

# Skills Development Center

*Mankosi, South Africa  
Newsletter, December 2019*

## *Year - End overview*

### The curriculum

The Skills Development Center (SDC) has a unique curriculum which offers tools divided in five steps which guide a participant towards an income for life.

#### The five steps towards a sustainable income.

##### 1. Own an idea

Very little infrastructure and industry in the area makes it challenging for the local youth to find jobs or even have a good business idea. To think out-of-the-box a great amount of creativity and inspiration is needed. We have brought in young entrepreneurs who have the same background to share their stories and give workshops about their learnings and success. Furthermore, professional creatives will give workshops to broaden horizons and open minds.

##### 2. Define idea & skill

This is about analysing the idea, target groups, select appropriate skills and creating an adapted learning program. Our team will mentor and guide the participant to refine the idea and highlight what is needed and expected.

##### 3. Learning program

Our aim is that the learning programs are no longer than one year per participant. We will focus on how to build a business and/or arranging internships in the work environment.

##### 4. Microfinance/ Career guidance

Start-up capital can be obtained through microfinance, when the candidates are ready to establish their businesses. The participant will be guided in the search and application for a job.

##### 5. Sustainable job

We feel responsible to give guidance and conduct follow-ups with all businesses and job placements. Close monitoring is key especially for the new businesses. Early detection of any kind of issues and problems is important and can be contested in time.

### Goal for 2020:

Within every step of the curriculum we assist with hard skills and soft skills. With hard skills we mean the practical skills like learning how to speak english or how to use a sewing machine. With soft skills we mean how to be on time for a job interview or how to deal with responsibility. Our goal for 2020 is that the SDC will professionalise the tools in place, within the hard - and soft skills to provide maximum guidance for the participants.

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**"May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears." - Nelson Mandela.**

We see in the Mankosi community an incredibly complex unemployment crisis that has been taking hold of generations. We also see powerful and inspiring people who don't need much to get out of poverty, these people give us the hope for an honest South Africa and giving us the courage to make the Skills Development Center a success.

In this last newsletter of the year we are looking back at the past twelve months and also set our goals for 2020.

### The building for the Skills Development Center

At this moment the sewing machines of the SDC are going around the village, because we do not yet have our own location. This is not an ideal situation and we are looking for the right partners who could help us with the funding.

In the meantime we are starting a collaboration with Sophie Dogterdom en Sven Schouten employed by GroupA architects in The Netherlands. Sophie and Sven are passionate about sustainable design and they agreed to design the Skills Center for us! We feel incredibly lucky to work with these two talents and we are inspired to see how they used their skills for a good cause.



On this aerial photo you can see that the place where the Skills Development Center will be located has already been flattened.

### Goal for 2020:

Our aim is that we start building in 2020. This is why we explore every possible way to raise the needed funds to make the building possible. Please let us know if you have any connections or idea's and send an email to [mirthe@transcape.org](mailto:mirthe@transcape.org)

### Adult Training and Education (ATE)

It is important that we offer the right skills for the participants and that is why we started a collaboration with ATE. ATE is a governmental program and offers a wide range of hard skills for people living in rural areas. It seems a perfect collaboration, we will see how it develops.

*Read more >>*



The ATE uses a placement test to discover what level the participants are at this moment.



Orientation conversation with the Mankosi community and the board of ATE.

#### Goal for 2020:

We will do our utmost to make this collaboration a success and that the local community will benefit the most.

## Development sewing skills

We are working together with a professional fashion designer Lisa Likuza from Mthatha. Lisa is talented and passionate about rural sewing skill development and give short trainings for a friendly price.

Nomandla and Nosphelele, two woman living in Mankosi community, joined the team for developing the sewing program. These women get training from Lisa and learned how to work with an electric sewing machine, overlocker, how to make men's and women's trousers and a simple bag. This creates a little bit of income for their families and for the SDC.

#### Goal for 2020:

We will continue to train Nomandla and Nosphelele in a way that suits their family life and the needs of the Mankosi community. For now the focus lies in training Nomandla and Nosphelele and make them comfortable with the machines and the new techniques. In 2020 we will focus on transferring the learned products to youth in Mankosi who need an income.



Nosphelele is working on the new sewing machine.

## Development drivers license program

Daniel Mvumbi is a valuable team member and in charge of the development of the Drivers License program. Last year he was fully involved as volunteer to shape the program, he is now ready to help his community and share his experience on how to get a driver's license. Although Daniel is a confident driver he does not have his driver's license. For some people this might seem strange, but in rural South Africa much is possible.



At this moment, Daniel is busy learning for his drivers license and we already learning an important lesson. South Africa is plagued by a lot of corruption and this happens on a large but also on a small scale. This is the reason why it is impossible in the nearest cities to get your driver's license without paying extra. We believe all problems in South Africa will disappear without corruption and that is why we will not take part in it and find a solution elsewhere.

#### Goal for 2020:

We expect that Daniel will get his driver's license soon because he deserves it and not because he "paid extra". In 2020 we hope we will have enough funding to afford our own car, in the meantime we will rent a car so Daniel can start with the lessons.

## Development in the computer courses

The computer courses will be outsourced by Mictseta. Mictseta is an organisation which is specialized in organizing computer courses with the challenges that come with living in a rural area. The courses will be no longer than 10 days and with their knowledge of the local language and culture, they will be the perfect partner to transfer the skill to the people of Mankosi. There are still a few obstacles to overcome when setting up these workshops, such as the availability of a suitable space.

#### Goal for 2020:

We aim to start our first computer course in 2020.

## Agroecology - a short introduction Why Agroecology? And why does it work?

Agroecology is one of many terms people use to describe an approach to sustainable farming — others being sustainable agriculture, ecological agriculture, low-external input agriculture or people-centered agriculture.

Agroecology is defined as farming that "centers on food production that makes the best use of nature's goods and services while not damaging these resources." It applies ecology to the design of farming systems; uses a whole-systems approach to farming and food systems; and links ecology, culture, economics and society to create healthy environments, food production and communities.

[Read more>>](#)



That may sound like a complicated process for extremely poor family farmers around the world to manage. But the reality is it works because it builds on farmers skills and knowledge: they have long experience working with nature, understanding the dynamics of their local environments, producing food and other products they need, maximizing the use of available resources, solving problems, and weighing risks, costs and benefits. Therefore they can manage the process and become lifelong innovators.

Since 2016 we are already busy implanting Agroecology in Mankosi. The SDC is very lucky to received help from two Agroecology experts from France. Many local farmers have already benefited from this training. There is one very motivated local young man named Thulani Gxala who wants to develop further in not only his own garden, but to ultimately become an expert and help his community.

Het implementeren van Agroecology in Mankosi gebeurt al sinds 2016. In de afgelopen jaren hebben we hulp gehad van twee experts uit Frankrijk. Many local farmers have already benefited from this training. There is one very motivated local young man named Thulani Gxala who wants to develop further in not only his own garden, but to ultimately become an expert and help his community.

#### With our focus on 2020:

We are currently looking for a suitable course for Thulani to develop in Agroecology. Thulani will be taking a course in 2020 and we are going to implement his learned skills in the community.



#### Thank you!

Thanks a lot for all the amazing people who donated, give their thoughts, share resources and talents and who used their voice to raise awareness for the people in Mankosi.

**Special thanks** to Herman, Corrie and Karin who organized a fundraising dinner and raised 1000 euro for the Skills Development Center. This evening was all about South African food and songs and was a great success.



**Special thanks** also to the Kwasa foundation for their sustainable support and enthusiasm.



#### Support the sewing workshop

The Skills Development Center sells colorful trousers for women with matching headwrap and scrunchies. Interested? Just send an email to [mirthe@transcape.org](mailto:mirthe@transcape.org).



We wish everyone a Merry  
Christmas and a Happy New  
Year!

Nomandla, Nosphelele,  
Khanisya, Daniel, Thulani,  
Nikelani, Lisa, Astrid en Mirthe