



# Raphael News 2020-3 (2nd Quarter 2020)

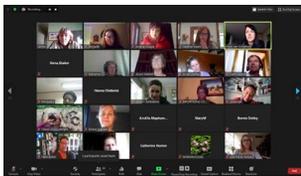
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**Funding:** During the second term, the Raphael Centre had an income of 12,850 Rand. It was composed of monthly donations by **Denise Herbert**, **Mrs Clarke** and through **our anonymous donor**. Also, we received gifts from **St Cuthbert's** and the actor **Gavin Marshall**. Both have supported Raphael Centre through their term donations for many years.

**Donations in kind:** During the entire second term, Nomaxabiso was assisted by four Rhodes University student volunteers. They helped to facilitate the child and youth tutoring and life skills session for more than four hours each week! We would like to thank: **Akhanya Siyanda Fani**, **Usiphile Ndubula**, **Sinazo Mbekela**, and **Anathi Mgijima** for the extra-ordinary commitment and support! Special thanks must go to the **Bernie Dolley** and the **Ikhala Trust**. They donated about 1,500 seedlings to the Siya Sonke families! Also, we would love to acknowledge the kind gift by **Di Westcott** who owns the second-hand **clothing shop 'Nearly New'**. The business has supported the Centre with clothing donations for the last three years.



## International Asset-based Citizen-driven Development (ABCD) Un-conference 2020:



22 Country Hosting Teams, 6 Timezone "on call" Hosts, over 2000 global participants. We felt thrilled to be part of this virtual gathering! We had the pleasure to be part of three seminars: 1. My Story Matters: how story sharing can impact on lives positively, how to use this medium for change, 2. 'Harvesting Strengths developed behind the mask': What strengths have we seen in our community/ seen in myself/ my family during times

of COVID-crisis, 3. Feel the Fear and Do it Anyway – A time of uncertainty but also an abundance of opportunities: About the reservoirs which we can draw from. We were so grateful to be able to meet our ABCD colleagues and friends from Canada and Australia again.



**COVID-19, Lockdown and Operations:** The tone for the second term of 2020 was set by a growing epidemic and National Lockdown Level 5 (April) and Level 4 (May). The country was heading toward its peak with a daily infection rate quickly rising from 4% to 10%. The Raphael Centre staff kept working from home. Daily communication and co-ordination among staff happened via WhatsApp. Weekly staff meetings were held over phone and email. Nomaxabiso was provided airtime to stay in contact with Anne and organisational partners, to attend staff development training and to continue working with Siya Sonke families over the phone and through WhatsApp.

To accommodate this main form of communication among staff and with learning partners, we amended the annual budget whereby funds for transport were re-allocated to communication (airtime) for Nomaxabiso.

**Siya Sonke:** At the end of March, we distributed a COVID-19 newsletter among the families. It had information about its transmission, prevention, handling infection and emergency contact numbers.

Throughout the 2nd term, Nomaxabiso kept contact with all Siya Sonke families. After she received consent by the parents, she created WhatsApp groups with the Siya Sonke children and youth and facilitated weekly child and youth development activities (tutoring and life skills) via these platforms and used online resources for preparation. In addition, she phoned and used WhatsApp to reach the Entrepreneurial groups and other adult Siya Sonke members to assist with developing emergency family and group budgets and to see what can be done about annual plans even during lockdown.



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## COVID-19 Impact on Livelihoods

Before COVID, the average income of the 35 Siya Sonke homes was 2500 Rand per month. During 50 days of lock-down level 5 and 4, all the families lost an income mounting up together to 37,400 Rand. Our partners mainly lost stipends from ECD work, CWP work and from the Department of Education. Also, they lost income from catering business and salary from working at hair salons and doing small jobs, such as domestic work. At average, households had over 1,030 Rand less available. This means that families suddenly lost more than 40% of their monthly income due to restrictions and bans. Besides, people living from craftwork like the Siya Sonke crafters lost intake through many cancellations of orders of - for example, beadwork or woodwork because events could not take place during that time (e.g. Easter). Many people adapted to the sell of 'essential items' such as fruit, sweets & chips in the community to survive and we heard that there was huge competition among sellers for a while.

## Siya Sonke paradigm shifting Makhanda: about food sustainability and food parcels

With level 5 regulations which closed down economic activity – especially of small entrepreneurs for nearly three months the household income of the Siya Sonke members declined for about 40% (see below). Noticing this, we immediately jumped up ladders – and without having consulted with our partners, we applied for the COVID-Relief (food parcels). Yet, when Xaxa checked in with the families to see how we could assist during these difficult times our partners suggested supporting with seedling donations instead of food parcels. Despite the desperate situation our partners favoured food security and independence over ad hoc help. By the first week of June the Ikhala Trust donated spinach, onions, salad, beetroot seedlings which we took straight to our partners. People were thrilled about the arrivals. **What we learned from this experience: Also in times of disaster management and crisis, it is paramount to allow and create spaces for local solutions. The community should be consulted in order to shape a crisis response which is effective and helpful.**



## Child and Youth Development

Nomaxabiso planned the life skills and tutoring sessions together with the volunteers. Here, they worked with all possible resources such as from Vodacom, they used the educational footage of DSTV and the radio shows from Mhlobo Wenene FM. Also, they found old exam papers and school assignments for 2nd term as well as worked along with the Department of Education curricula. Here are some examples of the sessions held: They covered topics such as Natural Science, Mathematics, English and Xhosa (Spelling and Comprehension), Geography and Economics & Management Science. For Youth Day Nomaxabiso prepared Sarafina Video clips and held a democracy discussions with the groups. The end of May and the first week of June is always earmarked for the annual Child and Youth Protection week. Child safety themes are usually worked on in the entire year (but for two weeks Nomaxabiso and her volunteers worked with the Siya Sonke children on assertiveness skills (please find here: <https://raphaelcentre.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Siya-Sonke-Childsafety-Project-Chart-2020.pdf>).

## Entrepreneurial Groups

Nomaxabiso did follow-ups on annual plans for 2020. The plans mainly talk about the marketing of products, building a decent client base and finding a good selling spot in their area, such as the taxi rank. Besides, she assisted the traders to receive permission to sell (essential) items in the community. The crafters' group decided to form their own save act group this year. The farmers identified land for a community garden at eNkanini area and started their savings group. Nomaxabiso helped with approaching the Municipality who said that they could rent-to-own the land but would need to register as an entity first.

