



FINISHING STRONG, STARTING STRONG

One of Sihamba Sonke's core values is to finish strong. Without a doubt we can reflect on last year and say we lived up to this value, pushing through the challenges that come with an organisation in its second year amid funding and staffing challenges.

We are grateful that we have seen abundant growth and are excited to harness the experience gained over the past two years to steer Sihamba Sonke to new heights in 2020.

But we are not alone on this journey. Our donors and supporters are the foundation that has carried us up to now. Other non-profit groups in Zithulele help us mature as an organisation and fill gaps in our experienced and resources. Thank you especially to Jabulani Rural Health Foundation, Philani, Axiom Education and Zithulele Independent School.



As we head into this new year, we celebrate with you some highlights from 2019. They are also the successes of the donors, supporters and friends of Sihamba Sonke

Computer Lab & Agriculture

Computer Lab

We finished 2019 with two fully-equipped computer centres donated by Computer Aid International in partnership with Dell. ICDL (International Computers Drivers Licence) South Africa recognised the work of our computer training mentor, Zimasile, in our community of Zithulele and nominated our organisation for this welcome donation.

The computer lab will be available to community members who need access to computers for education purposes. The lab will be used for some of the following activities: ICDL training; teacher training; career sessions and university applications; maths, science and English classes; computer programming and computer literacy. We are excited for Zimasile to have the opportunity to manage this lab, growing his own IT and leadership skills. Our organisation's vision is to work in close partnership with the community. We are therefore grateful to Chief Nkosi Gcinovuyo, the regional traditional leader, for coming to open the computer lab, which was named in his honour.

We are thankful for his support so far and look forward to keep crossing bridges and holding hands with our community. Follow this link to see a one-minute video of the opening ceremony: bit.ly/Solarlab



Agriculture

Our agriculture mentor, Sinethemba, was approached by community members for training in farming methods. Sinethemba uses her agriculture project as a platform to build relationships with the community. She has a big heart for mentorship and held weekly meetings with half a dozen girls. Her excitement and joy are contagious and motivate our team to emulate her passion.



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Touch Rugby

Touch Tiger's: Year-end Tournament (JIPT)

Our Touch Tigers Junior team travelled to Cape Town during September for the Junior Inter-Provincial Touch tournament. Our side played a few tough matches against vastly more experienced opponents. They beat some of South Africa's best teams to reach the finals, bringing home the second prize!

Well done to these boys who stood together against the odds and came back as champions. Congratulatinos are due to our touch rugby mentor, Siphelele, and his assistant coach, Kamva, for leading the team to this remarkable achievement.



Touch Tiger Coach Goes to New Zealand!!!

As a result of our team's exceptional performance at the tournament, Siphelele was one of three South African touch rugby players chosen to attend a three-month exposure programme in New Zealand. His trip there held a lot of firsts: the flight from East London to Johannesburg, the Gautrain, transit through Dubai and Bali, and the arrival in Auckland on the other side of the world.

We are extremely proud of how this young man has proven himself not only as a great leader and mentor but also as a talented sportsman. Siphelele inspires our team with his humbleness and work ethic. This three-month experience will make a massive difference in his life and show other young people in our community what they can achieve through dedication and hard work.

Siphelele left for New Zealand in December, and we still need your help! Please contact us if you would like to contribute to his living costs. Although the programme sponsored Siphelele's flight tickets and accommodation, we still need to raise R10,000 for his living expenses while in New Zealand.



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Homestay & Funding Tour

Homestay

We are excited to announce that our first homestay project is almost completed.

Under leadership of building mentor, Philip, this project serves as a platform to invest in the local builders, developing their skills while giving new purpose and opportunities.

They will finish construction on the first house in January and then start on a second building. The builders also held a workshop to explain their new skills in building with wood to the community, an event that was important to affirm their self-worth.

We have launched an eco-brick project in our community. We held workshops in schools to explain how waste can be reused for good. A two-litre cold drink bottle is filled with used plastic to make an ecobrick. We will use the ecobricks created in the community toward insulation of the homestays.



Funding Tour

Our executive director Ruan, and chess mentor Ntlahta organised a funding event with the board of directors in November. It was a privilege to share our story with others.

Sihamba Sonke made new allies who share our vision to bring hope for the youth in rural South Africa. Ntlahta gained experience in telling his story to others and also enjoyed his first flight and trip to a cinema.

Thank you to the board of directors, Franz Struwig and George Carstens, for organising the event, and to Lienke Struwig for hosting an amazing evening to celebrate Sihamba Sonke's achievements in 2019.



SAKHA IKAMVA (Gap Year Programme)



Our gap year programme saw nine young men undergo skills development, work placements, exposure through field trips, and computer training. We only had eight spaces in the Sakha Ikamva programme, named for the Xhosa term which means 'We build our future'. However, one young man from the community was so determined in attending sessions on his own accord that he ended up a full member and graduated with his companions in October. JZ is now pursuing further studies.

Our graduates particularly appreciated the course "The World needs a Father"; they all aim to be good fathers in life, breaking the cycle of absent role models in this area. Well done to our gap year mentor, Bhekisisa, for working alongside this group, leading them through life challenges while enforcing values that will carry them far in life.

The gap year ended with a field trip to KwaZulu-Natal where the team linked with organisations that do work similarly to Sihamba Sonke, such as KwaSiza Bantu and Thanda. They also visited a sawmill to give the guys exposure to different work opportunities. They ended the tour with a day at uShaka Marine World, where they learned more of our sea life and had some fun on the water slides – a first for many participants.

Our October graduation was held together with that of Masiphakameni, the women's gap year programme of the Jabulani Rural Health Foundation. Our men received participation certificates and ICDL certification. The community members, elders and chief attended the ceremony, hearing first-hand from the participants of their experiences and highlights of the year.



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CHESS & XHOSA WEDDING

Chess Year-end Tour & Graduation

At the end of every year, the best 12 chess players of the schools go to the Buffalo City District open tournament. They did an amazing job showcasing their talent and won several games. To celebrate their hard work, our chess players visited a cinema and watched a movie on the big screen for the first time.

Lastly, the first group of students from Independent School graduated from the chess programme. The skills they learnt through chess will enhance their studies of subjects like maths, and they also have strong relationships with young local mentors who can be role-models going forward.



Xhosa Wedding

In November two of our employees tied the knot – twice! - first with our Xhosa village community and then in Cape Town.

It was the first mixed Western-African wedding of its kind in our community and the village elders and Xhosa family that hosted Philip and Nicole participated in a reflection of the promise of our rainbow nation. Philip and Nicole, a big congratulations with your wedding and for showing your commitment to truly integrate in the community you serve.

We trust that your marriage will continue with this message of reconciliation as you live Sihamba Sonke's vision: to walk with everyone from our nation.



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Join us on the Journey

Funding & Needs

As we start a new year, we would like to thank all our supporters for believing in our vision. A special word of thanks goes to the Mergon Foundation, the Rupert Education Foundation and Tree of Life.

Our biggest current challenge is building housing for the staff joining our expanding organisation. Please consider supporting our housing project

Spread the Word: Social Media Campaign

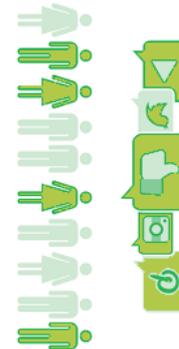
With a whole year behind us, it is such a privilege to see our mentors grow as they are empowered to be the drivers of community transformation through our skills & character development initiatives. Help us to scale our the impact by sharing our wesbite, Facebook & Instagram page.

Website: www.sihambasonke.org

Instagram: www.instagram.com/sihambasonke

Facebook:

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)

An excellent funding opportunity that will cost you nothing is the MySchool MyVillage initiative. Just swipe your MySchool card at Woolies and THEY will contribute to our project. All you have to do is to follow this link, bit.ly/myschoolform and e-mail the completed signed copy to myschool@sihambasonke.org if you want to apply for a MySchool Card. Note: You can support up to 3 beneficiaries with your MySchool Card. Just complete the form with your card number and add us as a beneficiary.

Volunteer: Be a rural skills development pioneer

If you are passionate about pioneering, skills development or education, we have the perfect volunteer opportunities for you. Join us on this journey by volunteering your skills.



Thank you that you are truly on this journey with us to "Walk Together". We thank those who joined us on the journey to help us raise value-driven, purposeful leaders for the future of our beautiful country.

