



AmaVerkykers
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Community

NEWS LETTER

July 2021

Have we cracked the elusive

SUSTAINABILITY

challenge?

This edition of our community newsletter, co-written by the community members themselves, celebrates the strides we have taken towards sustainable community engagement. We focus on the ingredients of a mature Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) partnership and the lessons we are learning. Yes, there are a few secrets. Read on to discover!



Top of this page: the usual corporate logos that frame each newsletter.

Bottom of this page: same logos, driving all over Mzansi!

Can you spot the difference?

see p6



ITS ABOUT THE PEOPLE

Sustainability, especially pertaining to community work, lies in the hands and hearts of the people. This points the way beyond projections, budgets and tick-boxes, to authentic relationships that affirm the dignity of each individual involved. If relationships sound too abstract, we can use the simpler term: friendship. Herein lies the first secret of sustainable community engagement, with the essential ingredient, being trust. Youthzones employ the slogan 'kuthatha isikhathi' because they know that trust is not built in a year or two, the empowering relationships that incubates innovation span across multiple annual reports and funding cycles.

We will highlight two aspects of BPC community work: Firstly, all the new projects (news for the newsletter) and secondly, focus on the upliftment work that lay the foundation of a resilient network and partnership.



Kuthatha isikhathi!

After ten years of countless projects and events in tattered clothes, on dusty soccer fields and in the most informal places, the partnership grew into its own branding. "This is why it works, You never start with big logos or fancy things, people must prove themselves, then, in time, we become ready for the next level." Doc Mabila

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ITS ABOUT RESPECT

In addition to trusting, long-term friendships, we have learnt that projects must be initiated from the grassroots level, that is: bottom-up. Many execs repeat these slogans, but fall in the trap of designing projects and aiming to get 'community buy-in'. If the community members conceived an initiative 'buy-in' or 'participation' are words that become irrelevant and superfluous.

Allowing vulnerable community members to be creative and to show initiative affirms dignity and it build self-belief. These values underpin a self-confident human being and such self-confidence is the foundation of agency.

Enabling people to make better choices lies at the hear of true development, consequently a CSR strategy should never focus on a project as a 'thing', but rather on a network of individuals engaged in multiple activities where learning and self-expression form part of the culture. In a way, it shift engagements from project based to programme based.

Sweet Dreams

"We want to work, we want to make beautiful things. Yes, we need help, but just a bit, because it is not good to wait for things, to get things. With a small chance we can contribute and feel equal" These words from *Tebogo Kgomonrsho* of *Hammanskraal* affirms the value of respect and dignity.



Mending Relations

To illustrate the importance of social cohesion: The Ledig Upholstery project in North West is a unique case study. Power dynamics can often make community work very tricky and the partnership with Youthzones show the value of how a hostile, even antagonistic environment can be turned around, so the corporate's good intention can be received in good faith.

Ledig Upholstery



Woza Woza Canteen – SED becomes ED becomes SD...

Woza best practice, woza. The integrated partnership with AmaVerkykers and Youthzones showcase how time and again, community participant move beyond charity (Socio Economic Development) to active participants in business. Calvin shows that neither unemployment nor unemployability has to define the youth, he is grasping his entrepreneurial opportunity with both hands. Woza woza!



Bagging Rights:

The ladies didn't rest on their success with mask making, but showcased creativity and environmental awareness by recycling uniform to make trendy and useful bags.



SKILLS, SKILLS, SKILLS



NEW



Odirile from Hammanskraal



The examples above showcase 'community building' in quite a literal sense! Bidvest Protea Coin, through partnership, ensures that young people are upskilled not only through certification, but through actual real-life opportunities, like the building and maintenance of the Gijima Gymnasium. This is true empowerment of young people through economic inclusion.



Brand Ambassadors!



Clocking 13 000 km's and seven provinces in the first two months reveal something of the Youthzones national footprint.



NEW



MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL



Media Exposure:

When Doc Mabila featured with Schalk van Heerden on KykNet, he made sure to wear his Bidvest Protea Coin shirt, despite the fact that it was a freezing evening! Dankie Doc!



COVID 19 - SMART



NEW

At the start of the pandemic Youthzones led the way with food distribution during the lockdown. It soon became apparent that the same old lessons held true: we need **sustainability, not hand-outs**. Consequently, instead of delivering food, we delivered the ability to grow food! In partnership with Laeveld Agrochem, Agriconsulting and Betereinders, young people, and especially **women** were empowered to deliver **food security**.



HEROES

LARGER THAN LIFE



This edition's heroes are all those youths who learn, through sport and life-skills, excursions and training, that we can do more when we work together. Especially in tough times like 2020 and 2021. We celebrate their hunger to learn and grow.



NEW