

Lesedi la Batho

LIGHT TO THE PEOPLE

DO WE HAVE NEWS FOR YOU!



Dear Friend of Lesedi,

I once saw an interview with Mother Theresa where they asked her how one could become a Driver of Change. Her answer was simple, "You take a bottle of anti-septic and you start to dress the wounds." Her words inspired me greatly, because they are simple and true. We have to make a beginning and just do it!

I feel so distraught by the extreme poverty of fellow South Africans. To see so many vulnerable children and mothers roaming the streets for scraps to eat, while being abused and living with a terrible disease that have already robbed them of their loved ones. To live in the same clothes for months at end with no parents to love and care for them and hear a six year old girl talk about ending her life, is truly heartbreaking. Where do you start? What can one do? You know the answer. Just do it!

At Lesedi la Batho we start with one child, one family, one community at a time. Through our food parcel programme we strive to provide much needed social relief before we start with our sustainable development programmes. In A Call to Action you will read the story of how a lady reacted on her desire to make a difference providing food to the poor.

We have recently moved our administrative offices from SA Cares for Life to the Loftus Versveld Stadium, home of the Blue Bulls. It is a bitter sweet feeling to leave our secure nest where we were given the love, care and attention to grow and become strong to take flight! Thank you to everyone at SA Cares for Life, we bless you!

So much has happened since our last newsletter. This newsletter reports on our highlights, but we would also like to invite you to visit our [website](#). Follow us on [Facebook](#), or get in touch by [emailing us](#).

We hope you are inspired and encouraged to join our army of light bearers. Together we can make the world a great place for all.

Warmest regards,
Chrisna Groenewald

A CALL TO ACTION!

Lorna van Wyk read our first newsletter which was forwarded to her by her daughter living in America. Lesedi la Batho's desire to provide food parcels for 200 families touched her heart

so deeply that she was inspired to start a project to provide food to child-headed families. She was moved to action and bravely prepared a presentation for her church, the Brooklyn Methodist church, asking the congregation members to contribute to the Fill-a-Bag project. One bag costs about R150 to R200 and contains ingredients that can prepare approximately 10 meals for a family of four. Lorna and her church members are currently supplying 115 food parcels a month for vulnerable people in Mabopane. Each bag we send out contains a Bible verse in Tswana and English. The Bible tells us God's word will not return to Him empty but will accomplish what He desires. To read the full testimony of how God's Word gives life click [here](#).

It is amazing to think how powerfully one person's response to a need can result in a miracle. Siphon is one of the many children whose life has been changed by this initiative. He is a 12 year old boy who lives at home with his mother and siblings. One day Siphon came home hungry after school and fried a few potatoes for lunch. When his mom came home she was furious because he finished the last potatoes. Siphon ran away from home for a week and his mom couldn't find him anywhere. By joining hands we can continue to help more children like Siphon to not go hungry. If you would like to get involved please [email](#) Lorna van Wyk. Pseudonym

TRUE RAYS OF HOPE!



Lesedi La Batho is proud and honoured to have been selected to become a partner of the German based NGO, Rays of Hope. The organisation is kindly looking at sponsoring a car for Lesedi La Batho, so that we are able to undertake duties such as collecting and distributing food parcels, transporting donations as well as bringing sponsors to our centre. Rays of Hope have also provided us with a pastor who provides spiritual guidance for both staff and community members at our centre. We look forward to a long and prosperous working relationship with them.

TOGETHER WE TAKE A STAND!

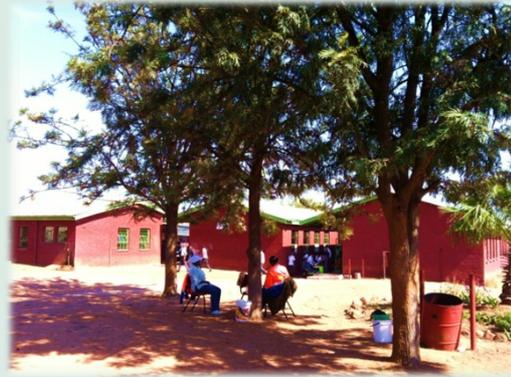


In light of the growing instances of gender based violence in South Africa, Lesedi La Batho is uniting with others in the stand against sexual and physical crimes against woman and children. We have partnered with Amo and Ian Pienaar, two brothers who are Special Forces trained combat soldiers with a unique knowledge in both attack and defence skills.

Together we are forming an Anti-Abuse program that combines training your body and mind. On the 14th and 15th May we held a 2 day pilot 'Attack-Defence' course and the feedback was very positive, indicating there is a real need for this course in the Mabopane area. This unique training will not just be self-defence classes, but it will also be presented at the 7 high schools in Mabopane. The work aims to change the mind set of teenage boys, encouraging

them to show their strength by ways of protecting those more vulnerable rather than abusing them and using violence.

TALENTS COME TO LIGHT!



In 2012 Madeleine Kooyman van Manen, an artist and volunteer, started the first extra-mural art classes at DA Mokoma High School in Block B, Mabopane.

With sports programmes now well established and supported at various schools in Mabopane, it was time to start focusing on the cultural aspect of community support and development - especially among the youth. Not all teenagers are interested in sport and this will give those individuals an opportunity to get involved in an activity that has the potential to create new opportunities.

DA Mokoma kindly provided a classroom for these purposes and with funds from the NMCF we were able to purchase a significant amount of materials. The University of Pretoria provided a storage cupboard for the materials and several architect's tables, which are being used as easels.

Classes are presented by Thabo Pitso, who lives in Mabopane and studied art through TUT. He has been a finalist in some of South Africa's most prestigious art competitions. Since graduating from TUT Thabo has already held his first solo exhibition.

Nine pupils are currently taking part in the programme. Interested pupils were asked to draw a self-portrait as their first project to establish their level of experience and although only a few classes have taken place, their drawing skills have improved dramatically.

A NEW PARTNERSHIP!

In April, Lesedi La Batho became partners with the Department of Social Development under their 'Sustainable Livelihoods' project which will enable us to provide accredited training courses for our community members in the hope of finding them employment. Over the course of the year, we aim to train 90 Community members in life skills as well as in the fields of: Basic and Advanced Computer Training, Basic Bookkeeping, Cashiers and Merchandising.

We will also then support our trainees in securing employment which will give them financial independence that will mean they can support their families. We have also received funding to set up a Referral and Information Desk which will act as a gateway to our centre and services. Community members' looking for employment will have access to the daily newspapers, the latest training courses and job opportunities as well as referrals to both internal and external projects.

We will be implementing satellite Referral and Information Desks at the 7 High School's in Mabopane to provide assistance to isolated and child headed families.



SPORTING ACTION!



We have hosted four tournaments since the beginning of the year. To mention two, one was the soccer tournament held at the Letlotlo secondary school on the 2nd of February 2012. Seven schools competed. There were an estimate of 200 participants. Each participant received a food parcel with a sandwich, juice and fruit. Lesedi la Batho would like to thank the Department of Sports and Recreation who helped us to make this a huge success and a day to be remembered.

The other was The Winterveld Tournament at Ikeleng Primary School was attended by 3 primary schools on the 6th of March. Manamelong, Ikeleng and Emma primary school took part to make this a fun day sponsored by the German International Corporation (GIZ). Teachers and parents from the different schools supported their teams. Lesedi la Batho coaches prepared delicious food parcels that were enjoyed by everyone. Manamelong Primary school won the tournament. Congratulations!

WE BUILD CAPACITY!



Since the beginning of the year we have hosted four workshops. We would like to highlight the following two. One was the HIV and AIDS prevention and basic First Aid workshop was held to educate coaches who work with kids on a daily basis. Soccer activities and fun games were used to teach the prevention of HIV and AIDS. The SA Soccer Legends and Community Police Forum also took part in what turned out to be a successful workshop. Developing life skills contribute to the community's well being.

The other was Searching for Sugarman. On April 18th, community members from Mabopane were fortunate enough to be invited to attend a workshop headed by the Oscar winning documentary film director of 'Searching for Sugarman', Malik Bendjelloul. This was made possible by the Swedish Embassy and held at Vista University in Mamelodi, where participants

from a number of projects around the Tshwane Municipality joined together to listen to Mr Bendjelloul's inspirational talk on how he made this multiple award winning documentary film with very little money or resources. We were all left inspired and full of hope that we too can do great things!

We appreciate that you have taken the time to read our news! Lesedi la Batho is making a positive change in the Mabopane community - thank you for being a valuable part of it! Please look out for our newsflash next month. Till then, God bless!

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