



**THANDANANI**  
**CHILDRENS FOUNDATION**

we care **4kids**



**Year-End Donor Report**

April 2024 to March 2025

# Director's Report



As we close another year in Thandanani's journey, we do so with a deep sense of both pride and purpose. The past 12 months have brought remarkable achievement, meaningful impact, and thoughtful reflection. Despite the many local and global challenges we all face, our work has remained steadfast - making a real and lasting difference in the lives of the children, youth, and families we serve.

Over the year, we supported over 1600 children & youth and 1150 of their caregivers, across more than 550 families through our various programmes and activities – all of which address the material, physical, cognitive, and emotional well-being of children & youth in one way or another. For example:

- Members of our Self-help Groups collectively saved over R151,000, which they circulated to group members as low-interest loans totalling R208,000, directly improving the lives of over 1,200 children.
- 95 households exited our Family Strengthening Programme - 68% graduating with significantly increased stability and self-reliance.
- 24 young people launched micro-enterprises through our Zenzele Youth Entrepreneurship Programme - leaving the programme with a renewed sense of purpose and agency having collectively generated more than R202,000 in income for themselves.
- While, through our Home-based ECD Programme (Play Mat), 105 caregivers learnt new skills and techniques to promote early learning at home for the 136 young children they care for. One caregiver walked nearly 9 kilometres to attend a session - a powerful reflection of the programme's value and reach.

But numbers only tell part of the story. Behind every statistic are real lives: grandmothers growing vegetables with their grandchildren, caregivers listening & nurturing, and teenagers turning hardship into opportunity. These stories are a testament to the power of responsive care, relational connection, and person-centred empowerment.

None of this would be possible without our extraordinary team - the Fieldworkers and Facilitators who carry out this work with humility, tenacity, and deep compassion. Their contribution - often unseen, but always essential - is the heartbeat of Thandanani. We thank each of them with heartfelt appreciation.

We are equally grateful to our many donors and supporters - individuals, schools, businesses, foundations, and institutions - many of whom have walked with us for years. Your partnership is especially vital in these uncertain times. Rising living costs, shrinking donor pools, and global economic instability have placed immense pressure on non-profits, including our own.

In response and with the wise support and guidance of our Board, we are taking proactive steps to ensure our own well-being - including scaling back aspects of our work, refocusing our priorities, and redoubling our fundraising efforts. At the same time, we are strengthening our commitment to what works: programmes that promote responsive caregiving and livelihood security. These strategies are key to reducing vulnerability and creating safe, nurturing environments where children can grow and thrive.

Looking ahead, we remain guided by our vision: a world where every child grows up feeling loved & protected and is equipped & supported in the realization of their dreams. In the context we all find ourselves in today, this mission calls on us to adapt, innovate and, with your continued support, to persist - more than ever before - in building that future together.

Thank you for continuing to walk this journey with us!

Sincerely

Duncan Andrew (Director)

# Thandanani Overview

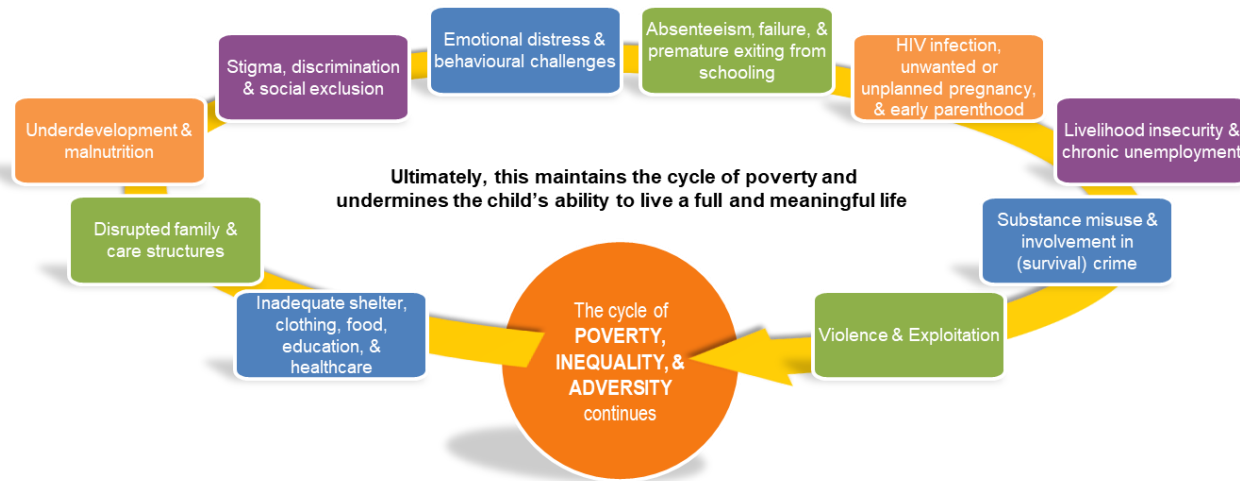
With a vision and mission deeply rooted in our history, Thandanani Children's Foundation is dedicated to transforming the lives of children and youth living in adversity. Despite South Africa's transition to democracy; poverty, inequality, and HIV/AIDS continue to dominate the lives of millions of South African children & youth.

In KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa:

- 65% of all **CHILDREN** live in poverty
- 23% live in overcrowded households
- 36% live in households where no adults are employed
- 11% lack regular meals
- 16% have lost either one or both of their parents
- 4.2% are HIV positive
- 65% of **YOUTH** (20 to 24) are unemployed or discouraged work seekers
- 49% have completed Grade 12
- 5% have some form of tertiary qualification
- 49% are not in any form of education, employment or training
- 58% have at least one child of their own, and
- 24% are HIV positive



Children and youth growing up in these circumstances face immense challenges that undermine their well-being, development and future prospects. These include:



Through our various projects and activities, Thandanani seeks to break cycles of poverty and adversity by creating opportunities for personal growth, enriched family life, improved educational outcomes, and sustainable livelihoods as we build stronger, more vibrant, families & communities where children are loved, nurtured and protected and youth are supported in pursuing their dreams. This report documents our achievements in the past year.

# Family Strengthening

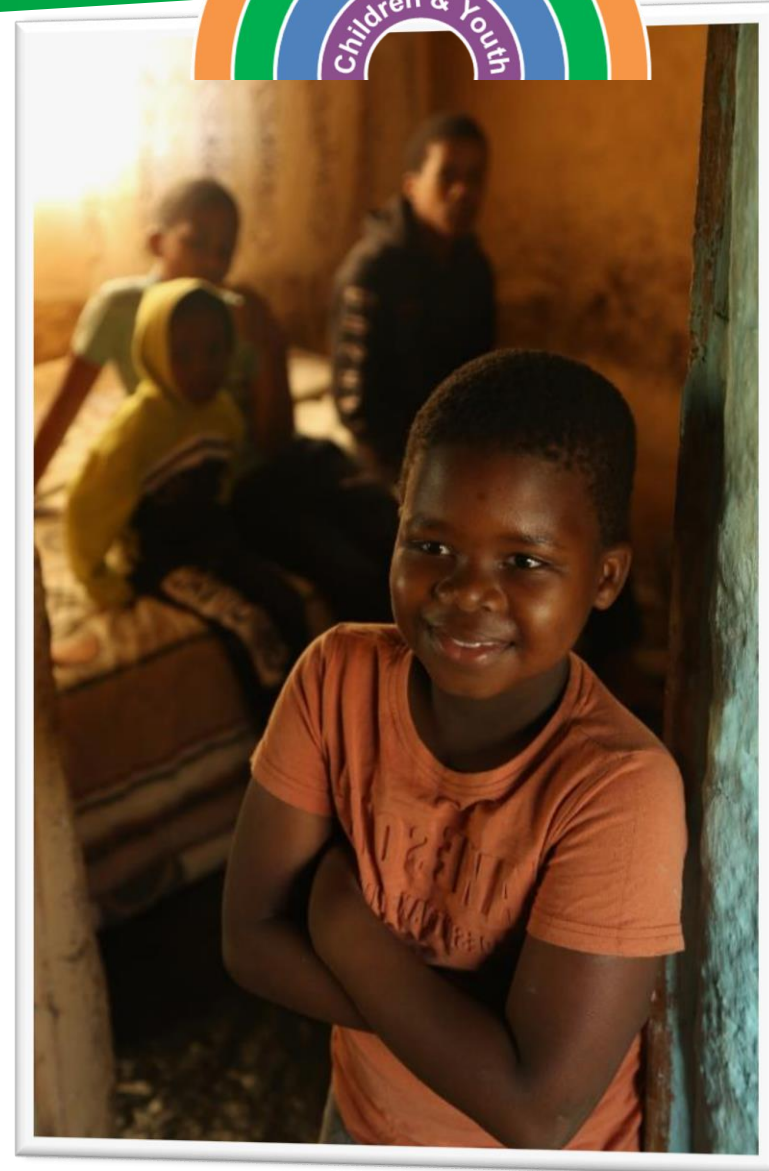


Thandanani's Family Strengthening Project supports vulnerable children and youth by empowering the families that care for them through a holistic, 3-year package of support that strengthens their capacity to respond to and provide for, the material, physical, cognitive, and emotional needs of the children in their care. This section summarises our Family Strengthening Project achievements in the past year.

## Beneficiaries

In the current reporting period, Thandanani provided support to a total of **1442** children, **539** caregivers, and **1120** family members from **539** households across **6** historically disadvantaged communities. A breakdown of these beneficiaries by age is provided below:

	Total Beneficiaries Supported: Apr 24 – Mar 25			Active Beneficiaries as at: 31 Mar 2025		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Children 0 - 5	217	172	389	188	141	329
Children 6 - 10	220	214	434	182	185	367
Children 11 - 15	237	228	465	190	184	374
Children 16 - 18	81	73	154	70	60	130
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Caregivers 18 - 35	5	137	142	3	109	112
Caregivers 36 - 55	3	260	263	3	225	228
Caregivers 56+		134	134		104	104
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
Other Adults 18 - 35	359	364	723	283	297	580
Other Adults 36 - 55	152	115	267	130	96	226
Other Adults 56+	55	75	130	43	59	102

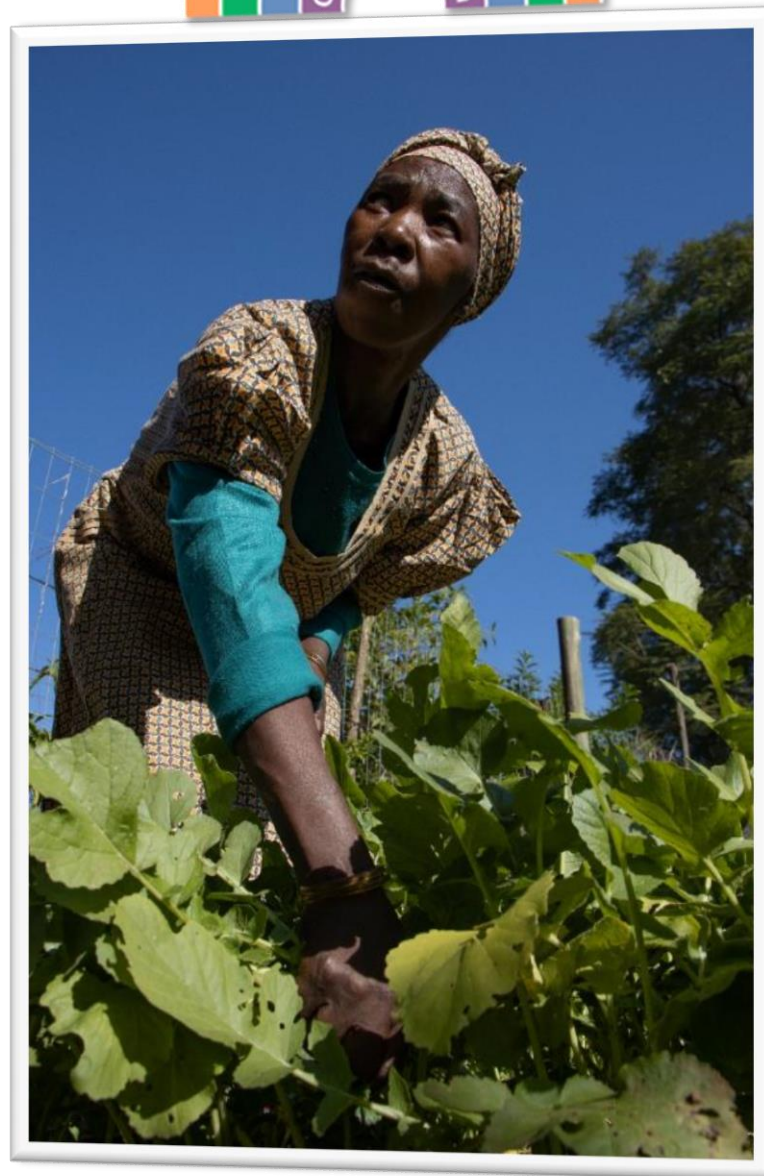


# Material Well-Being Activities

Thandanani's Family Strengthening Project helps improve the material well-being of families and their children in several ways. We help families access all the government grants they qualify for; help them establish and maintain food gardens and involve them in our Self-help Groups (SHGs) where they are supported to save money, gain access to low-interest loans through the group; and are encouraged and supported in starting small businesses for themselves. When needed, we also provide families with basic household items like pots, pans, and bedding. Fieldworkers also visit each family regularly to offer support and advice on managing household finances. Together, these efforts increase economic self-reliance and resilience and improve the family's capacity to meet the basic material needs of the children in their care.

## In the past year, we have:

- Conducted 4744 support visits (105% of our target for the period)
- Provided 72 families with basic household equipment (100% of our target), with 220 children benefitting (95% of our target)
- Issued 278 food vouchers to 85 families (118% of our target), with 280 children benefitting (122% of our target)
- Processed 233 grant applications (73% of our target)
- Secured the approval of 201 grants
- Conducted 4669 grant usage monitoring visits (115% of our target)
- Provided support to 103 existing food gardens
- Established 71 new food Gardens (98% of our target)
- Expanded 44 existing food gardens (73% of our target)
- Provided support to 32 Self-help Groups (SHGs) with a total of 462 members (96% of our target). These groups have accumulated a combined total of R151,440 in savings since 2022 and have recycled this in the form of loans to members to the value of R208,870 with 1248 children benefitting from an adult family member's participation in a Self-Help Group (87% of our target) in the past year.



## Physical Well-Being Activities

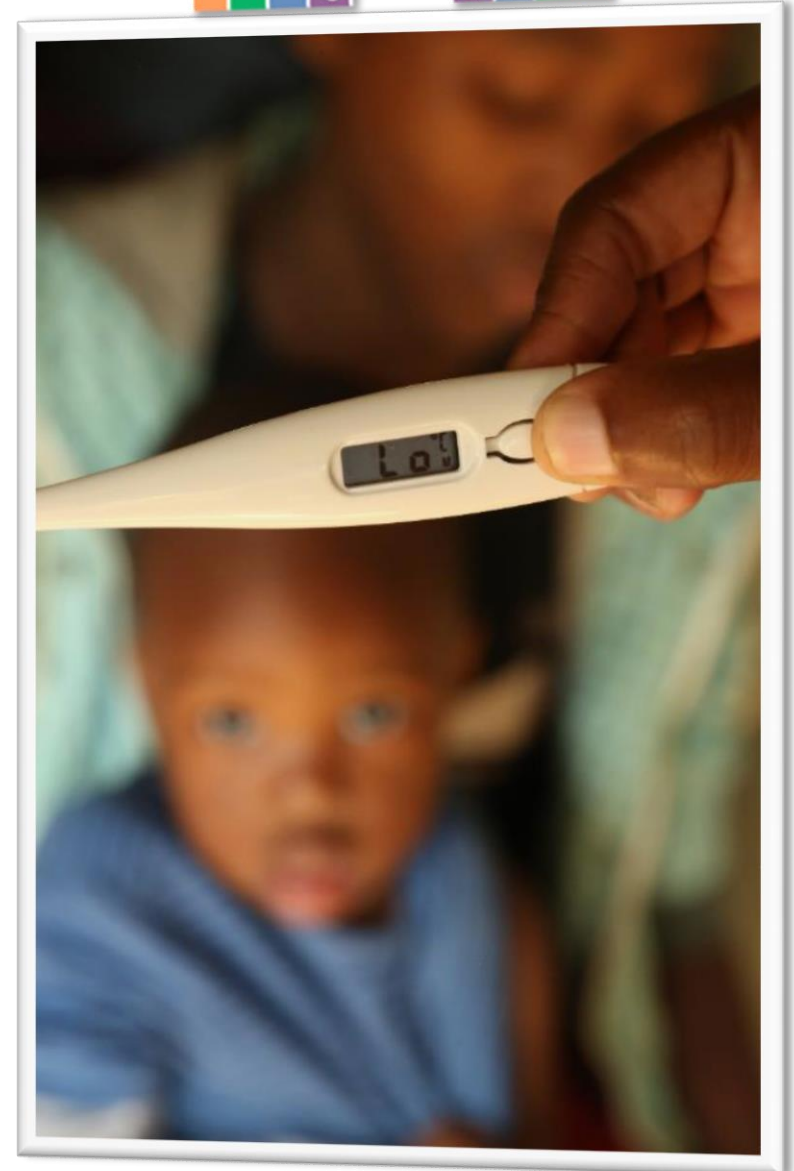
Thandanani's Family Strengthening Project strengthens the physical well-being of families and children by providing families with health screening, education, and testing services within the privacy of their own homes. When health concerns are identified, we ensure families take appropriate action by visiting clinics or accessing other health services. We continue to monitor their well-being through regular home visits, educating them on any health issues that arise, and ensuring they follow up with necessary care. In addition, Thandanani supports pregnant women and young mothers through the Ibhayi Lengane (The Babies' Blanket) programme. This involves home visits throughout pregnancy and the first 1,000 days of the infant's life, providing guidance to strengthen the bond between mother and child, and ensuring the infant receives the care they need. Through these efforts, Thandanani educates and empowers families to identify and respond promptly to the health needs of the children in their care.

### In the past year, we have:

- Provided health education to 145 families (121% of our target)
- Did health assessments with 312 children (81% of our target) and 266 adults (101% of our target)
- Conducted 4719 Physical well-being monitoring visits (117% of our target)
- Offered VCT to 306 children (89% of our target) and 261 adults (110% of our target)
- Tested 244 children (78% of our target) and 142 adults (87% of our target)
- Conducted 168 Ibhayi Lengane sessions with 29 mothers (Need based)

## Cognitive Well-Being Activities

Thandanani's Family Strengthening Project strengthens the cognitive well-being and development of children through its home-based Early Childhood Development programme for mothers with young children, providing them with the tools to support their children's early learning within the home environment and, for older children, through the provision of school uniform vouchers and regular school performance and attendance monitoring visits. During these visits, we empower caregivers to take an active role in their children's education by encouraging regular attendance, celebrating achievements, and offering support through any challenges. In this way, Thandanani helps create a supportive home environment where learning is valued and children are encouraged to succeed.



## In the past year, we have:

- Run ECD group sessions with 41 Caregivers on our Family Strengthening Programme (98% of our target) with 53 Children under the age of 6 benefiting from the programme (126% of our target)
- Conducted 260 ECD-related home visits to households on our Family Strengthening Programme (88% of our target)
- Conducted 1685 School Attendance & Performance monitoring visits (134% of our target)
- Monitored School Attendance & Performance of 1139 school-age children (114% of our target)
- Distributed school uniform vouchers to 223 children (114% of our target)

## Emotional Well-Being Activities

Thandanani's Family Strengthening Project strengthens the emotional well-being of families and children through regular monitoring visits, facilitating support groups for caregivers and younger children, and life-skill workshops for teens. These groups provide a safe space for family members to share their challenges, receive emotional support, and build resilience. Thandanani also engages families in memory work, helping them to document their life stories and experiences, fostering a sense of identity, belonging and emotional security, particularly for children. These activities, strengthen relationships and the emotional bonds within families, creating a more nurturing and resilient environment for children.

## In the past year, we have:

- Conducted 4741 Emotional Well-being monitoring visits (134% of our target)
- Conducted Life-Skills groups with 66 teens (73% of our target)
- Conducted Children's Support groups with 65 children (108% of our target)
- Conducted Caregiver Support groups with 64 caregivers (107% of our target)
- Completed Memory Work with 77 families (107% of our target), with 209 children participating (91% of our target)

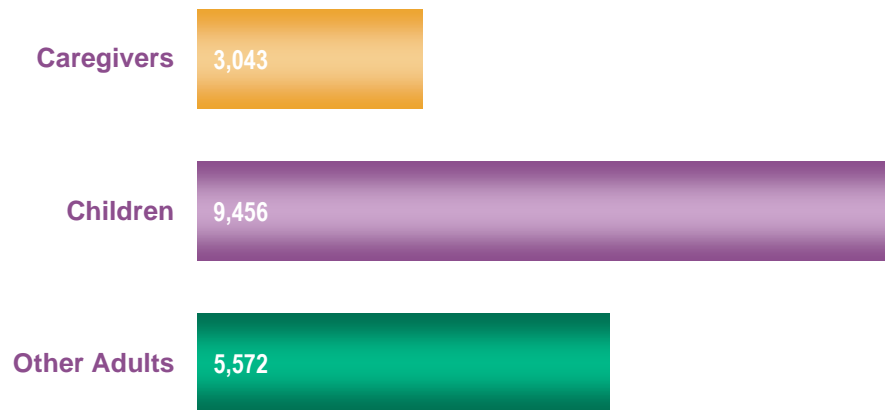


# Overall Project Impact

In line with our staged model of support aimed at moving families from vulnerability to increased stability and self-reliance over three years, **95** households exited the programme in the current reporting period while **106** new households joined the programme. The net effect is that the number of active households supported by Thandanani increased from **433** on 1 April 2024 to **444** by the end of the current reporting period.

Of the households that exited the programme during this period, 65 (68%) graduated from the programme and are now more stable & self-reliant and better able to meet the basic material, physical, cognitive, & emotional needs of the children in their care; 8 (8%) left the programme as a result of their securing employment and being unavailable to continue; 9 (9%) households were uncooperative and dropped out of the programme, 9 (9%) relocated from the areas we work in, and 4 (4%) left the programme for other reasons.

This means that since April 2007, Thandanani has provided support to a total of **18,071** beneficiaries across **3,043** households through its Family Strengthening Project.





# Stories from the Field ...

Names and identifying details changed. Photographs are not necessarily related to the stories.

## Self-help Groups

Nokuthula (66) is a proud member of the Masibambisane Self-help Group. In June 2024, inspired by her group's success and after receiving micro-enterprise training, she used a R400 loan from the SHG and R45 from her grant to buy and then sell soap bars in her local community. She quickly repaid the loan with interest and now runs a small business, generating around R720 in income and R275 in profit each month. This extra income helps support her family of five, who rely mostly on grants. Nokuthula remains an active SHG member and proudly encourages other women to join, believing in the SHG model as a powerful way to uplift vulnerable households.



## Food Gardens

In November 2024, Thandanani helped the Mngadi family - 3 children and their caregiver - establish a food garden at their home. Since then, the family has worked hard to maintain it, with the children playing an active role from the start. They helped set up the garden & continue to water & weed it regularly. Guided by Thandanani's Food Garden Fieldworker, the children have gained valuable knowledge & hands-on experience in sustainable food production. Alongside their grandmother, they have used eco-friendly methods - like enriching the soil with decomposed grasses & kraal manure - to prepare & care for the garden. The results have been transformative. The garden now provides the family with nutritious, home-grown vegetables and they've even sold surplus produce to neighbours, earning some additional income for themselves.



## Household Equipment

As the primary caregiver to five of her grandchildren, 58-year-old Gogo Mkhize was doing her best to support the children, but without yet being able to access a pension grant due to her age, life was incredibly difficult. She couldn't afford proper cooking equipment and had to rely on fire pots, making meal preparation a long, tiring process. That all changed when Thandanani delivered a bundle of essentials, including new pots and a small stove. Gogo was overjoyed. She expressed how this simple support would completely transform her daily life - making it easier to prepare food and ensure that her grandchildren enjoyed warm, nutritious meals. Her heartfelt gratitude was a powerful reminder of how meaningful practical support can be in easing the burdens of caregiving and ensuring children are properly fed and cared for.



## Food Vouchers

The Ngidi family, a household of five, was struggling to get by on social grants alone. Finances were tight, and food was running low. During a recent home visit our Fieldworker found Zanele, the caregiver, gently warming a pot of porridge - the only meal her children would have when they returned from school. She quietly explained that this was all they had until the next grant payment. When the fieldworker explained that she had come to visit the family because she had a food voucher for them, Zanele was visibly moved. Holding back tears, she said, "How did you know? My children have been eating the same food all week, and they were starting to complain." Her relief was immediate and obvious. Overcome with gratitude, Zanele shared how much the support meant to her and her family during such a difficult time.



## Health Education, Screening & Testing

During a home visit by one of our Fieldworkers, Gogo Bhengu expressed deep concern about her granddaughter, who she said had not been well in recent months. Gogo suspected the child might be HIV-positive as her mother had been sickly and had passed away a few years back but Gogo wasn't sure how to proceed. With gentle support from the Fieldworker, the family agreed to be tested - and the results confirmed Gogo's suspicion. The Fieldworker immediately facilitated a visit to the local clinic, where the child was initiated on treatment and given a follow-up appointment. Gogo was immensely relieved to finally understand her granddaughter's condition and, with advice and guidance from the Fieldworker, felt empowered to support her care. Thanks to this timely intervention, the child's health and well-being have since noticeably improved.



## Life-Skills

Siyamthanda, a 15-year-old boy, joined one of our life-skills groups where he was introduced to entrepreneurship and financial literacy as part of the programme. At the time, he was spending his weekends collecting water and cleaning gardens to earn a bit of money to help support his mother. As part of the programme's practical training, Siyamthanda and the other participants were given goods to sell in their local community. He rose to the challenge, selling all his products quickly and earning more than he ever imagined. His small business began to grow, and by the end of the programme, Siyamthanda no longer needed to work on weekends. Now, he's able to focus on his studies while continuing to run his business in the afternoons - a powerful example of how opportunity and guidance can open new doors for young people.



## School Performance & Attendance Monitoring

Caregivers have an important role to play in supporting the educational journey of the children in their care. However, challenges like limited literacy can make this difficult for some. This was the case for a Gogo (Granny) caring for two grandchildren, both of whom were falling behind at school. Their teacher had raised concerns about their lack of progress. During a home visit, the Fieldworker discovered that the children weren't completing their homework, which was contributing to their poor performance. With regular support & encouragement from the fieldworker over the next few months, the children began to improve and, by the end of the year, both had been promoted to the next grade. Gogo was deeply grateful, sharing how Thandanani's involvement had given her grandchildren a second chance & renewed hope for their education.



## Child Protection

Seventeen-year-old Thandeka had been living with her grandmother and aunt after losing her mother some years earlier. In February, Thandanani received an anonymous report that Thandeka had been forced to leave the home. A follow-up revealed that ongoing family conflict had led her to leave, prompting our Social Worker to convene a family conference. It soon became clear that much of the tension stemmed from the aunt's disciplinary approach. Though well-intentioned, she believed in "tough love," unaware of the emotional impact it was having. To help rebuild trust, the Social Worker provided parenting support focused on positive discipline. With greater understanding and a commitment to change, the family welcomed Thandeka back home - this time with healthier relationship dynamics and more supportive behaviour management in place.



# Zenzele Academy



“Zenzele” means “Do it for Yourself” - and that’s exactly what this programme supports young people to do. Developed by Thandanani, the Zenzele Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programme empowers youth aged 18 to 25 with the personal, social, and economic tools they need to move from vulnerability toward self-reliance.

Reaching 46 participants from Dambuzha and Snathing the 2024 programme combined personal growth, practical business skills, and ongoing mentorship to help unemployed youth unlock their potential & break the cycle of poverty.

## Programme Structure & Stages

### 1. Recruitment & Selection

Applications opened at the end of 2023 and continued into early 2024, with strong outreach through community channels and existing Thandanani networks. Of 121 applicants, 59 were invited to join after a rigorous two-day Boot Camp designed to assess motivation, teamwork, and basic readiness. Ultimately, 46 youth officially joined the programme.

### 2. Family Engagement

From the start, families were brought into the journey. Family briefing sessions ensured caregivers understood the programme and could support participants. Over the year, 101 family meetings were held with 103 family members, building trust and reinforcing support at home.

### 3. Personal Development & Team Building

This phase focused on building confidence, setting goals, and forming peer support. Activities encouraged reflection, self-awareness, and teamwork - laying a strong emotional and social foundation for what lay ahead.

### 4. Sexual & Reproductive Health (SRH) Education

Six engaging sessions helped participants explore healthy relationships, gender dynamics, consent, and HIV awareness. Participants gained both knowledge and personal insight, contributing to their overall well-being.



### 5. Camp Experience

A two-day residential camp brought the group together to consolidate their learning from the first two modules and introduced the upcoming enterprise component. This fun and focused time away created space for bonding, deep reflection, and motivation.

### 6. Micro-Enterprise Training & Planning

Over seven interactive sessions, youth learned the core concepts of starting and managing a small business - from costing and pricing to budgeting and marketing. Participants then put this knowledge into practice through a selling exercise that required them to turn R200 in seed funding into a profit through sales in their community.

### 7. The "Lion's Den"

Similar to the TV show Shark Tank, participants then pitched their business plans to a panel of mentors and business leaders. Of the 26 who presented, 24 received start-up funding, with awards ranging from R1,119 to R4,525. Business ideas included fast food stalls, egg and chicken sales, salons, laundromats, and vegetable sellers.

### 8. Enterprise Launch & Mentorship

With funding secured, the young entrepreneurs launched their businesses. Weekly mentorship sessions gave them space to troubleshoot, refine strategies, and stay motivated. Eight business stakeholders actively mentored participants through this process.

### 9. Market Days & Community Events

In addition to their day-to-day transactions, six Market Days gave youth a platform to sell their products and promote their services while providing Sexual & Reproductive Health information to the broader community. These lively events brought together 347 community members and 114 youth attendees. They also gave families and community leaders a chance to witness the progress being made by the participants.

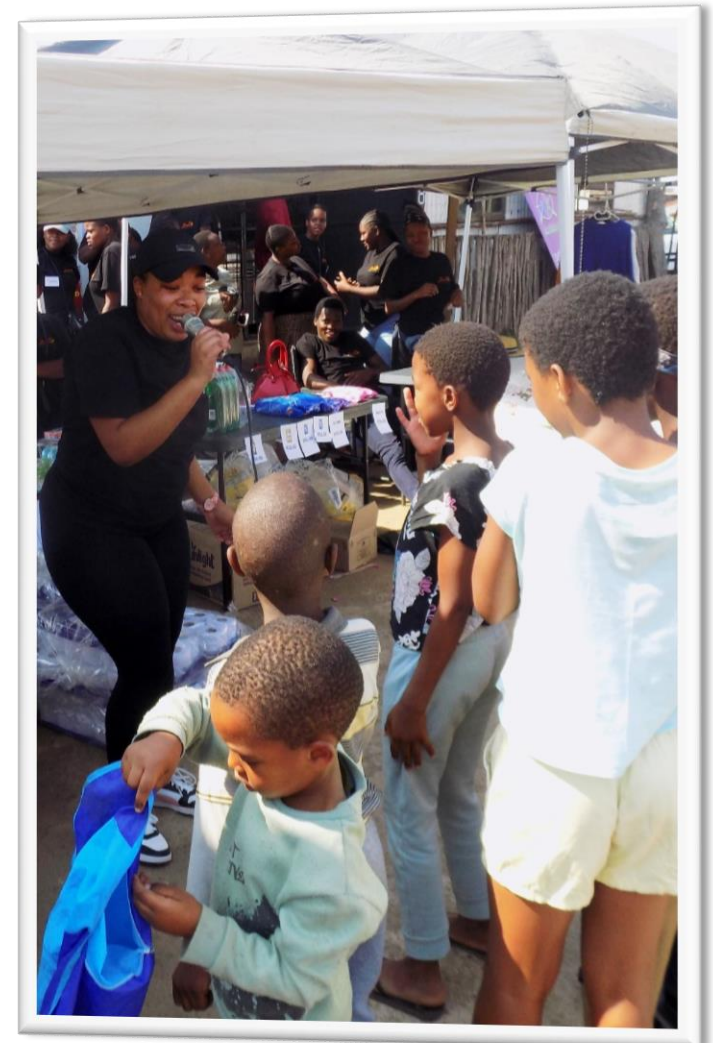
### 10. Graduation & Celebration

A combined graduation ceremony held in December brought the year to a celebratory close. Participants presented their learning journeys, with family members, mentors, and community leaders in attendance. Awards were presented, including certificates of excellence and "Entrepreneur of the Year" prizes.

## What Was Achieved

46 youth started the programme. 17 exited early due to securing jobs or starting further studies - a possible reflection of their increased confidence and motivation; 5 dropped out for other reasons; and 24 graduated having completed all programme modules and successfully initiated a micro-enterprise for themselves.

With a total of R62,847 in start-up capital having been awarded at the Lion's Den, these enterprises incurred R 89,228 in expenditure and generated income of R 202,330. A gross return of R 109,726 (123%) with 23 enterprises generating positive returns by the end of the project.



Entrepreneurs only utilised R8,842 (8%) of these returns for personal remuneration. Generating an average of R90 per month in additional personal income per individual. When other changes to personal income (i.e. increases & decreases from employment, grants etc.) were taken into account, the average monthly personal income per participant increased from a reported R254 at the start of the year to R814 per month by the end of the project. This is an average increase of R560 per month with 17% being remuneration generated through their enterprises.

## Participant Reflections

While dropout rates were higher than hoped, many of those who left did so for positive reasons. Internal evaluations showed strong satisfaction with the programme's structure, content, and support. Participants especially valued the practical selling experience, business mentorship, and personal growth they experienced. In the words of the participants themselves:

*"Being part of the Zenzele programme has had a profound impact on my life. I've found a supportive community and developed skills that are changing my future."* – Nokuthula, owner of Guilty Pleasures Fast Food.

*"Zenzele gave me the confidence and tools to open my salon and hire staff. I now see a future where I can grow and give back."* – Nandipha, founder of Nandy's Hair Salon.

Given the realities of KwaZulu-Natal where 65% of youth (20 to 24) are unemployed or discouraged work seekers; and 49% are not in any form of education, employment or training; Thandanani's Zenzele Programme is more than just a training programme – it is a catalyst for change offering youth a chance to build something of their own, with the knowledge, skills, and support they need to succeed.

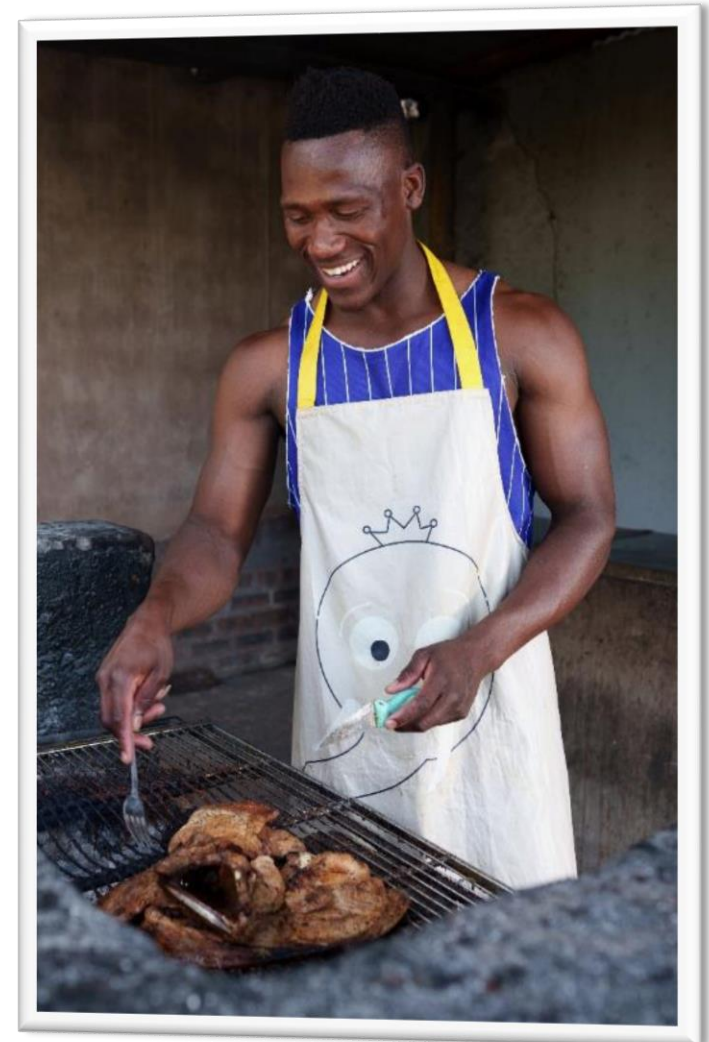
## Stories from the Field ...

*Names and identifying details changed. Photographs are not necessarily related to the stories.*

### Akhona's Fast Food: A Taste for Change

After finishing matric, Akhona found himself stuck. As the eldest child in a single-parent home, he had hoped to further his studies, but when that didn't happen, he was left feeling lost and frustrated. That's when he joined Thandanani's Zenzele Programme - a decision that changed everything.

The Zenzele Programme gave Akhona a safe and supportive space to connect with other young people facing similar challenges. Through the Personal Development component of the programme, he began to shift his focus from disappointment to personal growth. The "Wheel of Life" exercise and strengths-based activities that he participated in helped him identify his passions and plan a way forward.



With renewed confidence; training in Micro-enterprise development; and start-up capital provided by the Zenzele Programme, Akhona launched a small fast-food business, selling meals and snacks in his community. Not only did this give him a sense of purpose, but it also allowed him to contribute financially to his household - easing the burden on his mother. His efforts brought the family closer, and his younger siblings now see him as a role model.

But the program's impact didn't stop at business skills. Akhona says the Sexual Reproductive Health component of the programme also gave him the courage to speak openly about tough topics - especially around consent, sexual health, and gender roles. He now uses conversations with customers and friends, including those he plays soccer with, to share what he's learned about preventing unplanned pregnancies and the importance of respectful relationships.

Akhona's story is one of transformation - from uncertainty to action, from silence to leadership. His journey shows how the Zenzele Programme is helping young people build better lives, not just for themselves, but for their families and communities too.

### *Clean & Fresh Eggs: Snothando's Story of Resilience*

Snothando, a young woman from Dambuza, had a dream - to run her own poultry business. Full of energy and hope she took her first steps by joining the Zenzele Programme. With training in micro-enterprise development and start-up capital from the programme she bought twenty young layer chickens, aiming to sell fresh eggs to her community.

But things didn't go as planned. Harsh weather took a toll on her flock, and all twenty chickens died. It was a heartbreaking loss. Still, Snothando didn't give up.

Instead of walking away, she looked at what had gone wrong and found another path forward. This time, she used her savings to buy chickens ready for slaughter. She cared for them carefully, and soon they were strong and healthy. Snothando sold them in her community and made a solid profit.

Encouraged by this success, she reinvested her earnings to grow her business. With each step, she gained confidence, experience, and a clearer vision of what she wanted to build.

Snothando's journey is a powerful reminder that setbacks are not the end. Her resilience and willingness to adapt have turned a failed start into a thriving little poultry venture.

Today, she stands as an example to other young people in her community, showing that determination, flexibility, and hard work really can lead to success - even when the odds seem stacked against you.



# Home-Based ECD



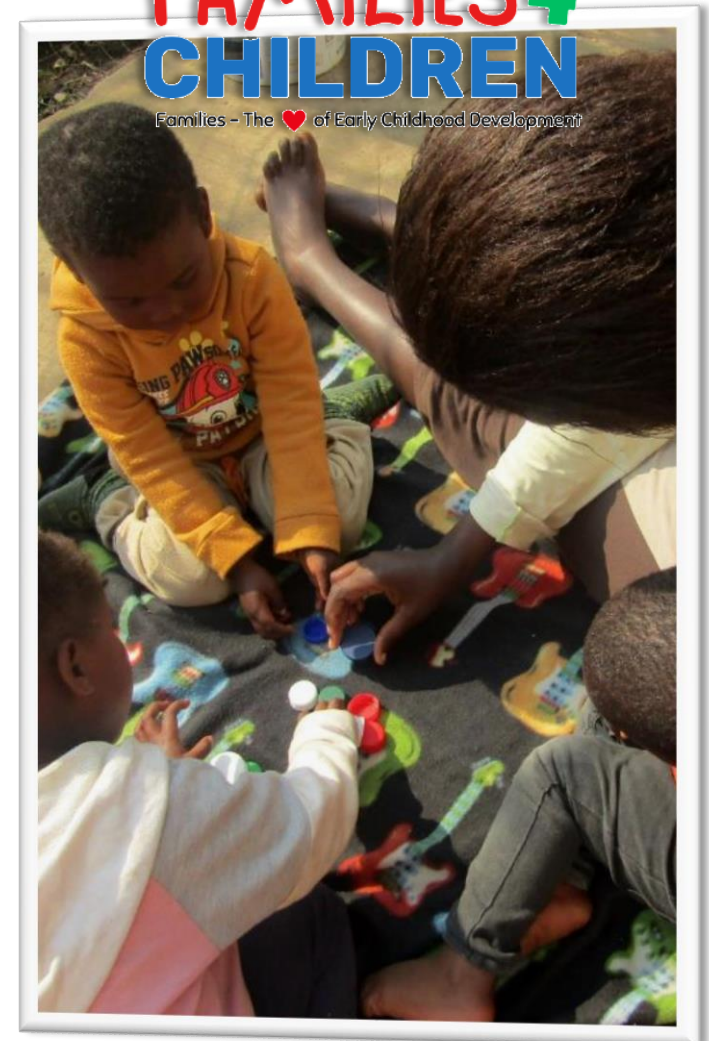
With 82% of infants (0-2 year-olds) and 34% of toddlers (3 to 5 year-olds) in KwaZulu-Natal not attending any form of preschool, crèche or playgroup, and with 37% of those who do participate in some form of early learning programme falling far behind in 5 core developmental zones (gross motor development, fine motor & visual motor integration, emergent numeracy and mathematics, cognition and executive functioning, and emergent literacy and language), Thandanani facilitates a Home-based ECD programme for Caregivers of children under six in the communities in which we work.

This Play Mat programme as it has come to be called, was developed several years ago in partnership with two other local NGOs, dlalanathi & Singakwenza. Since then, the partnership has received support from the German Government (BMZ) through one of our long-time donors, Kindernothilfe, and has expanded to include advocacy for the adoption of home-based early learning & stimulation programmes, like the Play Mat programme, as a cost-effective means to address the gap in access to meaningful early learning opportunities for millions of children in South Africa.

Thandanani's primary role in this Families4Children partnership has been to assist dlalanathi, the lead partner for the programme, in the formulation and implementation of the project's advocacy strategy and related research at the community level. In addition, we have continued to implement the Play Mat programme within the communities in which we work as a means of demonstrating the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of such programmes.

This programme teaches basic child developmental principles; engages Caregivers around the importance of stimulating learning in young children; and capacitates them with simple techniques to engage children through intentional play using everyday items found in the home and toys made from waste materials. In this way, Thandanani promotes an understanding of basic early childhood development and its importance; and fosters a culture of intentional engagement by Caregivers with their children.

In 2024, 105 Caregivers and 136 Children participated in the programme with 30 (29%) Caregivers and 37 (27%) Children being from families also being supported through Thandanani's Family Strengthening Programme.



## Stories from the Field ...

Names and identifying details changed.

### Waste to Toys: A Journey of Dedication

The Waste to Toys workshop, part of Thandanani Children's Foundation's Play Mat Program, recently welcomed participating Caregivers to a session held in the Thandanani boardroom. Participants came from six different communities - Snathing, Dambuza, Copesville, Willowfountain, Upper Noshezi, and Nxamalala. Each person used their own money to travel to the workshop and was reimbursed afterwards.

Among them was a woman from Dambuza whose story stood out. Deeply eager to take part in the workshop, she didn't have the money for transport. But that didn't stop her. Determined not to miss a single session, she decided to walk to Thandanani - a distance of nearly 9 kilometres. She arrived early, smiling and full of energy. Only later did she share her journey with the group. Everyone was moved - both amazed by her determination and touched by her situation.

When asked why she was so committed, she said, *"The way the fieldworker explained the program - how it uses simple, recycled materials to make toys that help children learn - I just knew I had to be part of it. I didn't want to miss a single day."*

Her dedication highlights the powerful impact the Play Mat Program is having in the communities where it's run. Participants aren't just learning new skills - they're deeply invested in the idea of teaching their children using educational toys made from everyday waste materials. This story is a reminder that when programs are meaningful and relevant, people will go to great lengths to be involved.

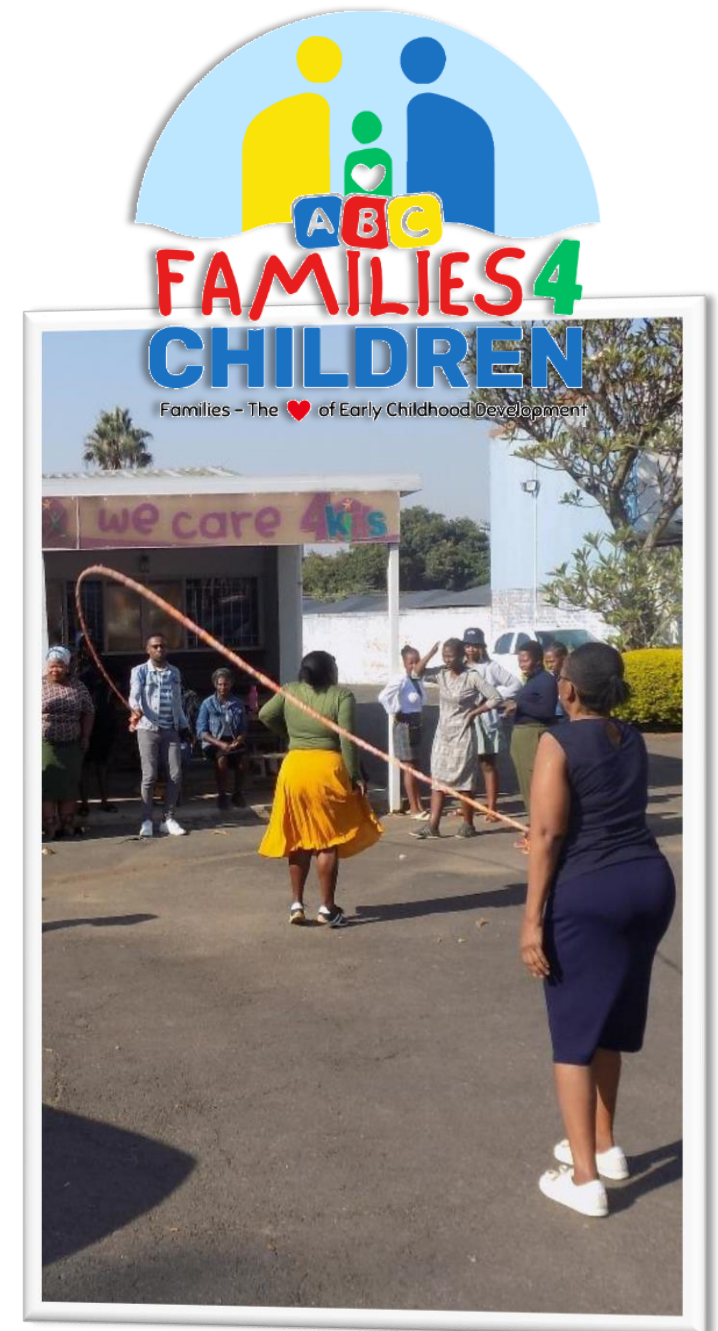
### "I Want to Do Better": A Gogo's Reflection on Listening

During a recent Play Mat parenting session, a 76-year-old Gogo experienced a powerful moment of reflection. When asked, "How do you think children feel when they are listened to?" she paused, visibly emotional.

Having raised children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren, she admitted she had never truly considered the impact of being heard from a child's perspective. Wanting to be honest with herself, she imagined life through their eyes. *"Children feel unvalued, unseen, unloved, ignored, and worthless," she said quietly. "It's true - as parents, we often contribute to the anger our children carry. How can a child trust someone who never listens to them?"*

The next question drove the point home: "How do you feel as an adult when no one listens to you?" She nodded, acknowledging that the emotions are the same - but unlike children, adults can speak up for themselves. *"I want to do better," she declared. "I'm going to listen more - especially to my grandchildren. Things will change. I will also teach my children how important it is to really hear their own children."*

Her commitment to the Play Mat Program is strong. She shared her love for what she's learning and her goal to pass it on. "I want to help the youth around me raise children who feel seen, heard, and loved. Maybe the next generation will grow up to be better parents." This powerful moment is a reminder that growth is possible at any age - and that even one shift in mindset can influence generations.





# Crèche Make-overs



This year, Maritzburg College became a new partner in our annual “School Make-Over” project traditionally facilitated in partnership with Epworth Girls High. With boys and staff from Maritzburg College joining forces with the girls from Epworth, the project was able to make-over two (rather than the traditional one) crèche for the first time. The joining of forces also created a new experience for the learners themselves as the boys and girls from the two schools worked together to transform the Asibambisane and Manzini Crèches in Willowfontein into colourful, vibrant and fun places for the more the 130 toddlers who regularly attend these crèches. After the planned two-day makeover, we received another surprise when we were told that a parent of one of the learners who had participated in the makeover had arranged for EnviroSan - a company specialising in the instillation of eco-friendly sanitation systems – to install a fully functional pit toilet system at the Manzini Crèche whose existing toilets were not in a good shape at all. This fully sponsored installation was completed a few weeks later providing the children at the crèche with access to safe and healthy toilet facilities. As always, we are extremely grateful to Epworth High and Maritzburg College - their learners, staff and numerous donors & sponsors and to EnviroSan who made this incredible transformation possible.

## BEFORE



## AFTER



# Unintended Impact

## A Fieldworker's Story

Names changed to protect identities. Photo unrelated

Dear Thandanani,

My name is Mbali, a 33-year-old Thandanani fieldworker. I'm writing to thank you for all the ways Thandanani has helped me overcome the struggles of my past.

I joined Thandanani as a fieldworker on June 1st, 2013, as a 22-year-old single mother with two young children. Life was incredibly tough then - I had no support, and no family to lean on. Growing up, I was raised by my grandparents because my parents separated when I was young. I lived with my father's family, where I experienced emotional and physical abuse. My grandmother punished me harshly for wetting the bed by making me wash blankets in the river at 5 a.m., even in winter. I was constantly shamed, and my self-esteem plummeted. I felt unloved, unwanted, and deeply ashamed.

When I got pregnant at 16, my grandmother kicked me out, and I had to live with my mother, who also treated me cruelly. She wouldn't let me go back to school and forced me to care for her other children. It was clear she didn't love me. I spent years feeling trapped, abused, and worthless.

After giving birth to my second child, I discovered that both my baby and I were HIV positive. It felt like the final blow. As a single parent with no family support, I believed I was cursed, and that nothing good could ever happen to me. I truly thought the only way out was to end my life and take my children with me. I felt like my life had been a series of painful experiences, each worse than the last. I was overwhelmed with guilt, shame, and despair.

But when I joined Thandanani, everything changed. The fieldworker workshops and training I attended spoke directly to my heart. I cried through many of them, as they uncovered the deep wounds I had been carrying for so long. Yet, after each session, I felt lighter, as if a part of my pain had been lifted.

Thandanani helped me heal from the wounds no one else could see. You gave me the strength to accept my status, love myself, and become a better mother. You helped me let go of the pain and focus on giving my children the love and care I never received. You gave me the tools to rebuild my self-esteem, to accept my status, and most importantly, to see that my life - and the lives of my children - could be different.

I learned how to be a loving mother, not just in spite of my past, but because of it. I now give my children the care and affection I never had. Thandanani didn't just help me survive - you gave me the strength to live again, and for that, I will be forever grateful.

Thank you, Thandanani, for giving me and my children a second chance at life. Your training workshops and support didn't just help me - they saved me. I am now a proud mom and a proud Thandanani fieldworker helping to change lives just as you helped change mine.

Thank you  
Mbali



# Income & Expenditure

## PROVISIONAL INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

1 April 2024 - March 2025

INCOME	R
<b>OVC FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROJECT</b>	<b>4,493,586</b>
4Kids Fundraising Income (Individual Donors)	66,693
Community Chest	60,000
Corporate Income	28,000
Department of Social Development	396,000
Epworth School for Girls	64,991
Hulamin	160,000
IQRRAA Trust	60,000
Kindermissionswerk (Die Stemsinger)	353,958
Isibuko Development Planners	115,000
Kindemothilfe	2,516,391
Old Mutual Staff Giving & Foundation Funds	572,553
NSYMS Pty Ltd	100,000
<b>ZENZELE YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROJECT</b>	<b>1,127,534</b>
Terre Des Hommes Schweiz	1,127,534
<b>HOME-BASED ECD PROJECT</b>	<b>962,434</b>
BMZ / KNH	962,434
<b>INVESTMENT AND OTHER INCOME</b>	<b>346,826</b>
Investment Income	313,862
Sundry Income	32,964
<b>VAT Refund</b>	<b>158,422</b>
VAT	158,422
<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	<b>7,088,802</b>

EXPENDITURE	R
<b>FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROJECT</b>	<b>5,194,887</b>
Staffing (Director)	549,666
Staffing (Finance & Admin Manager)	293,177
Staffing (Programme Manager )	150,871
Staff (Database Administrator)	157,701
Staffing (Receptionist / Office Admin)	102,276
Staffing (Snr Social Worker)	284,508
Staffing(Social Workers)	415,946
Staffing (FS Facilitators)	419,200
Staffing (SHG Facilitator)	210,304
Staffing (FG Facilitator)	207,826
Staffing (Driver)	74,031
Staffing (Snr SHG Fieldworker)	95,938
Staffing (FS Fieldworkers)	715,320
Material Well-Being (FG Development)	178,198
Material Well Being (FG Expansion)	76,506
Material Well-Being (Household Equipment)	55,851
Material Well-Being (Emergency Food Relief)	101,890
Material Well-Being (Self-Help Groups)	6,506
Material Well-Being (Full Birth Certificates)	-
Cognitive Well-Being & Development (School Uniforms)	57,529
Emotional Well-Being (Household Memory Work)	5,993
Emotional Well-Being (Life Skills)	26,571
Emotional Well-Being (Caregiver Support)	13,951
Emotional Well-Being (Children's Support)	13,951
Physical Well-Being (Health Service Supplies)	-
Caregiver/Child Travel Refunds & Subsidies	551
Sunfield Home	82,502
Special Projects (School Makeover)	64,991
Buildings & Equipment	218,220
IT & Telecommunications	180,838
Database Development & Management	14,412
General Office Administration	68,242
Auditing	32,640
Finance & Accounting Charges	25,697
Transport (Vehicle Fuel & Maintenance)	154,192
Staff Development	52,000
Marketing & Fundraising	86,892

<b>ZENZELE YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROJECT</b>	<b>1,127,534</b>
Staffing (Director)	159,323
Staffing (Finance Manager)	84,979
Staffing (Programme Manager)	70,281
Staffing (Receptionist/Administrator)	11,364
Staffing (M& E Coordinator)	19,962
Staffing ( Driver )	8,426
Staffing (Youth Facilitators)	393,378
Accommodation & Meals	43,400
Transport	3,600
ME Start-Up Capital	63,530
Venue Hire Events	1,217
Market / SRH Event	29,901
Mentor Gratuity	50,770
Mentor Recruitment (Marketing)	6,893
Mentor Briefing (Catering)	1,977
Recruitment & Briefings	1,440
Goods - Selling Exercise	6,400
Building & Equipment	69,988
IT & Telecommunication	46,296
General Office Administration	18,629
Auditing	9,437
Finance & Accounting Charges	6,201
Transport (Fuel & Maintenance)	11,336
Participant Travel	1,543
Catering	7,263
<b>HOME-BASED ECD PROJECT</b>	<b>962,434</b>
Venue Hire	1,739
Tea, snacks & lunch	21,385
Playmats & Stationery	64,386
Travel Refunds (Caregivers)	19,780
Auxillary Social Worker ( Project Coordinator)	172,563
Senior ECD Fieldworker	114,866
ECD Fieldworkers	172,877
Director	87,628
Programme Manager / Advocacy Representative	115,677
Finance Manager	46,738
Finance Assistant	14,035
Database Administrator	21,958
Buildings & Equipment Maintenance	55,667
IT & Telecommunication	23,416
Database Development & Management	5,588
General Office Administration	10,791
Auditing	4,562
Finance & Accounting Charges	3,440
Transport ( Fuel)	3,449
Transport (Vehicle Maintenance)	1,416
Internal M & E (Systems & Materials)	473.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE: Year-to-Date</b>	<b>7,284,855</b>

<b>PROJECT &amp; ORGANISATIONAL SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	
OVC Family Strengthening Project Surplus/(Deficit)	-701,301
Zenzele Youth Entrepreneurship Project Surplus/(Deficit)	-
Home-Based Ecd Project Surplus/(Deficit)	-
Investment and Other Income (Non-Contractual)	346,826
VAT Refund	158,422
<b>NETT SURPLUS/(DEFICIT): Year-to Date</b>	<b>-196,053</b>

**Note : The expenditure reflected above is inclusive of VAT**



# Organisational Details

## Thandanani's current Board comprises:

Monica Malunga  
Diane Carson  
Larry Tooke  
Asande Zuma  
Lisa Strydom  
Malusi Khanyile  
Moira Filmer  
Sipho Radebe

Chairperson  
Deputy Chair  
Treasurer & Secretary  
Director  
Director  
Director  
Director  
Director

Retired Regional Operations Manager  
Registered Nurse & Community Clinic Manager  
Psychologist  
Entrepreneur & Trainer  
Social Worker & NPO Manager  
Community & Youth Advocate  
Deputy Head – Epworth Girls High  
Retired Agricultural Professional & Entrepreneur

## Auditors:

Colenbrander Chartered Accountants (SA) Registered Auditors  
Phone: 27 (0) 33 343 0800  
Fax: 27 (0) 33 343 0811  
Postal Address: PO Box 456, Hilton, 3245  
Physical Address: 28 Hilton Avenue, Hilton, 3245  
Email: [claire@colenbrander.co.za](mailto:claire@colenbrander.co.za)

## Banking Details:

Thandanani Children's Foundation  
Standard Bank, 14 Chatterton Road  
Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, 3201  
Account Type: Current Account  
Account Number 052131327  
Branch Code 05-75-25  
Swift Code SBZAZAJJ  
Bank Phone Number: +27 860 101 341

## Registration Details:

Non-Profit Organisation: 006-136NPO  
Section 21 Company: 2002/005186/08  
Section 18A PBO: 930003417

SARS P.A.Y.E: 7090709751  
SARS UIF: U090709751  
VAT Registration: 4360260691

## Contact Person:

Duncan Andrew (Director)  
Thandanani House  
46 Langalibalele Street  
Pietermaritzburg  
3201

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MiOffice Suite 30  
Private Bag X9118  
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Fax: +27 (0)86 6143525  
Web: [www.thandanani.org.za](http://www.thandanani.org.za)  
Email: [reception@thandanani.org.za](mailto:reception@thandanani.org.za)

