when eNCA News aired a piece they filmed at Hlokomela for World AIDS Day. The insert was featured every hour throughout the entire day and was later that day also broadcast on KykNet. The insert, entitled "Hlokomela Aids treatment hub fights HIV" is also available on YouTube.



The local newspapers, Kruger2Canyon News and Hoedspruit Herald, are valued supporters of Hlokomela and publish regular articles about the organisation, its events, people and achievements. On average, the papers carry about four stories about the organisation per quarter.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

During the year under review, we organised a number of special events to mark issues of interest, also allowing Hlokomela stakeholders to get to know each other in a different setting than usual.

THESE INCLUDE:

- ✘ STI and Condom Week
- ✘ Valentine's Day celebration
- ✘ TB Day
- ✘ World AIDS Day and a march for 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children, incorporated with the organisation's "10 Years of Caring" celebrations.
- ✘ Candle Light Memorial
- ✘ Annual Nompilo Awards
- ✘ Hlokomela Women's Golf Day
- ✘ Migrants vs Locals Soccer Tournament at Migration Day
- ✘ Grannies soccer match between Hlokomela and Vakhegula Vakhegula from Nkowankowa



WORKSHOPS

Every month, change agents meet to discuss challenges and progress of the wellness programme. During these discussions, feedback on the quarterly and monthly dialogues and group discussions is reviewed and integrated to keep our activities relevant and effective. Also on the agenda are analyses of formal reporting tools like patient records, referrals and home based and health promotion tally forms.

MIGRATION

Hlokomela staff attend regular workshops with the International Organization of Migration (IOM) to review progress on the Ripfumelo programme. Three staff members attended an IAct workshop to improve the functioning of Support Groups.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH WORKSHOPS

Change agents and staff attend regular workshops organised by the Department of Health on programmes for conflict management, reporting tools, mental health and other organisational and health issues.

GENDER AND MIGRATION

Hlokomela facilitates workshops on gender and migration to empower migrants and local farmworkers about human rights, access to health services, and other support services. Hlokomela extends its gender empowerment programmes to the youth through sessions where issues such as bullying, gender based violence, alcohol abuse and poor health are discussed.

This year Hlokomela conducted a gender and migration workshop at which stakeholders such as local police officers, social workers, representatives from Hoedspruit Victim Empowerment, youth leaders, the Community Policing Forum, migrants and farm workers as well as other NGOs were present.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT

HTT coordinators attended a community capacity enhancement refinement workshop presented by Project Literacy in Pretoria.

MEETINGS AND VISITS

On-going contacts and updates are maintained with the Department of Health on district and provincial levels through forum participation, regular meetings and visits. Many of the visits focus on evaluation and assessment to ensure all partners remain on the same wavelength. At a local level, Hlokomela is represented on the clinic committee to ensure coordination.

SEMINARS AND SYMPOSIA

Our Director gave a presentation about networking at the 2nd Annual Not-for-Profit Industry Conference.

The Director and two staff members also attended the Ashoka Southern Africa Regional Summit and made valuable contacts in the field of youth and education.

ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

FUNDERS

Hlokomela receives funding and technical support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as the Government's local, district and provincial offices of the Department of Health. The Department of Health honours a service level agreement with Hlokomela for home based care, high transmission area services and service delivery.

Hlokomela aims for an integrated relationship with all levels of Government. At a district level, regular contact, workshops and campaigns ensure that programmes like condom distribution, HCT, organisational governance and management are in line with the partnership goals. Our partners also include the Department of Labour, the National Lotteries Commission, Timbavati Foundation and Inzalo Community Project.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

BREAST CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAMME

We have partnered with researchers from Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore, MD, USA) and University of Witwatersrand (Johannesburg, SA) who are collaborating to implement a programme of low-cost detection and treatment for breast cancer at Hlokomela Clinic. This programme will use ultrasound to screen for breast cancer and a non-surgical treatment called cryoablation to treat detected masses. Additionally, the research team will use questionnaires to learn about women's knowledge of and attitudes towards breast cancer.



THE VITAL FOUNDATION

In 2016 Hlokomela will be partnering with The Vital Foundation which contributes to addressing the growing scourge of woman and child abuse through providing funding to organisations such as Hlokomela that are well placed to take care of victims of abuse and develop prevention strategies. Hlokomela will achieve this through services such as awareness, education, counselling, medical assistance and a safe house.

The Vital Foundation is funded from the proceeds of the R1 makes a difference campaign. Vital Health Foods donate R1 from the sale of every Vital supplement to the Vital Foundation.

COMMUNITY

We value and build our relationship with the local community through regular meetings and joint campaigns with the Kruger to Canyon Biosphere Region network, Air Force Base Hoedspruit, NGO partners and the Maruleng Municipality.

HLOKOMELA STAFF

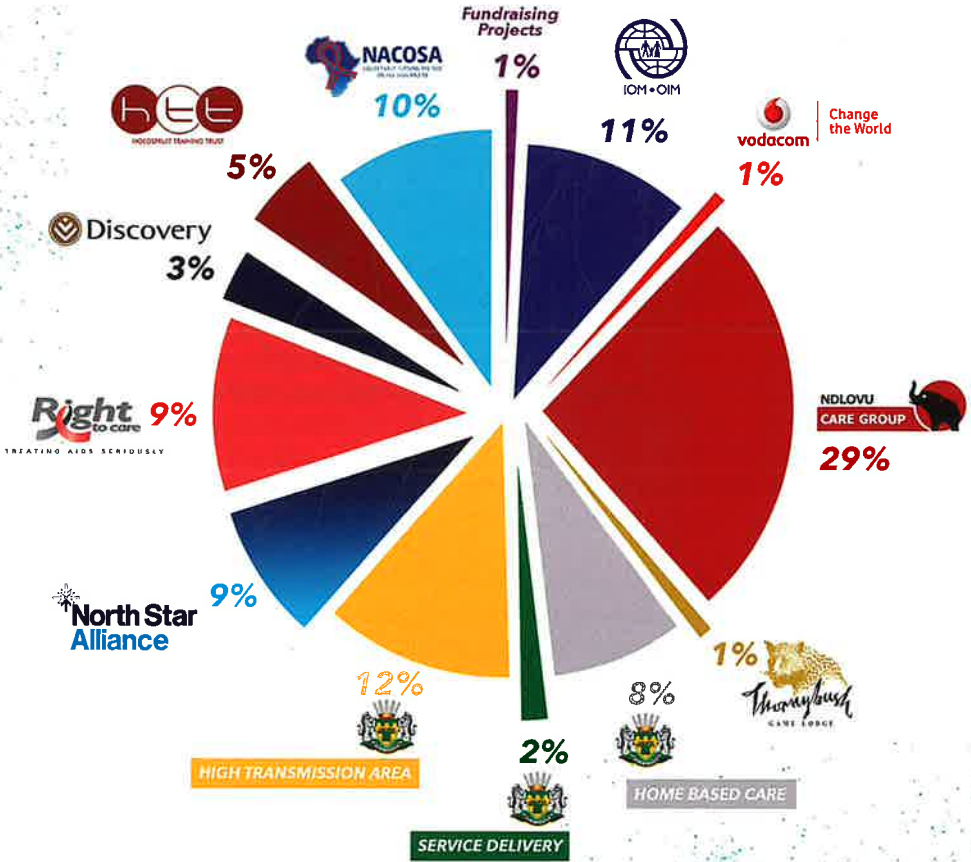
Our staff drive our success. We have a committed team of 55 people and strive to empower them through appropriate training programmes, workshops, seminars, networking and enabling peer contact.

Our annual general meeting (AGM) in October featured presentations of progress reports for all Hlokomela activities. Farmers and officials from the Mopani District Department of Health attended.

Bheki Malomola, an HCT Coordinator, was announced as Hlokomela's Employee of the Year for 2015.

FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING

HTT relies mainly on donor funding and governmental assistance to keep our doors open. In addition, Hlokomela runs income generating activities to supplement our income.



*Detailed audited financial statements are available upon request.



INCOME GENERATING VENTURES

HLOKOMELA HERB GARDEN

The Hlokomela Herb Garden was established in 2008. It received funding from the National Development Agency (NDA) in 2009 for development and growth towards self-sustainability.

Under the management of Angie Rowles and Solomon Ngobeni, the Herb Garden supplies fresh herbs, salads and herb products to many of the top restaurants and lodges in the Hoedspruit area.



The Herb Garden suffered severe damage in 2015 due to two unprecedented hail storms within the space of seven months. The shade net structure had to be replaced twice, causing a significant dent in the project's profitability. Through the efforts of Glen van Heerden, the Thornybush Landowners and Inzalo Community Project, a substantial part of the costs have been recovered through their generous donations.

COMPOST/COMMUNITY GARDEN PROJECT

The first Hlokomela community garden was established in 2005. The compost and community garden project started in October 2012 with seed funding from the NLDTF.

The community garden is situated on a portion of land made available by Bavaria Fruit Estate. Though the funding was for the compost project, it was evident that there was a greater need to cultivate fresh vegetables in the community.

The focus shifted towards the development of a community garden with self-sustainability still a primary concern.





HLOKOMELA FOOD BANK

The Hlokomela Community Garden will also support the Hlokomela Food Bank. The Hlokomela Wellness Clinic is a distribution point for Hlokomela Food Bank parcels, which are distributed to farm workers.

Local farmers also donate fresh fruit and vegetables to supplement the service. This contributes greatly towards our nutrition support system for farmworkers and patients from our wellness clinics.

EVENTS

Hlokomela's annual Herb Bush Party has become a well-supported greater Hoedspruit calendar fixture. This event is held annually and supported by most of our local customers, including lodges, restaurants and food outlets in the Kruger to Canyon Biosphere Region.

This year the event was hosted at The Stables at Khaya Ndlovu Manor House just outside Hoedspruit. The event was supported by nine lodges, restaurants and individuals who participated by creating finger foods adhering to the theme "Let's Dine Around the World".

The Safari Wine Club hosted wine tasting for the guests and Craft Liquor Merchants hosted a very popular craft beer tasting. About 150 tickets were sold and almost **R50 000** was raised during the event.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

PEER MOTIVATORS' EXPERIENCES



SEX WORKER FINDS HER TRUE PASSION THROUGH HLOKOMELA

BY CONSTANCE RAHLANE

From sex worker to peer motivator, from peer motivator to lay counsellor *Tlangi Lekhune's life seems to have blossomed in just a year and she thanks Hlokomela for making it possible. Tlangi says she never thought that she would be a lay counsellor because she was a sex worker. Tlangi also never dreamed that there would be a day that she will consider sex work as work. However, with Hlokomela she turned out to be doing exactly that.

Tlangi was just the ordinary girl from next door, selling vegetables on the streets of her village, but her business didn't grow. "Sometimes my tomatoes would go bad and I had to throw them away," she says. "I didn't make much profit at all as most villagers chose to buy their vegetables in town. It was stressful because I had to provide for my children."

Her life turned around when she met a friend who was a sex worker. "My friend had a comfortable life and seemingly had everything she needed. I envied her and asked her how she did it. She then introduced me to clients around Mpumalanga and so I began as a sex worker at 27."

Now 42, Tlangi's days as a sex worker are history and she thanks Hlokomela for it. She says her big breakthrough came after hearing that Hlokomela needed people who are/used to be sex workers to be trained to work for the organisation as peer motivators. Tlangi jumped at the opportunity and was appointed as a peer motivator.

A mother of three, Tlangi says she was lucky to be selected as one of ten peer motivators to attend a three month HIV training course organised by NACOSA. This was where she gained counselling skills. Again, when a post for a lay counsellor opened up she applied and started work as a lay counsellor in April 2015.

She says there was no need to continue with sex work after being appointed as a lay counsellor because the money she earns enables her to make a comfortable living. "Hlokomela has helped me to be where I am today. Hlokomela has taken me from the ground to up and above, my life has changed completely. It is not easy to be a sex worker because you don't know what to expect from clients; some are rude, others have a huge manhood and some are even aggressive and dangerous."

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Although she knows that her contract is nearly over, she wishes to carry on working at Hlokomela so that she can continue to help sex workers, communities and farm workers with HIV information and testing. "If my contract ends, the temptation to do sex work again may be high because I will be without an income."

*** Tlangi Lekhune is a pseudonym to protect Tlangi's true identity.**

PATRI FINDS SUPPORT AT HLOKOMELA

BY CONSTANCE RAHLANE

Living with HIV *Patri Bengu is happy to have found all the support she needs from Hlokomela staff. She says they don't support her just because she is a peer motivator for sex workers there, she found the support she needed at Hlokomela long before being appointed as a peer motivator in 2014.

Patri says when she was first diagnosed with HIV in 2004 she was devastated.

She became a sex worker many years before in 1997, but she never expected to test positive for HIV. Like many sex workers, Patri says her circumstances lead her to become a sex worker.

"My mother died in a car accident when I was 17 and she was the only bread winner in our family. I had to take care of my four siblings and myself," she says.

She says she started doing sex work in her late mother's market, where she would have white clients who picked her up for service. Later she closed the market and became a full-time sex worker. She says people in her village knew about her job and even helped her to find more clients, especially white tourists.

Patri continued as a sex worker even after she tested positive for HIV but she always insists on using protection. She started visiting Hlokomela for check-ups and her CD4 count was always high.

"The staff there are very friendly and accommodating. They gave me information about the virus and I felt comfortable when talking to them," she says. "It was not easy for me when I had to start taking ARV treatment in December 2014; because it is a lifetime commitment and I was scared. The staff made me understand the importance of taking ARVs."

Patri feels lucky to work as a peer motivator at Hlokomela because she feels at home here and she thanks Hlokomela for giving her the work as she was able to build her own home and furnish it.

"I found it easy in my work as peer motivator to teach fellow sex workers about HIV and I have referred many sex workers to test for HIV at local clinics and Hlokomela. I also teach them about their rights and many more health issues that concern us. I love my job as peer motivator and wish the contract won't end. I also love my job as a sex worker because we protect the families of our clients - we don't commit to them like girlfriends do.

I would however like to find another well-paying job so that I will be able to quit because I cannot do sex work for the rest of my life," says the 38-year-old, childless Patri.

"I wish Hlokomela to grow into a hospital so that they can employ and help many more people. As sex workers we are happy about the service Hlokomela provides for us" she says.

***Patri Bengu is a pseudonym to protect Patri's true identity.**



HLOKOMELA HONOURS

- 2007** Independent study finds farm workers trust confidentiality of services offered
- 2007** Oral presentation at South African AIDS Conference in Durban
- 2008** Maruleng Municipality's Best Non-Profit Organisation in Mopani District
- 2008** Christine du Preez is a finalist in The Southern African Trust and Mail & Guardian Drivers of Change Investing in the Future awards
- 2008** Poster presentation at the 17th International AIDS Conference in Mexico City
- 2008** Poster presentation at the 4th Annual South African AIDS Conference in Durban
- 2009** Hlokomela received an award from Mail & Guardian "Investing in the Future" awards selection committee with the 2009 'Investing in Life' award for its holistic innovative approach to medical and social service delivery for farm workers and their families
- 2010** Hlokomela participated in the 2010 International AIDS Conference in Vienna
- 2010** Silver Star award from Impumelelo for innovations in government and public sectors
- 2010** Board member presentation on the Herb Garden at the Peace Corps South Africa Health Symposium
- 2012** Denmark based television crew films an episode of a cooking series by the winner of Master Chef Denmark, using ingredients from Hlokomela Herb Garden
- 2012** Poster presentation at the 19th International AIDS Conference in Washington, DC
- 2013** The Director of Hlokomela received the award and was the winner of the SA's Most Influential Women in Civil Society Organisations and Related Services
- 2013** Poster at the 6th SA Annual AIDS Conference in Durban
- 2014** Director accepted as Ashoka Fellow
- 2014** Herb Garden manager and general assistant awarded Entrepreneur and Female Farm Worker of the Year respectively by the Limpopo Department of Agriculture
- 2015** Christine du Preez receives a Recognition Award in the category International Community Workers Recognition at the Women4Africa Awards UK 2015.
- 2015** Discovery Fund makes a mini documentary of the Hlokomela project: "Sprawling farm clinics winning the war on HIV/AIDS in Limpopo"
[VIDEO AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE](#)
- 2015** For World Aids Day on 1 December 2015, eNCA News featured Hlokomela Clinic: "Hlokomela Aids treatment hub fights HIV"
[VIDEO AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE](#)

IN LOVING MEMORY



REFAH MOGAKANE

17 SEPTEMBER 1968 – 18 DECEMBER 2015



HLOKOMELA

FARM WORKERS CARE FOR EACH OTHER

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PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Right
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