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June 2023 Report

Introduction

The month of June was very eventful with completion of paving, computer training, primary school gaming, the school holiday programme and intensive knitting for the grannies. Our learners are getting involved in so many activities and this is stretching our staff to their limits. We also experienced dynamic programming as our board members and corporate partners came along to participate in our activities.

Paving

The paving around the Centre was completed, and the Centre was ready for the holiday programme. We are so grateful for the generous funding extended by Janine and Maddi towards paving and making the Centre more child friendly. It's in time for the holiday programme.



Before and after paving

Afterschool and Weekend Programme

a. Digital Literacy

Our digital literacy programme was more on training learners to use computers, sustained computer practice, tertiary applications for matriculants, and Microsoft 365 training for learners and teachers. During the month of June emphasis was on training and helping grade 12 learners to apply for tertiary places. The Nintendo School League was launched, and our primary school participants have been making progress in training and taking part in online gaming competitions. Learners are increasingly getting confident in using computers with at least 1900 learners accessing the computer labs every month. Learners from adjacent schools are also coming to use the high school lab, broadening the digital innovation among the youths.



High school learners taking part in computer training programmes.

b. Critical Thinking and Problem-solving Skills Development

YOSA activities during afterschool and school holiday times were more focused at developing learners' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The partnership with our board members and corporate partners in training and playing games has contributed to effective learner development. Jen bought chess sets and she was actively helping to teach new games at the Centre during weekends. During the month of June, we had an enhanced staff compliment as we worked with our corporate partners from FNZ Holdings who gave a lot of their time to YOSA. We were able to provide learning and behavioral support, as well as play a lot of games and sporting activities with learners. Centre-based activities help children to stay off the streets, provide moral and curriculum education including nutrition. Parents bring their children to the Centre to experience positive development.



Jen, Mike and Astonishment playing chess and other games with kids.



Small group academic mentorship for learners



Astonishment and Curriculum coaches (Wits students) and learners undergoing coaching



Alternate moral and curriculum activities at the Centre

c. Grannies' Support Group

The grannies have no any other source of income apart from their meagre social grants, yet they care for schoolgoing grantchildren. They have deficiencies of food and other basic necessities. The support group is a place for their social and emotional upliftment. One of them has a total of 13 grand children in her care. The sewing machines and knitting needles supplied by Janine have transformed the grannies and their families. The wool supplied by Karen and Anna kept the ladies busy. There is a definite drive towards the group's selfsufficiency. Knitting has also attracted the attention of school girls who are being trained by the grannies. More wool is required to respond to the interests and nurture the young talents. The knitting project is fast permeating the whole community.



Grannies buying wool sponsored by Karen and Trevor and knitting at the Centre



Bridgety and Ntombi teaching high school girls to knit at the Centre



Children in dance classes and in small group curriculum coaching at the Centre.

Donations

YOSA is extremely grateful to FNZ Holdings for the funding that helps with project staffing, programming, and especially the expansion of the digital literacy programme. This funding is the anchor that has helped us to implement our programme despite the funding challenges in the NPO sector. The financial support from Wendie Norrish, Karen and Warwick Hawthorne has also significantly boosted our programming during the month of June. We have also distributed clothes, shoes, toiletries, dignity packs and other food items to 357 beneficiaries during the month of June. These were made possible by Karen Glass, Janine, Donna, Karen and Warwick, Anna, Maddi and Courtney. Donations-in-kind were extremely helpful to babies during the cold winter. They also helped to provide for university students. Clothes, toiletries, dignity packs and stationery facilitate effective school attendance in keeping with YOSA goal of fighting poverty through education.



Karen sorting and presenting the donation of winter clothes for babies and YOSA staff and beneficiaries distributing to babies



Learners of YOSA programme and grannies visited Othandweni Children's to distribute babies' winter clothes donated by Karen Glass.

Teenage Mothers

There is a significant decrease in the number of teenage pregnancies in YOSA supported schools. Our Positive Youth Development programme has helped to focus young people on education while avoiding the distractions that come with childbearing. From an average of 21 pregnant girls in each school by June last year, all the 5 high schools we support have gone down to single digits with the highest being 8 pregnant learners in one school. We are intensifying programming around helping the girl-child to complete matric and focus on tertiary education.



Teenage mothers receiving donations of baby clothes provided by Donna, Courtney and Karen Glass

Progress in Brief

We have prepared to host Academic Merit Awards ceremonies for our primary and secondary schools. The stationery donated by our Australian friends will go a very long way in providing the prizes for the events. We will also buy some badges and trophies with our FNZ grant. We have also included a category for learners who are excelling in digital literacy. Continuous support is humbly requested towards prizes as motivation is key to most of our vulnerable beneficiaries. Additional wool is also needed to help turn the knitting project into a profitable venture for the grannies. The training of learners in knitting has also been well received by parents in the community. YOSA partnership with communities, schools, the Department of Education and its focus on digital literacy in the township schools has earned it membership on the UNESCO national Committee.