

2021/22 ANNUAL REPORT



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Abalimi Bezekhaya (*meaning farmers of the home in isiXhosa*), established 1982, is a non-profit micro-farming organisation that aims to provide basic human necessities for indigent persons, along a development chain from survival to commercial (farmer development chain¹ - FDC), by assisting impoverished, unemployed and underemployed groups and communities within the area of Greater Cape Town known as the Cape Flats and surrounds within the metropole to establish and maintain their own vegetable gardens, so as to enable those groups and communities to supplement their supply of food and create livelihoods.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report provides a narrative review for the period March 2021 to February 2022 to correspond with the annual financial report. It gives an outline of the main activities that happened during the year and includes key information around governance issues, strategic focus and key concerns.

While we were recovering from COVID we sadly and unexpectedly lost Dave Golding in May 2021 due to cancer. This has had a huge impact on the team, and although we have managed to juggle the operational requirements we will always miss him.

As always, the core of Abalimi has been driven by the field team and they continued strong as there was a huge influx of people wanting to grow veggies. We trained a record number of 928 people despite the COVID restrictions and sale of resources at the garden centres increased. Manure runs are still continuing, although not as frequent as during the pandemic, however it is a way to reach out to the broader community.

During the past year we placed a lot of focus on developing local community market opportunities for the farmers. There has been an increased in sale of veggies locally, both directly from the gardens and through the Harare Farmers Market. There are also two external markets that are going very well, the Mountain Market in Vredehoek and the Triggerfish Market in Strand.

¹ http://abalimibezekhaya.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Abalimi_Farmer-development-chain.pdf

2 STRATEGIC FOCUS

With life slowly returning back to normal, there has been a significant increase in the need for food gardens and food security. Training has increased, as well as the sale of resources.

Abalimi still stands strong on the four main pillars, with an additional pillar identified as outlined below.

- Provision of **training** and extension services about growing vegetables organically;
- Provision of **resources** for organic farming, such as seeds, seedlings and manure;
- Provision of support with capital **infrastructure** investment, specifically around soil building (composted manure) and irrigation (pumps and irrigation);
- Assist with **market access** for sale of surplus vegetables; and
- Support around **social and organisational development**.

This additional pillar was recognised specifically post COVID as a core element which the field team have been providing for many years. With additional time being spent on this more recently the need to clearly stipulate it as a pillar was agreed on.



Figure 1: Training of community members with the three day basic training course at Nyanga

Following on the closing of Harvest of Hope it was decided to explore alternative ways to support the farmers with market access. This was first done through gaining more local knowledge through surveys within the community. Abalimi is now supporting the local farmers market that has been set up in Harare, Khayelitsha, as well as the external market in Vredehoek (Mountain Market) and Strand (Triggerfish Market).

*“Over 950 people
were trained
during the past
year”*

Abalimi’s work, supporting food security in the townships, remains essential to our target audience and we are as relevant and essential as the past 40 years.

3 GOVERNANCE

The Abalimi board continued to provide the core of the governance within the organization and the **board members** during this period outlined below:

- Morwesi Ramonyai - Chairperson
- Grace Stead - Secretary and Public Officer
- Macmillan Dzeka - Treasurer
- Rob Small
- Sibongile Sityebi
- Jeremy Jones

The core responsibilities of the Board have been confirmed as providing:

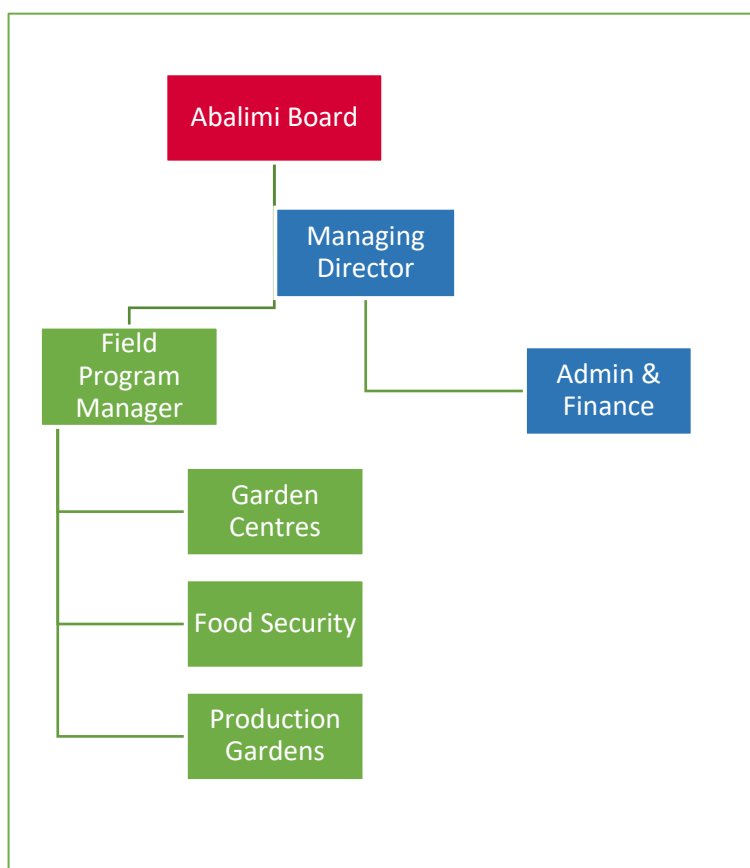
- Strategy
- Policy and systems
- Oversight - check on implementation
- Disclosure - reporting / M&E

4 STAFF OVERVIEW

The Abalimi staff are the core of what we do and have been very committed through the year, putting in a lot of pressure on the team, but they have been amazing! The loss of Dave Golding had a huge impact on the team, but everybody stepped in to help fill the gap.

The organogram as outlined on the right has not changed in the past year, with training and field team work integrated into the core tasks of the field team

The team is still led by Grace Stead (Managing Director) who also took up the responsibility of Field Program Manager, with the support of Babalwa Mpayipeli, who was appointed as assistant Field Program Manager.



The position of Field Program Manager was vacant for quite a while due to funding constraint, but then a person was appointed, but it did not work out. The position is currently vacant and we are exploring the best way to move forward. Two staff members retired at the end of 2021, Mabel Bokolo and Boniswa Nomahe, and two new staff members were appointed and are settling down well.

All staff have formal **contracts** in place. A **pension plan** is in place for staff who opted to contribute towards this. The Consolidated Employers Organisation (CEO) and SEESA have continued to provide **labour support** to Abalimi during the past year although there were no staff concerns.



Figure 2: Abalimi team at the end of 2021 (Grace Stead was taking the photo)

At the end of February 2021 there were a total of **13 full-time staff members**, with the majority women (66%) and four men. Ten are African (73%), with one Coloured and two White staff members.

We currently have three agricultural graduate interns sponsored by the Department of Agriculture for a period of two years, as well as a German volunteer and other local volunteers, both in the field and in the office.

5 BENEFICIARIES

Abalimi's core geographical focus remains the Cape Flats and specifically Khayelitsha, Nyanga, Gugulethu, Philippi and surrounding areas, although more recently there seems to be a slightly wider reach with queries from Mfuleni, Langa and beyond. During COVID we also assisted additional gardens on request beyond our core geographical focus area.

The beneficiaries are mostly Black (99%), disadvantaged individuals from the townships. More than 80% of the people are unemployed, with an average of 4,3 people per household. Most of the garden centre clients (85%) were for home gardens, with the gender ratio being 50/50.

“Most of the garden centre clients (85%) were home gardens”



Figure 3: Some of Abalimi beneficiaries

6 LOGISTICS & COMMUNICATION

Our administrative office is based at 20 Boston Circle, which is accessible and in a safe environment, with safe on-site parking for vehicles. The core of our activities is however run from the garden centres based in Khayelitsha and Nyanga.

Financial management systems are working well, although it is very time consuming because all the sales dockets from the garden centres are captured manually. This is managed internally, with support from an external accountant and annual financial audits. The 2021/22 annual financials have been submitted to HGCA for auditing.

Communication systems are functioning well and we are pleased to have office-hours uncapped wifi at the office and both garden centres. We have managed to retain our Telkom line with the same telephone number, which can also be accessed off-site. The office and field team computers, laptops, software and anti-virus are kept up to date.

Our social media (Facebook and Instagram) impact is growing, specifically focussing on our 40 year celebration during 2022. Engagement via WhatsApp and SMS has also increased and it is encouraging to see the discussions between farmers with peer to peer learning.

Dave's Opel bakkie was donated to Abalimi, so we now have two vehicles. The Nissan bakkie is used mostly for deliveries, while the Opel bakkie is used more for site visits as it has a canopy. We are still encouraging staff to get their driver's licenses.

7 TRAINING & GARDEN CENTRES

Training has soared during the last year with a range of training courses from basic training and demonstrations, through to focus farmer sessions and Agriplanner. The total number of people more than doubled year on year. Additional training posters were developed to complement the initial set of posters used in training.

Type of training	Sessions	People
Basic training	39	670
Focus farmer	14	196
Agriplanner	2	42
Demonstrations	3	50
Total	58	958
Youth	20%	
Men	34%	
Women	63%	



Figure 4: Training community members in Langa

The **garden centres** are still the heart of the activities as this is where the training happens and people buy resources, such as seeds, seedlings and manure, as well as tools. The membership drive is held in March each year and has been well received by both home and community gardens. The garden centres also produce veggies for sale to the community. They have demonstration gardens and are a shining example of what can be achieved.

8 SPECIAL PROJECTS

The following special projects were implemented during the past year:

8.1 Department of Agriculture Household Support

Abalimi was appointed by DOA to assist with training and distribution of resources to 300 households early 2021 and another 100 households early 2022. The deliverables for these projects included:

- Identification of beneficiaries;
- Training of approved beneficiaries (minimum of one day training);
- Implementation of household gardens; and
- Monitoring through at least one site visit within one month after implementation.



Figure 5: DOA resource distribution to household gardens

Beneficiaries received resources including potting soil, composted manure, seeds, seedlings, a tree, planter bags and tools. Abalimi also provided a voucher system to allow them to come to the garden centre to get additional seedlings over a longer period of time.

8.2 Khulisa Amafama / UCOOK

The project continued through till February 2022 with UCOOK, PEDI and Abalimi providing support to four community gardens to help them to secure market access, develop their skills, increase income for better livelihoods and ensure community food security.

By developing a production plan that suits the needs of UCOOK, we can secure market access for the farmers. Abalimi is providing the agricultural support, while PEDI is providing logistical support. The project is furthermore providing financial support for agricultural resources and infrastructure, with the aim to make a lasting impact on these gardens.



Figure 6: Khulisa Amafama project with UCOOK at Abathethi

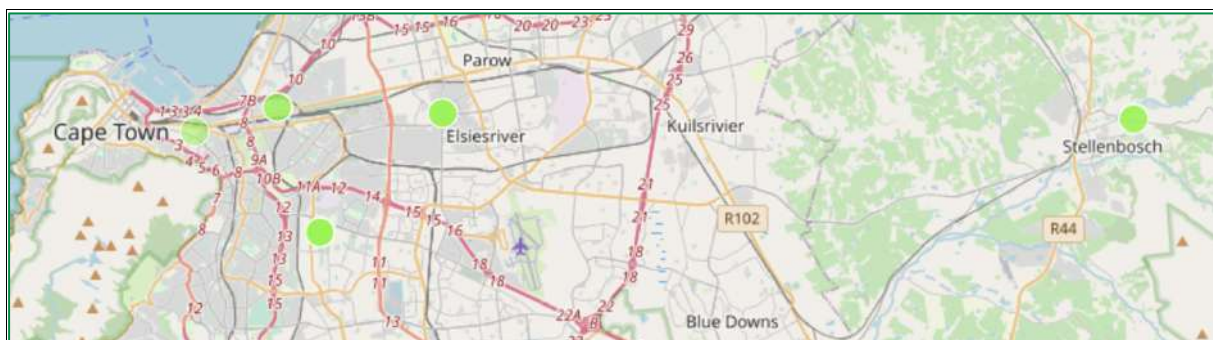
8.3 Neighbourhood Old Age Homes

The partnership with NOAH is going well. It started with training residents in Khayelitsha, and expanded to the establishment of communal gardens at five of their residences.

The team continues to provide support to the home and communal gardens where residents are growing vegetables for own consumption, to share and to sell. It is good to work with another NGO as this helps with social engagement, as well as monitoring of impact.



Figure 7: NOAH communal garden



NOAH communal homes are based in Woodstock, Maitland, Athlone, Elsies River and Stellenbosch.

8.4 Heldeberg Schools

Four schools in the Helderberg Area (Nomzama, Silukhango, Sir Lowry's and Temperance) requested support for training and setting up a garden. It was a joint initiative between the teachers, learners and school care takers. The soil was very good and the gardens flourished. Additional support might be requested in the future again, but the project is complete.



Figure 8: Helderberg Schools garden

8.5 Manelisi's Urban Food Garden

Manelisi Mapukata is a farmer in Gugulethu who was taught by his father to grow vegetables and his love for farming has only grown over the years. He started out at his home in Gugulethu, but expanded to a portion of land at Fezeka. Abalimi received dedicated funding from the Silvertree Trust to support Manelisi with his garden and has been working with Manelisi and Rosie Campbell to upgrade the garden. It was a long and slow process to get the containers moved, but it is finally done.

8.6 Umingonaphaka



Figure 9: Supporting Umingonaphaka Educare in Khayelitsha with training, resources and mentoring.

A Swedish based Triathlon and Swimrun group has been supporting the Umingonaphaka Educare for a while, and requested that Abalimi support them with establishing food gardens. This included training of staff and parents from the area, provision of resources, as well as an upgrade to the existing garden at the school. The project continues as we try to sort out their irrigation problems.

8.7 Participatory Guarantee System

The Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) pollinator program was well implemented and the Ikamva Lafama PGS was set up. The aim was to have ten farms certified by the end of last year, however only one was certified. It was a slow process, but it should continue to be supported as it grows over time. It is proposed that a second pollinator be trained during 2022 to assist with implementation as it is very time consuming.



Figure 9: Moya weKhaya was the first PGS garden in Khayelitsha.

8.8 Vendor Programme

A review was done of the vendor programme during the first half of 2021 where specific support was given to the vendors to set up systems for monitoring their impact. There are currently five active vendors who submit their records and get their resources at a discounted process so that they can sell it within their local community.

8.9 Market Access

Since the closing of Harvest of Hope at the end of 2019, and COVID in 2020, there has been constant requests for more market access. Sadly Umthunzi also closed in 2021 so PEDI is the only organisation providing market access infrastructure (logistics and admin) for external sales. PEDI gets an available list from farmers and then orders from them, does collection and the financial administration, although only 20% of availability is currently being bought by PEDI.

Abalimi is still providing market access support to farmers, with the strategy changing to encouraging more **local market access** in the townships, as well as **small farmers markets** where produce can be sold independently. A market survey was done last year to gain a better understanding of the local market barriers and opportunities.



Figure 11: Sale of veggies at Triggerfish farmers market

A **local market** has been established in Harare, Khayelitsha, where produce is sold at street price to local residents. Here is no mark-up for Abalimi, however we provide the transport, infrastructure (gazebo, table, etc) and the admin to ensure that this happens and to show farmers that it is possible. In addition to this we are encouraging farmers to use their local networks to promote the sale of their veggies.

A group of ladies (calling themselves Khayelitsha Farmers Market) are selling their veggies at the **Mountain Market** (Vredehoek) and **Triggerfish Market** (Strand) every Saturday. They are getting veggies from various different farms depending on availability. They have set up systems that they pay the farmers directly and do all the administration. Abalimi assisted them financially for the first three months to see if it is viable, but as from March 2022 they will be independent and Abalimi will only assist with transport and some oversight as part of a mentoring program. The aim is to get more farmers involved in markets like this where they can drive the sales according to their needs.



9 FINANCE

Abalimi again received a clean audit for 2020/21, while the 2021/22 financials have been submitted and a clean audit is anticipated. All main debts and loans have been settled, and we have a valid SARS tax certificate.



9.1 INCOME

We are extremely grateful to our donors, which are a mix of private—individuals, independent trusts and foundations. They have continued to support us and we have been able to do additional training and implementation, which brought in funding from special projects.

The main income can be summarised as follows:

• Donations	R 1,720 613
• Garden Centre Sales	R 294 157
• SARS VAT refunds	R 36 257
• Special projects	R 2,039 770
• Veggie sales	R 24 467
• Market Table	R 16 893
• Other	R 68 420
• TOTAL	R 4,200 579

We have experienced some donor fatigue post COVID, however income has been sustained through loyal support and the implementation of special projects. Various options have been explored for securing long-term funding, however it is a slow process.

9.2 EXPENDITURE

There was still a strong focus on curbing unnecessary costs with the main expenditure items outlined below, with a total expense of **R3 526 778**:

• Administration (rent, insurance, maintenance, feed, etc)	R 227 750
• Transport & vehicles	R 80 886
• Staff (salaries, PAYE, UIF, WCF, contract staff)	R 1,732 833
• IT & communication (website, telecoms, IT)	R 62 513
• Resources (manure, seedlings, irrigation, etc)	R 384 756
• Accounting & auditing	R 277 750
• Special projects	R 420 558
• TOTAL	R 3,526 778

There has been an increase income and reduction in expenditure compared to the previous year.

10 CLOSING STATEMENT

The last year has clearly showed the need for training and support around food gardens in the township. Training and sale of resources has increased compared to previous years for both home and community gardens. There were various new gardens and special projects supplementing core funding and creating awareness. It has been a very successful year.

Looking ahead to 2022 we are preparing for 40 years of celebration of Abalimi. Various activities are planned for the year ahead, starting with the Farmer Festival and Agri-Expo on 23 April 2022. In winter there will be a cook-up with chefs and farmers, while the spring will focus on showcasing the community and home gardens through visits and competitions. This is an amazing opportunity for Abalimi to show what we have achieved over the last 40 years and what we can do now.

We continue to provide a pivotal service in the local community supporting the urban poor for better food security in a practical manner.

Grace Stead
Managing Director
Abalimi Bezekhaya
April 2022

Morwesi Ramonyai
Chairperson
Abalimi Bezekhaya