



MAY 2021 | ISSUE NO. 7

# SIHAMBBA SONKE

FIRST SEMESTER NEWSLETTER

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## OUR NEW NORMAL: RESILIENCE THE KEY!

**by Ruan Cilliers (Executive Director Sihamba Sonke)**

The Oxford dictionary defines resilience as "the ability of people to recover quickly after something unpleasant, such as shock, injury, etc." Covid-19 was more than just an unpleasant experience, it shook our world and reshaped the way our organisations function in just about every way possible. We had to reconsider funding strategies, programme impact, HR capacity, and suddenly had to respond to new community needs just to name a few challenges. It is a harsh reality that unless we are able to show resilience and adapt in order to respond to these new needs, we could quickly find ourselves heading for the Covid-19 iceberg, with a similar fate as the Titanic. This newsletter, however, celebrates how our team has responded and shown resilience, making way for the new normal. From changing some of our core programmes and introducing new programmes, such as Work 4 A Living, we have not only increased our impact, but also continue to carry the hope of opportunity in the new normal! A shout-out to every team member who gave their all throughout these difficult times, we salute you! Come celebrate with us in this newsletter.



## WORLD CLASS OPPORTUNITY, BACKYARD ACCESSIBILITY.

With unrelenting support from Dell and ComputerAid International, the Sihamba Sonke computer lab, after a rather dry lockdown season, has returned to a steady rhythm of training local school children, teachers and youth from the community in the globally recognised ICDL courses.

In a world where computer literacy is becoming an increasingly essential skill needed to secure employment, the lack of opportunities to develop such skills often only set individuals from rural areas such as ours even further back. Since the start of this year, over 800 hours of individual lab usage have been recorded, whether it be for CV updates, university applications, studies, or training of some sort.

Additionally, we have managed to reach a total of 109 module passes from community members in 2021 so far! And, indeed, our Sihamba Sonke staff have benefitted greatly from this programme. Every now and then big cheers of congratulations and high fives sweep through the office as another staff member passes one of their ICDL modules.

Zimasile Hotyo, one of our trainers, also received the opportunity to travel to Durban for a week in order to present training there. Our trainers have recently completed their "ICDL Train The Trainer" courses, qualifying them to raise up and train the next generation of ICDL trainers. Furthermore, two of our members are currently working towards their "SAS Certification" (SAS is a leading statistical analysis programming software).

The past few months also saw the completion of significant upgrades on our ComputerAid Computer Lab, but more on this later...

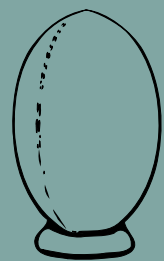


### SIHAMBA SONKE

Walking together to raise up value-driven, purposeful leaders driving rural community transformation.

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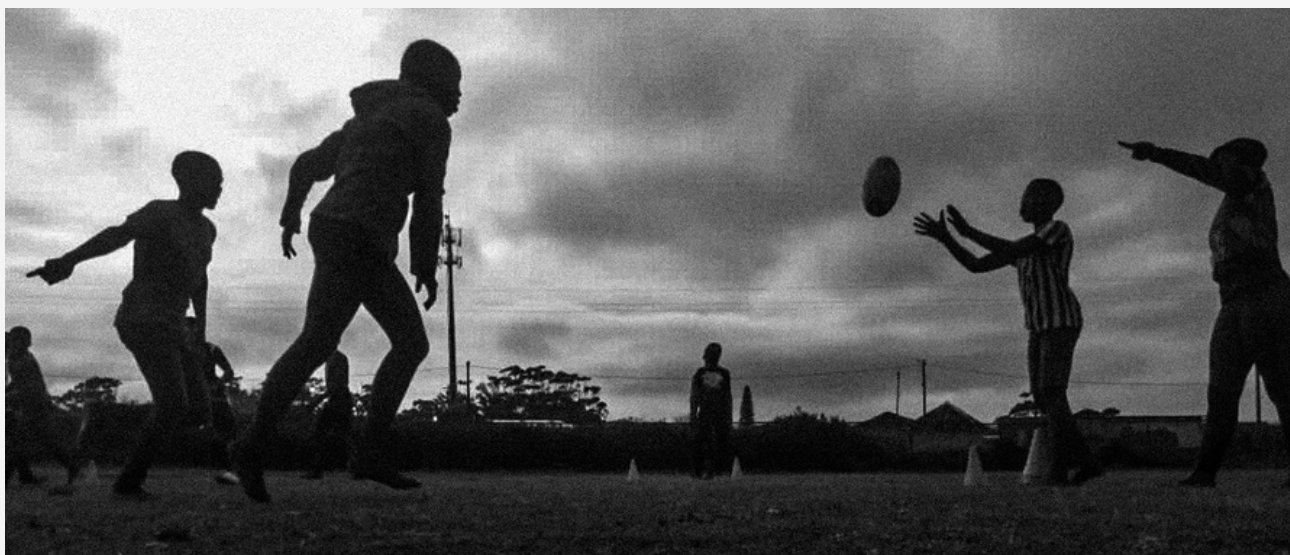


## TOUCH TIGERS: REGIONAL CHAMPIONS!

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Even though this has been an extremely difficult year for sports as a result of challenges and restrictions faced due to the pandemic, we worked very hard to innovate and implement new ideas in our sports programme , in order to adapt and do things according to the times that we are living in. For me, as the head coach, it was a great pleasure to give my assistants more opportunity to lead the team during this time despite the challenges. We managed to win first place at the regional tournament that was held in East London. It was unbelievable when both the Men's and the Mixed teams came home with gold medal after the limited time that we had to prepare for the tournament. - Siphelele Mqwashela

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## FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

For Sihamba Sonke's chess programme, 2020 was a year that, rather unsurprisingly, posed a number of major challenges and obstacles, with Covid-19 restrictions putting a significant damper on the in-school chess programmes and enormous challenges in gaining momentum for the year.

However, looking back over the past year, especially the last 6 months, we can honestly reflect and say that we were able to take those challenges and turn them into opportunities. After launching three different chess clubs in the community in the fourth term of 2020, having gained momentum, and the in-school chess programmes being able to function at full steam again during the first term of 2021, the chess programme is stronger than ever.



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CHESS IS NOT ALWAYS ABOUT WINNING. SOMETIMES IT'S SIMPLY ABOUT LEARNING. AND SO IS LIFE.

“

Along with the chess programme thriving in the community, the Sihamba Sonke chess team have been hard at work in the background to write, edit and finalise our very own “Chess Book”, in order to ultimately be able to publish our chess programme and curriculum, to be used as a community development tool for the youth all over South Africa, and eventually possibly right around the world.

While the vision of the chess programme and the publication of the chess book is to be able to equip as many individuals as possible with chess skills and help youth to realise their full potential through the game of chess, the heart of the programme remains to create a place of belonging, where we can teach and use the values in our chess book as a reference in our daily lives, and use the lessons we learn through chess to navigate difficulties in life. We are eagerly awaiting the publication and the launch of our chess book later in 2021, and are excited to see how other communities can be impacted through it, just as ours has been over the past few years!





## COMMUNITY: WORK 4 A LIVING COURSE

At the start of 2021, Sihamba Sonke partnered with Jabulani Rural Health Foundation to run and facilitate a Work 4 a Living centre in Zithulele. Three of our Sihamba Sonke staff members travelled to George in March to be trained as facilitators for the Job Readiness course. This course empowers people to thrive in the workplace, and it covers a multitude of topics ranging from interviews, financial literacy and starting your own small business to respecting fellow employees, stewardship and worldview.

We presented the 13-day Job Readiness course to the prospective Sakha Ikamva participants as well as the Sihamba Sonke staff. The course has an exciting practical aspect where every participant is given R50 to start a small business. The aim of this is to prove that one does not really need anything other than an idea to start a business. The winning group at Sihamba Sonke made over R900 in profit in 13 days, not to mention working their full time day-jobs at Sihamba Sonke throughout!



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HARD ON STANDARDS,  
SOFT ON PEOPLE  
- ENA RICHARDS (W4AL FOUNDER)

“

The fruit of the Job Readiness course is already evident in how people are starting to take ownership of their own lives and livelihood. During and after the course we talk regularly about using what we have to create value, wealth and hope for ourselves, our families and the community.

One of the Sakha Ikamva participants, Alungile, has already started to invest more time and effort in his vegetable garden at his home, applying the excellent work ethic and small business skills taught during the course. He now regularly sells his produce in and around Zithulele. He also started a small salon service to make some more money in his spare time. Two other participants, Monwabisi and Phiwe have taken the concept of Ubuntu which they have learnt during the course and applied it in the community. At multiple times they have picked up the litter and trash in the streets of Zithulele to create a cleaner environment and happier community. Sinethemba, who is also one of the facilitators and staff members has applied the financial literacy and small business skills to her own nail salon business and has since made some great improvements.

We are very excited to see how Work 4 a Living will impact and change our community for the better!



# W4AL AS THE LAUNCHPAD FOR THIS YEAR'S SAKHA IKAMVA GROUP

This year we decided to make use of the Work 4 A Living job readiness programme as part of our interview and selection process for the Sakha Ikamva programme, not only in order to give the participants the opportunity to be equipped with the skills and knowledge of excellent work ethic, but also that the unsuccessful applicants can walk away with a Work 4 A Living certificate, and those meeting the standards having access to Work 4 A Living's national job database. The course has broadened our participants' views and approaches towards work and making a success of every opportunity. Many conversations followed during the sessions around worldview and how our community does life. Starting the programme with the Work 4 a Living Job Readiness course has certainly set up a great foundation for deeper conversations around work ethic, poverty and entitlement mind sets, especially in our community.



The Sakha Ikamva programme focuses on development with a whole-person approach. Physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. We have regular fitness sessions, chess learning sessions, character and spiritual development. Currently we have a big focus on our purpose and calling on earth. How we can use what we have, our time and resources to serve the community and bring change through hope! A big developmental focus we have is to help the guys start their own small business in the community. Some of them have already started on a small scale, and our hope is to raise up employers rather than employees. We are also running the Wired 4 Business course, also part of Work 4 a Living, with the Sakha Ikamva participants. This course gives great insight into starting and running a successful small business. These practical skills can be used further in life to maintain and hopefully develop their small businesses into bigger organisations.



areas of these young men's lives. This year we have divided all the participants in groups with the Sihamba Sonke staff in order that we can learn from and support each other through difficult and good times. Recently we did a camping trip where we spent some time together playing various games and sports, made food together and shared life stories. When growing together as a team, it is important that we understand where we come from and how we can support each other in life. The camping trip had a big impact on the team. Many of the guys have not camped before and so the experience of sleeping outdoors in tents and having to face a sudden wind storm added to the bonding experience. We are looking forward to seeing how these young men will grow throughout the year into impactful leaders.





## NEW TEAM MEMBER!

We want to welcome Siya who joined our team recently. Siya is a new full-time employee who will be contributing his skills in various platforms across our organization.



## EASY ACCESS

Rural access is a continual challenge, especially in rainy weather conditions on our gravel roads. Without a 4x4, many times we found ourselves stuck and needing to borrow vehicles in the community to help our programmes. However, we are beyond thankful and excited about our 2nd hand 4x4 addition which will be transporting our teams to their programs. Gaining funding for infrastructure expenses is often difficult. If you are interested to contribute to such expenses, please see the next page below, to see how!



## AND THE BUILDING CONTINUES..

This past term was also concluded with big celebrations as our computer lab has undergone some renovations and is now the place to be in our community! From extending one container to host a bigger class for computer training, to extending the outside area to a comfortable meeting/lunch spot for community members to utilize. A big shoutout to our building team for working hard to making our containers an inspiring space, to Zirk Kay for his architectural input and overall support, and a bigger thank you to our funders from Computer Aid who made this possible!



## THANK YOU GLOBAL CHALLENGE!

We welcomed our first outreach team for the year, and we cannot thank the Global Challenge team from Jeffreys Bay enough! Not only did they come at a time where our community really needed some extra hands, but the spirit in which they reached out and served is something that we will always remember!

# JOIN US ON THE JOURNEY

## ***It's the R100, R200 & R500 a month that made all the difference!***

We particularly want to thank our partners that consistently gave us a small donation each month. Your R200 a month seems little, but ten people cover a salary of a local mentor. These were the funds that helped us over the line in 2020 it allowed us to plan, knowing what our guaranteed cash flow will look like.

We want to encourage you to join us on this amazing journey or share this opportunity with anyone in your network who share our passion to build thriving communities with healthy families and relationships as the foundation. Know your monthly donation, doesn't matter how small is the game-changer. If you want to want to make a monthly contribution of R100, R200, or R500 a month, use the bank details below.

Acc name: Sihamba Sonke  
Bank: First National Bank  
Account Type: Cheque  
SWIFT Code: FIRNZAJJ

Account No: 62759245676  
Branch Name: Umtata Mall  
Branch Code: 210643  
Reference: Donation – Name

## **SPREAD THE WORD**

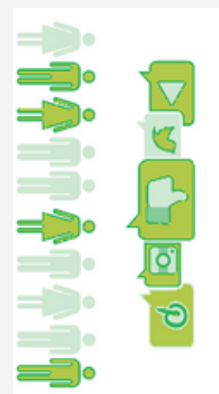
It is such a privilege to see our mentors grow as they are empowered to be the drivers of community transformation through our skills & character development initiatives. Help us to scale our the impact by sharing our wesbite, Facebook & Instagram page.

**Website:** [www.sihambasonke.org](http://www.sihambasonke.org)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram.com/sihambasonke](https://www.instagram.com/sihambasonke)

**Facebook:**

[web.facebook.com/sihambasonke.walkingtogether](https://web.facebook.com/sihambasonke.walkingtogether)



## **Funding:**

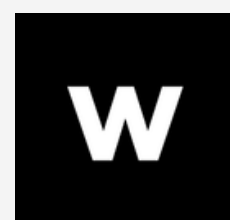
### **18A Tax Certificates**

Due to the massive amounts of growth, we are stretching our capacity and finding funds remains a challenge. If you would like to contribute or know of funding opportunities, don't hesitate to contact us. Note we are 18A registered, so you will get a tax deduction for your donation. A great win-win! :-)



### **My School - My Village ([www.myschool.co.za](http://www.myschool.co.za))**

An excellent funding opportunity that will cost you nothing is the MySchool MyVillage initiative. **Just swipe your MySchool card or link your Woolies Card to Sihamba Sonke and THEY will contribute to our project.** Just go online on your MySchool or Woolies profile to activate up to three beneficiaries.



If you want to apply for a MySchool Card, all you have to do is to follow this link, [bit.ly/myschoolform](https://bit.ly/myschoolform) and e-mail the completed signed copy to [nicole@sihambasonke.org](mailto:nicole@sihambasonke.org)