



Volume 1, Issue 1  
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Quarterly

# NEWSLETTER

## KUSASA - "tomorrow" in Xhosa & Zulu

### THE KIDS MEET THE IRISH PRIME MINISTER!



Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern meets Asive, Athi & Nelly of THE KUSASA PROJECT at the launch of the Chello Foundation in Cape Town. The Chello Foundation supports at-risk children and Aids Orphans through the provision of scholarships and will be working with THE KUSASA PROJECT in South Africa.

### Powerful Statistics to Date...

- 400 children impacted weekly
- More than 40 local volunteers recruited
- R700k/\$100K donations raised
- 380 fleeces provided, winter 2007
- 10 sponsored field trips for 380 children
- 5 sporting tournament sponsored
- 20 certificates for Dream Team 12 month programme completion
- 30,000 meals served
- 9 ongoing student programmes

## ONE YEAR ON—WHAT HAVE WE DONE!

In 2006, Doug Gurr & Dave Riordan began reading English and playing sports with about 50 or so impoverished Xhosa children at a primary school in South Africa. No such programmes existed in the school before hand. It was from this start, that an organization was born with a simple mission—"to create a gateway of opportunity for underprivileged children by facilitating academic, sporting & life skills development". With the help of many people locally and abroad, THE KUSASA PROJECT has grown considerably in a very short time.

Here are a few key milestones:

**May 2006:** Reading and after-school recreation sessions begin.

**November 2006:** "Dream Team" concept for high potential 6th & 7th graders.

**January 2007:** THE KUSASA PROJECT becomes an official South African Charitable Trust.

**January-December 2007:** Full-time programmes running 4-5 days per week including academic, recreational, artistic & sporting activities.

**February 2007:** Affiliation w/ 501(c)3 registered US charity Kids Force International to facilitate US funding.

**July 2007:** The Breakfast Club opens. Dream Team students & local volunteers feed breakfast to 350 primary school children each school day.

**December 2007:** THE KUSASA PROJECT awarded PBO & 18A tax-exempt status by the South African Revenue Service.

**January 2008:** THE KUSASA PROJECT awarded R80k to fund Literacy Project from Reed Elsevier. 4 local schools targeted for comprehensive literacy initiative.



Dream Team member Nolizwe tutors her younger schoolmate in one of our reading programmes.

## FOUNDERS' MESSAGE

It is a striking and often emotional short drive from one of the most beautiful villages in the world, Franschhoek, up the mountain into the poverty, grime & destitution of the informal settlement where our project was born. The group of children (and adults) we work

with inspire in us, and all those who meet them, hope in mankind and the future. Amid the squalor and poverty which would break the spirit of most of us more materially wealthy people is a core of wonderful children who show amazing warmth, joy, generosity, insight

and courage undimmed by their surroundings or immense challenges. It is for these individuals, and for our own children, that THE KUSASA PROJECT exists.

Dave & Doug

## What We've Been Up To/Programmes



The Breakfast Club's early morning smiles.

2007 was a whirlwind year with programme kickoffs, volunteer recruitment and fundraising. In addition to getting the organization set up in South Africa for tax purposes and linking up with Alicia Fitts and KidsForce International in the US (to facilitate US tax-deductible donations), we were looking to put in place a consistent group of volunteers, build relationships with local schools such as Bridge House School and its dynamic head of Prep, Melvin King, key community leaders such as Susan Huxter from Le Quartier Francais, Ron Whytock of the Franco Organisation and Franschhoek United Football Club, and to gain credibility with the residents of the area.



One of the little angels at a local crèche that we assist.

THE KUSASA PROJECT is about programmes for kids and in that vein we were very active. A thumbnail of the programmes & activities conducted during the year follows:

**Programmes:** Funding for an additional Grade 1 teacher; Morning reading for Grades 4-7; The Breakfast Club feeding programme (run by local ladies & Dream Team kids daily from 6:30-8:00); Films & discussion; Dream Team; Library Initiative; Chess Club; Art Club (with work exhibited at a Franschhoek gallery); Drama Club (3 productions); Technology; Entrepreneurship; 10 week LifeSkills course by Dr. Marion Keim-Lees; THE KUSASA PROJECT's Football Tournament, Bastille Festival Football Tournament; Netball training & the Groendal Sports Day Netball; Kicking for Peace Tournaments; Training of young footballers by Franschhoek United; friendly football & netball training with Bridge House School; John Hampden Grammar School visit; Sponsorship of Coaching Training through SAFA; provision of child volunteers to as-

ist with Moreson Half Marathon, funneling of shirts, shoes, balls and other kit to kids who often kick old milk plastic bottles barefoot on fields littered with cow pies & glass.

**Field Trips:** Science Museum, Aquarium, Butterfly World, Natural History Museum, Planetarium, Strand beach, Kidszone, final year trip for Dream Team—hike to a magical waterfall at Jonkershoek Nature Reserve, ad-hoc trips up the mountains to get a much needed break from the environs of the shacks.

**Creche Work:** Rebuilding of local crèche in township previously housed in leaking shacks, providing volunteers & material and with Franco, a new classroom. It was through our crèche work that we met the Angel of The Shacks, Mrs. Kaider Ndaba (see story below).

## What We've Been Up To/Fundraising

Fundraising is important to us not only for its direct financial effect but also as a means of raising awareness, both locally and abroad, about the children and their needs.



John Hampden Grammar School and our footballers.

We held a number of local fundraisers, with David Foster of Col-Cacchios Pizza organising Big Music Nights where we tested our vocal chords and the patience of the audiences.

These followed the raffle of a lamb at Pick N'Pay Supermarket courtesy of Stuart Downie as well as the raffle of 31 bottles of fine champagne at the Franschhoek Champagne Festival with thanks going to Nick

Davies. Hugo, "The Cheese King" Blaisse, made the biggest sacrifice for the cause hauling his hulking Dutch frame around the streets of the Big Apple to raise money via the NY Marathon. Monte Levin and Gary Lazarus of Pam Golding Winelands International provided considerable support for a number of programmes.

Our fundraising also extended overseas where we had great support from UK Schools, Solent Middle School and John Hampden Grammar School in particular. Blue Oar Securities and Chelsea Football Club (!)

came through while a load of Doug's old mates from the Isle of Wight offered considerable funding as did a few of Dave's old banking colleagues. The Sullivan and Riordan families wrote generous cheques and the old NationsBank boys, Jeff Kane and Oscar Crantz, came through with much appreciated funding. Jeff and Mimi Kane bankrolled The Breakfast Club for most of the year.

Each contribution, whether large or small, makes a difference and is appreciated by everyone involved in THE KUSASA PROJECT.

## New Programmes for 2008

Our philosophy from the beginning has been to underpromise and overdeliver. As we grow and look to meet the considerable needs of the children of the area, we will work hard to hold to this maxim as we feel it is critical to maintaining credibility with our donors, volunteers and most importantly with the children we interact with. Our focus in 2008, while ambitious, will continue to remain consistent with this theme. We expect to put the organisation's energy into the following:

- Community service— TKP children giving back
- Literacy programmes for Grade 1-3 in Xhosa & Afrikaans speaking schools in the valley
- After school tutoring off-site (i.e. clean, safe locale)
- Additional sports training (rugby, athletics, volleyball)
- Creche coordination and teacher training
- Provision of scholarships
- Solving transport problems
- Introduction of skilled teacher aids & social workers
- Support around the new Dalubuhle School inc. computer & library resources & new uniforms
- Deepening our outreach to the parents & carers of our children—a key target for longterm success
- Building alliances with corporates to provide funding and expertise



Grade 4 Field Trip to the Natural History Museum, Cape Town.

## Volunteer Diary: Jenny Dewing, UK, 18 yrs

*I have had the most amazing time. I can't think of a better way to spend a week of my holiday. I have wonderful memories that will stay with me forever and pictures that speak a thousand words; children smiling, laughing and pulling faces. These are the children that have so little but give so much. It's hard to imagine the children in these photos as the same children who go home at*

*night to a cold empty shack.*

*This is why THE KUSASA PROJECT is so important: to provide during the day fun and enjoyment and to allow them to feel safe and secure. But perhaps the most important aspect of the project is that it gives the children of the township people that they can rely on, people outside their community who want to help them and who*

*believe in them. In order for improvements to occur inside the townships, the children need to believe in themselves.*

*I will never forget this experience, the people that I have met and, of course, the children. I will miss Likupo's smile, Mungoselele's cute laugh and Masonwabe's determination and leadership. I hope that the future is brighter for them.*



Jenny and the kids.

## Community Profile: The Angel of the Shacks

In our work we meet many interesting and inspiring people who work against the odds to make a better life for themselves or others in need. One person who sets herself apart in her courage, humanity, strength and sheer life force is Mrs. Ndaba, a 62 year old Xhosa widow. We came to know Mrs. Ndaba through her orphaned granddaughters who are part of our Dream Team and are our most dedicated and reliable volunteers at The Breakfast Club. Mrs. Ndaba's

shack house is an oasis of color and joy amidst the bleak shacks of the settlement. Built by her hand, the pink shack houses Mrs. Ndaba, her 2 young granddaughters, her youngest daughter, her child and an aunt. There is no electricity nor plumbing, yet from 5:30-18:30, Mrs. Ndaba and her daughter care for 50-60 children from 18months-5 years. In a space far too small for such numbers, she feeds them and teaches basic pre-school concepts. The children

there are lively and happy and clearly have a love for the angel who cares for them. With little fanfare and almost no financial resource this wonderful woman goes about caring for the most vulnerable of her community radiating a force of good and never asking for thanks. We walk away from our frequent visits to the little pink shack reinvigorated to make a difference, awed and humbled by what this Angel does everyday from the strength of her own heart.



Mrs. Ndaba and Supporters from Pick 'N Pay Franschhoek.



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### THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

#### US Donors

Checks payable to KidsForce International  
(note THE KUSASA PROJECT in memo line)  
KidsForce International  
C/O Alicia Fitts  
5920 Manor Place  
Brentwood, TN 37027

#### Sterling or Rand

Payments via wire to:  
NEDBANK-FRANSCHHOEK  
ACCT #: 167005186  
BRANCH CODE: 167005  
SWIFT CODE: NEDSAJ  
BENEFICIARY: THE KUSASA PROJECT

## Working for a Brighter Tomorrow for the children of South Africa

By engaging children at a foundation age, in conjunction with educators, average residents of the area, community workers and parents, we seek to improve essential core skills for life, to instill the importance of community service and offer viable alternatives to the activities that can destroy a child's future and the hopes of a community. A fundamental objective is to stimulate these children's minds and aspirations to a future beyond the shacks and poverty in which they now live...a brighter and healthier tomorrow.



Enthusiastic Grade 3 readers.

## A Child's Perspective: *Athenkosi Mbinda*

My name is Athenkosi (Athi) Mbinda. I am a Xhosa boy born in Groot Drakenstein, Western Cape in 1993, 30 June. I live here in Franschhoek in the informal settlement with my brothers, sisters and parents. Most of the people of the informal settlement live without water, electricity or toilets. There are a lot of fires from cooking and usually kids or old people get burned or die when the fires burn. I've been with THE KUSASA PROJECT one year and will be two years in 2008. When I was twelve years I decided to become a pilot when I grow up, but it is difficult for me because there are no opportunities.

Being with KUSASA is very interesting and I help with reading for the younger kids. I got to express my career interest (to them) and even flew a helicopter. THE KUSASA PROJECT has helped a lot of kids in my area. Everybody has got time to express his/her talent and there is still more time. THE KUSASA PROJECT even helped our parents because of the breakfast that they are giving to the kids at school. So, I say "Thank You" to Dave, Doug and Lucy for their help to all the kids. Thank you to all the people of THE KUSASA PROJECT.



Athi, future pilot.