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DEVELOPMENT OF LOUWVILLE COMMUNITY GARDEN



Abalimi was approached by Tristan Bosser, CEO for Aurora Wind Power, to implement a food gardening project in the Louwville community of Vredenburg, in partnership with Soul City.

A portion of 1.5 hectares was selected at Western High School, while an initial area

of 2000m² was developed. Implementation included site levelling, access road, container, toilet, water supply, electricity, shade cloth, windbreaks, manure, seeds, seedlings, herbs and training with monthly supporting visits over twelve months.

Ten community gardeners from different age groups came to visit the Moya We Khaya project in Khayelitsha to see a community garden in full production. They were highly motivated by this visit.

The winter rains in May, June and July produced beautiful organic vegetables for personal consumption and selling. While the drought had a major impact on the summer crops, the project continues. Unfortunately groundwater is saline and thus unsuitable for vegetable production, so alternative water solutions are being researched, such as collecting rainwater from the school's roof.

It has been a real pleasure to work with such a positive and motivated team, and we wish them all the best going forward!



Before and after the project implementation at Vredenburg.

FARMERS COME TOGETHER

Over 90 farmers from around the Cape Flats gathered at Abalimi headquarters on Friday, September 21st. These farmer workshops are hosted quarterly by Abalimi to provide an opportunity for farmer engagement.

This meeting focused on how Abalimi and the farmers can move forward, especially with re-starting the Harvest of Hope box deliveries, which were temporarily on hold while Abalimi was restructuring. The farmers



Abalimi staff and farmers get together at the new pack shed

discussed various aspects of the delivery program, including logistics, farmer contracts, membership fees and vegetable pricing.

Farmers had small break-away groups where they could discuss the benefits and obstacles around food production and sales, followed by a plenary session where they provided feedback. The Harvest of Hope team has noted the need

to improve logistics and ensure a fair and transparent process for all parties.

Abalimi continues to provide support and training to the farmers, but encourage them to be more independent through growing their own markets. Overall, it was a day of much deliberation but also filled with fun, food, prayer and community spirit.

EDITORIAL

Dear Friends, this year has been a tough one due to the terrible drought which knocked production at many of our home and community gardens – particularly those ones who rely on municipal water. On the bright side, this has just made us stronger and more resilient than before. Our field team and most of our farmers have not been discouraged, in fact the opposite!

This newsletter carries the theme **pruning and regrowth**, focussing on our subsistence gardens, which are the bedrock or our 3000 strong movement. Alongside this, our competent management team has taken over the reins after Ma Christina Kaba, our former CEO, decided to retire to focus on her own micro farm. Both Ma Kaba and Ma Nancy, our Chairperson, remain on the governing board to give advice and support, with Sibongile Setyebi joining as a farmer representative.

These stories focus on women and youth who, against all odds, are forging ahead with their gardens. They give some insight into what Abalimi has been doing in the last year. We hope you enjoy!

Best regards

Abalimi Editorial Team

NOTICE

We have moved

We recently moved from Philippi Village to our new premises at 1 Boston Circle, Airport Industria North. The new space is better suited to all our needs and includes more room for our office workers, along with a large integrated pack shed that has made vegetable packing and distribution more efficient.

Find us on google maps by searching for Abalimi or "community garden"

Harvest of Hope

Our veggies box distribution program for families has restarted after the drought. We currently provide an "interim" box for our consumers based on what the farmers currently have available. In the new year, we will be able to provide a greater variety of fresh summer crops, as we have already done the planning and planting.

HOH boxes are dropped off weekly and are currently priced at R170, giving a selection of ten vegetables, ideal for a medium sized family. We are thankful for the continued support from customers for HOH as it provides market access for the farmers. It is a win-win!



One of many Abalimi supported home gardens in Khayelitsha.

HOME GARDENS EXPAND

Siziphiwe Izandla, meaning “God gives us hands”, is a group of six women farmers in Khayelitsha Site B. They received training from Abalimi. Besides planting vegetables in bathtubs, rubber tires and any corner available, they have expanded to the Sobambisana PrePrimary School.

“I’m happy to plant vegetables,” says secretary Thosana Gladile. She harvests a lot of produce from her small garden. Ideally, she would like to have more land so that she can better feed the children in her community.

“But it’s okay if your garden is small,” says treasurer Unice Gobeni. “It will feed you.”

She wants young people to get involved in gardening because it would “keep them busy, which would reduce the crime rate”.

The women buy seedlings and manure from the Abalimi garden centre, as there are no other nurseries in Khayelitsha. Mornings are typically spent tending their gardens.

Their families eat the vegetables, while occasionally excess produce is sold. Some of the vegetables are gifted to those who cannot afford to buy them, and some donated to a school feeding scheme.

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR WOMAN GARDENERS

At 82 years old, Mama Emily Phangalele works at the Akhanya Garden. She grew up in the Eastern Cape, where she learned from her father how to plant vegetables.

The garden helped to feed her family and let her earn some money since she was unemployed at the time.

“It’s not easy to garden,” she says. “You must love it.”

Now in Cape Town, she continues to help her family to pay for school uniforms and shoes thanks to her garden. She works the land all day from Monday to Saturday and then rests on Sunday, thanking God for her continued energy.

When Noxolo Molosi first heard about Abalimi’s farmer training in 2015, nobody

in her family was working or receiving any government support.

Now she is one of four farmers at the Zingiza Garden, where she spends her days planting seeds and looking out for pests and moles.

While she once struggled to buy enough food for her family, Moxolo is now able to sell her vegetables over the fence and via Harvest of Hope. She has opened her own bank account and buys paraffin and electricity for her home.

When asked what she likes about gardening, Moxolo mentions feeling the soil with her hands and getting plenty of exercise from her work. She also enjoys being able to pick her own vegetables and then cook them at home.

“Everything that is planted here, I love it,” Noxolo said.



Mama Emily tends to her garden.



Moxolo has found a source of income and livelihood through working at the Zingisa Garden.



Ria and Sophumla at Ubuhle Bendalo Food Garden

BIG GOALS FOR YOUNG FARMER

At the Ubuhle Bendalo Food Garden in Khayelitsha Site B, Sophumla Ntoyabo, with help from volunteer Ria Schuurman, provide a lovely demonstration garden for the community.

The children from the nearby high school often stop by the garden, which is right next to their playground. Parents also look over the fence and are sometimes inspired to buy seedlings and manure for their own gardens.

Gardening was not always in Sophumla’s life plan. After hearing about it from a friend though, he participated in a six-month training

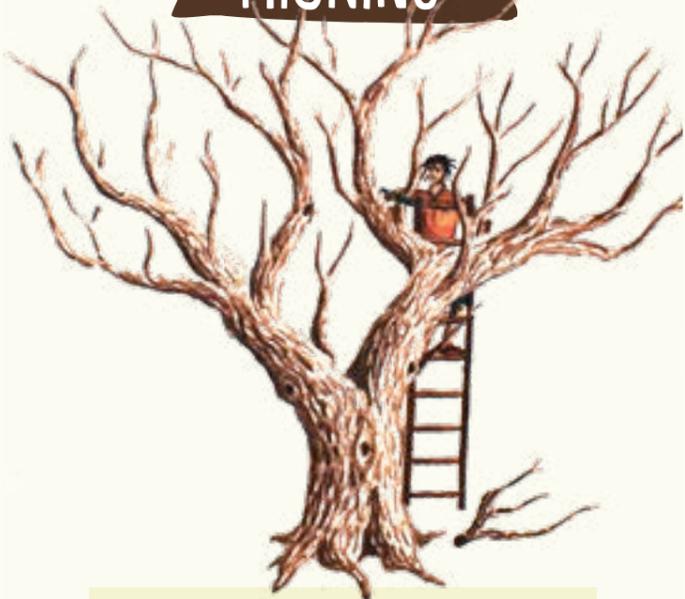
programme hosted by the Abalimi Young Farmers’ Training Centre (YFTC).

“Working with the soil has improved my life and given me assurance,” he says.

Sophumla sees the adverse impact of poverty and the lack of opportunities. His next goal is to start a larger home garden initiative as he would like to see up to 100 home food gardens around Site B.

He has a big dream of owning a farm because he believes **“our modern society has taken us away from nature and from each other and one way to come back to this, is through gardening”.**

PRUNING



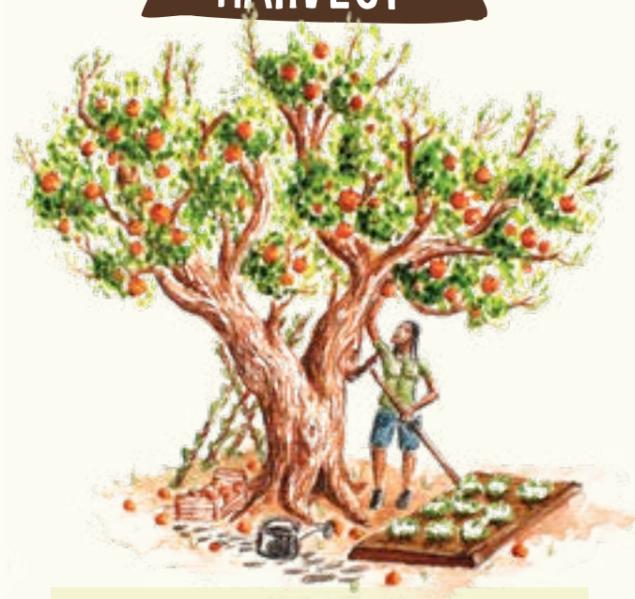
Starting a garden is far from easy, especially in times of drought and uncertainty.

REGROWTH



Although it has been a long year, we were able to plant new seeds and regrow our operations.

HARVEST



We are grateful for the ongoing support from our friends and the success our farmers have achieved.

YOUTH VOLUNTEER AT THE NYANGA GARDEN CENTRE

Sindiswa Wana and Amanda Dyoyi support Mama Bokolo at the Nyanga Garden Centre with the daily running of the garden.

Sindiswa learned about Abalimi when she wrote a proposal about urban agriculture in a business management course. Her goal is to be a businesswoman and use her skills to fight poverty and unemployment in her community. She is passionate about a healthy lifestyle and educating people about the land they live on.

Gardening has given Sindiswa the opportunity to connect more with her Christian faith. She is always amazed by how she can place one small seed in the ground and watch it grow into a large, beautiful plant. She wants to have a home garden, but the drought in Cape Town has made it difficult for her to reach her goal. She likes preparing and eating vegetables, saying that it gives her a feeling of harmony.



Sindiswa and Amanda working together at the Nyanga Garden Centre.

GETTING LOCAL YOUTH INVOLVED WITH GARDENING

Lonwabo Mfenguza encourages other local youth to assist him on his land so that they can learn more about gardening and the importance of food security. His own interest in farming was sparked while spending time with family in the Eastern Cape during holidays. After completing an apprenticeship through Abalimi's Young Farmer Training Centre in 2016, he collaborated with a friend in Cape Town to start a school garden.

"My vision for the future is to own a large-scale farm using biological

Amanda loves being surrounded by nature and says that God has given her a calling in gardening. She would like to set an example for others by eating lots of fruits and vegetables and taking care of herself.

In the future, Amanda wants to live somewhere with enough land to grow her own herbs and vegetables. She has two young daughters, aged 2 and 9.

"Taking care of a garden is like taking care of an infant," she says. "It needs warmth."

methods while involving the youth in farming initiatives," he says.

Lonwabo explains that the Abalimi apprenticeship gave him information on agriculture and practical skills that he needed to succeed in this field. Since his initial training, he has continued to increase his agricultural knowledge by completing a one-year programme with the Agroecology Academy in mixed farming. He is now enrolled in a course on biodynamic agriculture. He believes that organic farming is the most practical method - environmentally, socially and financially.



Lonwabo in his garden

ABALIMI FACT SHEET APRIL 2017 UNTIL END OF AUGUST 2018

MICRO-FARMERS	NEW 906	8231	Total on Farmer Register since 2008
RETURNING 1232	ACTIVE 2138		
	<i>includes new and returning</i>		Young Farmers (35 and younger) 13%
GARDEN CENTER SALES R250,939			Male 47%
<i>Purchases by farmers for seeds, seedlings and manure.</i>			Female 53%
			Unemployed 63%

TRAINING	19 BASIC TRAINING COURSES	224 People trained
	<i>Three-day basic gardening course</i>	
1896 Trained since 2008	15 FARMER WORKSHOPS	226 People attended workshops
	<i>Workshops for production farmers on specific topics such as mulching, manure, crop rotation, etc</i>	

HARVEST OF HOPE (HOH)	Turnover R2 007 429
<i>% earned by farmers after costs</i>	64%
<i>Number of micro-farmers supplying HOH</i>	82
<i>Number of gardens supplying HOH</i>	19
AVERAGE BAGS AND BOXES PER WEEK 2017	249 bags and boxes
<i>HOH box scheme was put on hold end January 2018 due to the drought and relaunched in October 2018</i>	
	Earned by farmers after costs R1 292 194
	Highest earnings per farmer/month R5 564
	Lowest earnings per farmer/month R11



Dave Golding (Abalimi field program manager) and Khayaletu of VPUU visit the Monwabisi 1 Community food garden

ABALIMI TEAMS UP WITH VPUU

The Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrade (VPUU) project partnered with Abalimi to promote urban farming.

VPUU funded the development of two community gardens and seven home gardens in Monwabisi community, Khayelitsha.

The intervention began with Abalimi's popular Three-day Basic Agriculture course where a total of 40 community members attended five of these courses, including 18 youth. The first community garden was started with 14 members on an extremely sandy and exposed site, adjacent to the VPUU community hub

at Monwabisi 1, while Monwabisi 2 was established early 2018.

Winter rains, cooler temperatures, cow manure and bokhasi for soil enhancement resulted in enough vegetables to feed the gardeners, as well as sales to the local community. Income generated from the garden is used for transport to attend community meetings and for the purchase of seeds to grow seedlings for planting.

Both community gardens have boreholes, tanks and irrigation systems. Abalimi provides follow up support and mentoring visits on a monthly basis and hopes to work more closely with VPUU in the future to promote food security, specifically among youth.

FIELD TEAM EXPANDS

In September 2018 Abalimi welcomed a new staff member, Zukile Malusi onto our Field Team.

He comes with 15 years of community development experience and farming industry training. He is an accredited facilitator on plant production, new venture creation and project

management. He has worked with various NGOs as well as government organizations throughout South Africa.

Zukile will be coordinating the Farmer's Production Programme, including the institutional development for farmers to make them more independent. He will also be working close with new vendors. We are very excited to have Zukile as part of the team.

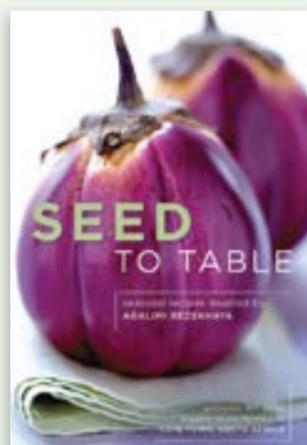


Zukile joins the Abalimi field team



SEED TO TABLE

Just a reminder that the last few copies of our Seed to Table recipe book are still available for sale at R200 each. It features delicious meals that were developed with our farmers and highlights the vegetables from each season. This would be an excellent present around the holiday season, and all the money raised goes back to supporting our farmers.



The Camel Rock team delights in the veggies from Abalimi

CAMEL ROCK RESTAURANT

One thing that makes Camel Rock Restaurant in Cape Town unique, is its location in Scarborough.

While it is away from the city center, the restaurant still attracts a well-sized crowd.

The owner, Justin, described the venue as "unusual, where people feel at home". He took over Camel Rock in 2015 from his family and oversaw a series of renovations, as he hopes to give diners the "real South African experience".

Justin sources his produce from Abalimi because it is organic and he likes to support the Harvest of Hope initiative and its local farmers. He has also worked with Abalimi by growing mushrooms at the Moya we Khaya Community Garden.

Camel Rock is open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner and has nightly specials such as Tapas Night on Fridays. They also feature a garden section with live music on weekends. Visit <http://www.camelrocks.co.za> for more information or to book a table.



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