MORE THAN A JOB

When Jabulani’s Rural Ability Programme (RAP) started the apprenticeship programme in 2016, there was not a lot of information on how to implement or develop a programme like this for people with disabilities and therefore this programme has been about learning in action. Through the efforts of our RAP Project Coordinator, Shannon, and Anathi, our Livelihoods Community Facilitator, we are starting to see the benefits of this initiative. We do not recruit more than seven apprentices each year, as we believe that this is an instance where choosing quality over quantity is where the real learning, change and impact are to be discovered.

Ongeziwe is a 35-year-old man with a severe hearing loss and a mental disorder. He joined our apprenticeship programme in March 2018. When Ongeziwe first met Anathi, he told him how he had lost all hope because he couldn't find employment due to his level of education and his disability. His self-esteem was very low and he believed that there are was no chance of him finding employment to supplement his social grant, which is too little to take care of his personal and household needs.

Ongeziwe grew up in a family of five siblings, raised by his mother and his father, who is a mine worker. He is their only child with a disability. Ongeziwe wasn’t able to complete his schooling, three of his siblings dropped out due to household economic challenges and peer-pressure, so only one of his siblings still attends school. Ongeziwe, together with his parents, have big dreams for his brother, who they are working to support to stay in school in Johannesburg.

During Ongeziwe’s apprenticeship, he committed himself to his work and to learning new skills. He established good relationships with his colleagues, who were very supportive and comfortably accepted him in the workplace, especially after Anathi provided them with guidance on how to support and work effectively alongside Ongeziwe.

Towards the end of Ongeziwe’s apprenticeship a vacancy opened up in Jabulani’s Healthy Village Project team and Ongeziwe was offered this full time position. He also recently joined a Savings and Credit Group (groups that we run according to the model developed by SaveAct), through which he saves money every month to fulfil his dream of supporting his younger brother’s schooling. Ongeziwe’s wish for his brother is...
“for him to study and become a professional medical doctor”.

Ongzeziwe is very grateful for the apprenticeship opportunity granted him by the Rural Ability Programme; an opportunity that has made him feel valued and helped restore his hope and dignity. In contrast to how he felt when Anathi first met him, Ongzeziwe now has this to say: “Today I am able to wake-up in the morning and go to work knowing that I am going to earn money and take care of my family, save and buy myself some of the basics that I need, a bed, wardrobe and new clothes”.

Our apprenticeship programme for people with disabilities provides more than just a job. It is about empowerment, building hope, acceptance and inclusion.

THE FACES OF OUR FUTURE

The 1st of December each year, marks World AIDS Day. World AIDS Day was the first ever global health day marked by the World Health Organization (WHO) and it is a day dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection, and mourning those who have died of the disease. It is also an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV and show support for those living with HIV.

We have done various things over the years to mark this day, engaging different target groups, and usually with a focus on reaching large groups of people. This year we decided to do something a bit different.

Children and young people are at high risk of becoming infected with HIV. Young people, especially young women, are vulnerable due to their age, biological factors, access to barrier products, and disempowering (often exploitative) social, cultural and economic conditions. As a result, the HIV epidemic has had a particularly devastating impact on young women, who make up about 66% of infections among young people worldwide. The good news, is that young people are also the most active and influential agents of change in a community (although this can be positive or negative change).

Based on this context, we decided that World Aids Day 2018 would have a distinct youth focus. We wanted to engage young people from the Zithulele area, in order to better understand their perspectives and perceptions on HIV in the community.

It was an “invite only” event, for 20 young people aged between 18 and 26, whom the HIV/TB team thought would really engage in the event. Over lunch, different groups discussed different topics. These included: How does HIV affect people on an individual, family, community level – particularly the youth?; What are the ‘perceived’ barriers to youth not protecting themselves from HIV or not testing early for HIV?; What role can young people play in supporting their community and especially their peers infected by HIV?; and What do we need to improve or change as stakeholders working in this field, in order to better meet the needs of young people? All relevant but not easy questions to answer!

The event was embraced with much enthusiasm and expectancy. Discussions were thorough and lively. The participants agreed to form an HIV Youth Forum as a way and means to being involved in the struggle against HIV, and individual pledges to be involved were made. Now plans are underway for how this group can start moving forward, while we bear in mind that “The power of youth is the common wealth for the entire world. The faces of young people are the faces of our past, our present and our future” - Kailash Satyarthi
A FIRST FOR US

After five years of successfully running the Jump Start youth development gap year programme, we are handing it over to a new NGO in Zithulele. Sihamba Sonke*, who are focussing on coming alongside young men (and will expand to women over time), providing them with opportunities for training and pathways to employment. When Jabulani started the Jump Start Youth Development programme for young men, it was to fill a gap of big importance to this community. With Sihamba Sonke focussing on this kind of work there is no longer a gap and as such, 2018 was our last intake of Jabulani Jump Starters, as Sihamba Sonke will ‘fill this gap’ from 2019 onwards.

In its place, Jabulani will pilot a similar programme for young women as a gap for this still exists. We have called this programme “Masiphakameni” which in English, means “Let's rise”, with a tagline of “Ithemba kwikamva lethu” meaning “Hope for our future”. After holding an information day for all who were interested, we received 21 applications. These ladies have all been interviewed and now we have the hard task of choosing just eight to be enrolled in the programme. We will still be running this programme in partnership with Axium Education and Sihamba Sonke, as we did with Jump Start. We are very excited for this new venture and look forward to keeping you updated in future newsletters and through Facebook posts.

*For more information on Sihamba Sonke, click [here](#).

ACT NOW FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Jabulani exists because we believe that every individual has potential within themselves and that humanity works best when we are helping one another, working together towards a transformed society. Therefore in addition to our own vision, mission and values, one of Jabulani’s central tenets is that we are here to enable others to do what they do best, whether that is employing Clinical Team Assistants to work alongside clinicians so that they can focus on being clinical, or sharing our office space with Axium Education while they were raising funds for their own building, allowing them to continue with their much needed and excellent work in education.

One such initiative we have embarked on, is to raise funds for the Zithulele Independent School. This school was founded in 2016 by a group of parents and community members in Zithulele Village. The school serves a diverse range of families, with 60% of the learners coming from the local community and the balance from families working at NGOs or Zithulele Hospital. The classes are intentionally small to allow learning to be individualised and experiential. The language of instruction is mostly English but children can access help and information in either English or isiXhosa and the aim is that, in time, the children will become dual-literate.

School fees are charged on a sliding scale based on each household's income, and while all families contribute towards fees, due to the low economic status of most households around Zithulele, about 70% of learners need a fees subsidy. Donations are therefore essential to the ongoing functioning of the school. Our “Send a child to school” campaign allows the committed teachers to focus on providing a safe and nurturing environment in which children can develop their individual potential. If you feel led to helping us break the cycle of poverty, please donate to this life-changing opportunity by clicking [here](#). Donors can receive a tax deduction for their support.