



## MSELENI CARE AND COMPASSION MINISTRIES

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## ANNUAL REPORT

April 2020-March 2021

*This is what the Lord Almighty said: "Administer true justice, show mercy and compassion to one another." Zechariah 7v9*

### MSELENI CHILDREN'S HOME

(SIM Project No: ZA 87330)

*But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. He will be like a tree planted by the water, that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.*  
*Jeremiah 17v8-9*



Praise the Lord, at last, after 5 years and 8 months, Mseleni Children's Home is re-registered and is opening again. The HOD (Head of Department) signed the documents late at night on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021. We have been busy since then. Posts for Child Care Workers, Senior Child Care Worker and cooks have been advertised, applications shortlisted and interviews conducted. Staff have been appointed. Our social worker, Thabo Nakedi, will move back from Lulisandla Kumntwana to the Children's Home. The Director, Nosihle Mabika, is already in place. The Home has currently been registered for 20 children, which presents a financial challenge, as overheads, especially staff, will be much the same as if there were 40, but the subsidy will be halved. We look forward to DSD placing children in April. In the meantime, staff have been undergoing refresher training.



Thabo  
facilitating  
at the staff  
refresher  
training



*Thabo, the social worker, with some of the care staff & one of the cooks*

In our last Annual Report (2019-20) we had reported that the use of our premises had been offered to Mseleni Hospital, with the expectation that it might be used as a COVID 19 isolation unit. The offer was gratefully received by Hospital Management, but in the end there did not seem to be a need as there were not so many cases, and then it looked as if DSD might be responding, so we put all the beds and equipment back as it was ready for the site visit!

Mseleni Children's Home falls under the umbrella of Mseleni Care and Compassion Ministries, as does Ebenezer Early Childhood Development Centre and Lulisandla Kumntwana. In September 2020 Mrs SZT (Nosihle) Mabika was appointed as Director of MCCM, taking over from Rachel Fredlund. She started with Mseleni Children's Home in December 2009, and has worked with the organization ever since, in that position, then also as Principal Social Worker for Lulisandla Kumntwana, and then as Manager for Mseleni Children's Home. In her new role she will combine the roles of Director and managing Mseleni Children's Home. Rachel continues to work as Financial Manager of MCCM.

*Nosihle Mabika*



In the process of responding to various visits by DSD during the year, much work was again undertaken in preparation – how many times have we done this? Unfortunately, our brilliant biometric access control system was knocked out by either a lightning strike or a power surge. So part of the activity, plus a lot of expense, was involved with replacing the lap top and a lot of the system. We thank the Lord for the hard work of the computer shop people, & Kevin Lotter of Kevin’s Keys, plus the MCCM staff to get this done. Kevin donated the labour, only charging for the components.



Ready & waiting!

We continue to care for young people who grew up in MCH under the After Care Programme. After spending 7 months at home learning on-line (which included working with a team to produce a documentary) S’li went back to Cape Town and successfully completed her BA in Motion Picture Medium at AFDA , and will be graduating in April. She has gone on to study for her Honours degree, having been awarded a bursary from AFDA. Tholakele, who completed her Honours in Community Development and is doing an internship with the Department of Cooperative Government and

Traditional Affairs, is now also starting to study for another Honours in Spatial Planning.



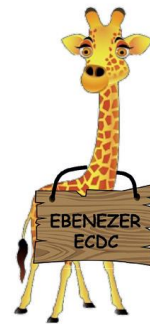
*S’li shooting on site!*

Others of the young people we are caring for had their plans put on hold because of the COVID situation, but as the situation has eased, Nokwanda and Eric have made a move to Johannesburg in order to look for work, and Nontobeko has moved back to Manguzi, just north of Mseleni, in order to try to re-establish her cake business. Zamo has resumed her nursing course in Johannesburg.

Back in 2017 a short film was made about another of the young people who grew up in Mseleni Children's Home, and then went on to qualify as a social worker, & is also happily married. This film can be viewed by following this link: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/6047145/video/341585948>

## **EBENEZER EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE**

*Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. Proverbs 22v7*



The year started very well with enrolment again at 34. The four new volunteers who have been drawn from other creches (part of our objective to try to assist other ECDCs to raise their standards) continued and the number of employed staff was increased with the addition of an ECD assistant from the beginning of March. We were planning to host another Africa Ignite workshop, with an increased attendance from other ECDCs. The newly established ECDC Forum also planned to arrange a special event during Child Protection month (May). However, COVID 19 has interrupted so many plans. Training was been put on hold, events cancelled, and from the middle of March 2020, Ebenezer ECDC was closed.

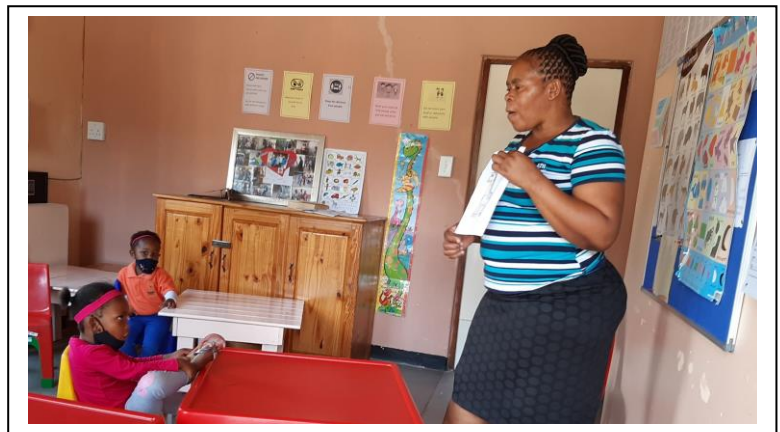
With restrictions being relaxed somewhat, it was possible for the training which had been arranged with Africa Ignite to be run in July and August, although numbers attending had to be reduced. The training was much appreciated by all the staff who attended from Ebenezer and the other ECDCs.

### Africa Ignite training



In July and August the staff offered lessons for the parents to do at home with the children. They collected them every week, and returned what had been done. 15 children took part in that scheme. Contact was also maintained with the children through Whatsapp groups.

In September we were able to make the decision to re-open the ECDC, following carefully the prescribed COVID regulations. Since then we have had 23 children attending, and it has been great to hear their happy voices ringing out again.



The ECDC was closed at the beginning of December for the summer break, re-opening when government schools re-opened on 15 February 2021. Staff had limited salaries in December, and did not receive any pay in January, as parents were not paying fees. Once the children came back in February the financial situation began to recover. There are now 27 children and COVID measures are still in place. It is great to hear and see the children playing and learning and making progress. A lot of effort was put in to following up with statements made by DSD that we should be receiving some funding, and this has now been approved, so that Ebenezer ECDC is now getting a subsidy

from DSD. This has meant that we have been able to increase our staff, and hopefully improve our service. So the staff complement is now the Manager, four ECD workers, and a cook/cleaner. The decision has also been made that, as we now have this extra support, we will open up the ECDC to children from disadvantaged families who will be offered assistance with the fees. The assistance will be means tested, on a sliding scale, according to income. We hope that this will enable us to really make an impact in the lives of some children who would otherwise have missed out. As previously, we are still committed to including children with special needs. In 2020 we already had two children in that category, and they were doing very well. We will be in communication with the Therapy Department of Mseleni Hospital in order to find if they have children they wish to refer to us.

The ECDC Forum is now starting up again, and the plan is to continue with the special event for Child Protection Month which will be May, which had been planned in 2021, as well as to see if any more training can be accessed.

In terms of the training of ECD workers, the original two, successfully completed the course at TREE in Durban and are still waiting for the graduation ceremony. One of them is now employed as an ECD worker at Ebenezer. The studies of the second group of four who were taken on were interrupted by COVID, but have now resumed. They have one final module left to complete.

We do have another young man who has just started the TREE course. He grew up in a children's home at Ubombo, and we have had a lot of contact with him since that Home closed, and he has been sponsored under our tertiary & vocational support programme under Lulisandla Kumntwana. He is working as a volunteer at Ebenezer when he is not away at TREE. He got very keen on the idea of training to work with small children when he spent time at Ebenezer ECDC previously.

## **LULISANDLA KUMNTWANA**

SIM Project No: ZA 97398

*Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. James 1v27*



As we entered this year in April 2020, S Africa had just gone into a national lockdown because of COVID. Since LK is a community-based organisation, this meant that most of our activities were severely curtailed while at the same time many of the people we are trying to help had increased vulnerability.

During the previous year we had been working with a team of young people under the ABSA YES programme. The focus of their activities was to run #Smartmove, a programme aimed at prevention and alleviation of drug and alcohol abuse. We had taken this into schools and it had been going

really well. With the closure of schools, and also being unable to work in the community, this programme was put on hold, and the YES team were unable to work. We were also just starting to implement the Tournament Programme, where we would be giving life coaching sessions all about relationships to young people in sports clubs. This programme also had to be put on hold. The same went for the Teen Parenting Groups, and the 4 After Schools Clubs and the Real Life Programme (Support Group for teens living with HIV). We have also been unable to run any psycho-social support workshops.

Our two coordinators, Saziso Nhleko and Thabo Nakedi, as well as Nosihle Mabika (Manager of MCH, but also very involved with LK) worked from home as much as possible. We tried to keep contact with families through social media. We put up posters and sent out leaflets advertising our helpline so that people in distress could call us. When called, if necessary the staff made a home visit, or they counselled and advised by phone.

The life skills course for unemployed youth which was running in March was cut short because of lockdown, and sadly, since then, funding has run out so that the Youth Development Team has had to be retrenched and currently this programme has come to an end unless more funding can be accessed.

One aspect of our work which has increased during this year has been the distribution of relief food parcels. We continued with the regular distribution funded through CoCos Foundation and Reach Out To The Child, but extra donations from a family in the UK and also through E3 Initiative enabled us to add to these. We also assisted the family of a staff member who had been retrenched, and the family of one of our Real Life group who very sadly passed away during this time. We were also able to create a booklet containing a gospel tract and some Bible verses to encourage in time of fear, anxiety and distress which we added to the parcels. For a couple of months we also added some basic toiletries, and some crayons and games for the children. So over the whole year we have distributed a total of 567 food parcels. In addition to the food parcels, we were contacted by an organisation which donated E Pap (a fortified porridge) and we were approved to take part in this. A total of 178 families were given E pap through LK.



*Some of the families who have been helped with relief food parcels.*



In September, lockdown restrictions were beginning to ease. This meant that the young people who had been employed under the YES programme as facilitators were able to return to work. However, they were unable to implement the #Smartmove programme in the schools as access was still very limited, and the schools themselves were very focussed on trying to catch up with studies. The strategy therefore changed, and instead of working in the schools, the young people used the Relationship materials, which were originally designed to be used with sports clubs, going from home to home, and working with any young people who were interested in doing the programme. A pair of facilitators also had a great opportunity to use the Relationship materials with some church youth groups, and then also at a youth camp. They felt that the programme had a great impact with the young people interactive and very interested.

The staff also continued with the teenage parenting programme using it home to home before the Christmas break.

In December we were able to run a three day camp for boys called Ngiyazazi (I know myself.) The focus of this camp was to help boys to make good life decisions, especially in the area of relationships, and there was an emphasis too on dealing with gender based violence. The camp had been planned for 50 young men, but in fact there were only 35, but this helped with the social distancing. Here are some comments made by the boys who attended:

*I learnt that we should not bear grudges against another person. If you hold onto grudges, you will not be able to go forward in life. We learnt about relationships, and gender-based violence, that we should not abuse women, and that a proper man does not do that.*

*I learnt about being a man. That you are not a man because you have a beard, or because you are strong, you are a man by the things which you do, by your thoughts, the way you act. This is what helped me. I think it would be helpful to have more camps; I would like to attend again.*

*What I learnt at the camp was goal setting, that if you want to succeed you must first be organised & plan. The camp made me very happy as I learnt many things which I did not know.*

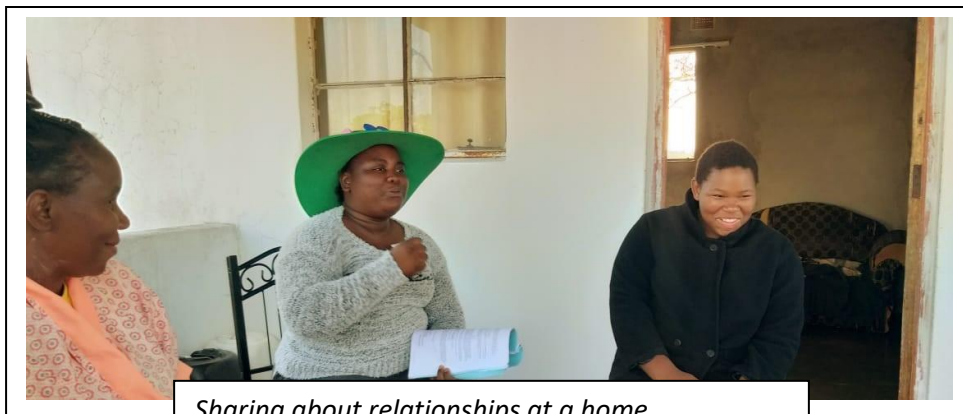




At the Ngiyazazi Camp



The plan had then been to do two week long Holiday Activity Clubs in January before school opened, using the #SmartMove materials which are aimed at alleviating and preventing abuse of alcohol and drugs. However, S Africa moved up to a higher alert level under the COVID restrictions at that point so the clubs had to be cancelled. The facilitators had then completed their contracts under the YES programme.



*Sharing about relationships at a home....  
And parenting skills.*

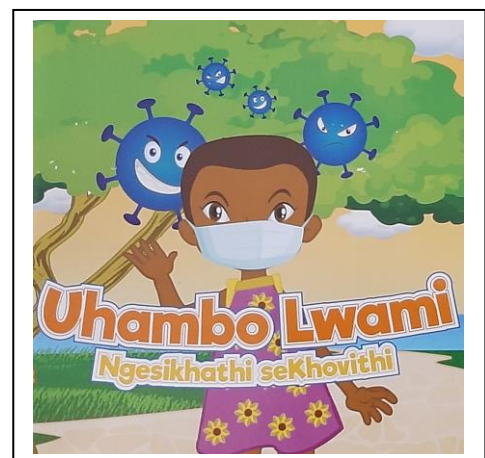


With international travel not being possible, sadly we have not had any teams from CoCos Foundation visiting in this period, and the housebuilding programme has also been put on hold.

In October 2019 we had the privilege of having Melissa Lukenbaugh spend time with us visiting many of our ministries and interacting with our staff and beneficiaries so that she could create some videos of our work. The first of these has now become available. It can be viewed on by following this link: <https://vimeo.com/465118332> We still look forward to seeing more!

Meanwhile, we had a go at doing our own! This was at the request of a Shoeburyness and Thorpe Bay Baptist Church in the UK, out of which has arisen Reach Out To The Child, who support us so well. They wanted a video to share in one of their services and we put this together. It can be viewed following this link: <https://youtu.be/ulCKI3WPp8>

During October 2020 Nosihle Mabika and some of the LK staff joined up with Dr Maud Mthembu and others from the Department of Social Work at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Their combined efforts produced a book, called “Uhambo Lwami Ngesikhathi seKhovithi” (My Journey During COVID 19) which is based on a true story of a family of orphans who are cared for under LK programmes, who then lost their grandmother to COVID.



Although our Real Life programme was put on hold because of COVID restrictions, we decided that the group should meet in September. This was because very sadly one of the group had a stroke and then passed away. We were able to give the family food to help them with the extra expenses at that time. But as staff contacted the various members of the Real Life group it was clear that many of them were struggling to cope as they heard of the passing away of this member, who had been a very lively and fun person. So the group met together and they were able to talk through some of the feelings and questions which arose in this situation, and to get support and support each other. They met again in December 2020 for a celebration of Christmas and also had the opportunity to look at ways of protecting themselves during the festive season. Then in March 2021 they met again and the session focussed on the book "Uhambo Lwami Ngesikhathi seKhovithi."



Once schools re-opened in February, the coordinators started again using the #Smartmove Programme in the schools, and by the end of March 144 young people had been part of this programme.

It has not been possible to do the Tournament Programme with sports clubs as sports clubs have not been meeting, but by March they were starting up, and so the coordinators are in the process of making contact with them again. Once the facilitators start working again in April this will be implemented, COVID restrictions allowing.

Our coordinator in the south was asked if he could assist with an organisation who intended to enrol young people who had completed school in an internship programme. He therefore gathered a group of 50 young people in Mduku and 50 in Mnqobokazi. As yet the programme has not been implemented, but he saw the opportunity and has been having sessions with these young people, about 5 with each group, using topics selected from the Tournament Programme, and also from #Smartmove

All through the different circumstances of the year, the coordinators have carried on with their regular work of OVC (Orphans and Vulnerable Children) support. Over the year they made 1603 home visits, and investigated the home circumstances of 1150 families. Despite restricted access to Home Affairs, they were able to assist 16 families with applying for birth certificates, and 7 families with death certificates, and 8 with IDs. Once the family has been assessed and the coordinators have assisted the family in accessing the necessary birth and death documents they pass on the case to DSD to access the foster grant, although they do still remain involved giving support and resolving

problems. The coordinators were busy helping families resolve problems, with 40 families being given advice, 499 families were counselled, with further 722 OVCs being given individual counselling. During most of 2021, the coordinators were not able to go to the schools because of restrictions, but once schools re-opened in February they continued as before, and they monitored the progress of 162 children in school. Our data base reflects that by the end of December 2020 there were 1401 OVCs who had received some kind of help from LK. The data base is restarted in the new year, and by the end of March 2021, 1913 had been given assistance.

There has been progress with the Crisis Care Centre, and South African Police Service made a visit and signed an MOU with us. At present the staff are still accompanying clients to the hospital for the medical examination, but the police are using our facility, and it is hoped that as we get more established, it might be possible to do the medical examination at our facility too. Meanwhile increasing numbers of cases are being referred, some by the hospital and some by DSD, and some cases self-refer. In 2021 the team was joined by a social worker who has been placed with us by Umhlabuyalingana Municipality under the Municipality Internship Programme. She is working with Nosihle on this programme, offering counselling to those who are referred. Over the whole year from April 2020 to March 2021 the staff have assisted with 14 cases of child abuse, 3 cases of adult sexual abuse, 169 cases of domestic violence, and 214 cases of trauma.

In 2021 colleges and tertiary institutions are also re-opening. In January 2021 LK was able to assist 112 young people with applying and registering at tertiary institutions. There are 13 young people who are sponsored and given regular assistance with finances, such as rent and food, and some with fees, and this support is channelled through LK, and monitored.



*A group of the young people LK assisted to register at TVET*



*At Coastal College, hearing what courses were available & filling in forms*

The four After Schools Clubs which had to close down as schools were closed under the first lockdown, re-opened from the beginning of March 2021, but in a slightly different form. There are restrictions, and not all classes take place every day. At the request of one of the schools, and after discussion with the others, the clubs now longer meet after school ,but during school hours, and the scope has been widened so that they cater not just for orphans but for other vulnerable children, especially those with learning difficulties. The school staff are very appreciative, and comment that the clubs make a big impact. There are 440 children in total who attend these clubs. The facilitators had a day's training in February.

Throughout this year finances have been a challenge. We reached a low point in the project when letters were written to all staff informing them that they would be retrenched at the end of October as funds had run out. However, a UK donor, Reach Out To The Child gave money so that we were able to continue, although staff had reduced salaries. This enabled us to run the planned Ngiyazazi Camp, and we had also planned the Holiday Clubs, and to continue with the relief work and so on.

Then, during the first part of 2020 an application was made to the National Development Agency and we had at that point hopes that we would be awarded a grant. This was put on hold because of COVID, but from July 2020 the NDA started communicating with us again. A contract was signed, and training given in monitoring and evaluation, but in fact the grant was not given until the end of January 2021. We thank the Lord for this provision, which has enabled us to continue with programmes. Five of the facilitators under the YES programme will continue for 6 months from the beginning of April. There will be another Ngiyazazi Camp, this time for girls, and two Holiday Activity Clubs, and they will implement the #SmartMove Programme in schools, as well as starting up the Tournament Programme with sports clubs.

From April Thabo Nakedi will stop working as coordinator with LK, and will move back to being the social worker for Mseleni Children's Home as DSD have finally re-registered the Home. In his place we will be employing Mpume Tembe, who previously worked a social worker under Lulisandla Kumntwana. It is great to be welcoming her back, and we are so grateful too for the efforts Thabo has put in as coordinator with LK while he could not work under MCH.



*Mpume Tembe, now back working with us as Coordinator.*

Report presented by Mrs SZT Mabika  
Director, Mseleni Care and Compassion Ministries

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
SZT Mabika

This Annual Report was approved at the Annual General Meeting September 2021.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ MP Thwala  
Chairperson  
Mseleni Care and Compassion Ministries