



Mandela Day 2015

MHANI GINGI PLANS TO INVOLVE DISABLED PEOPLE IN AGRICULTURE

A significant development in Mhani Gingi Social Entrepreneurial Network's efforts in 2015 to empower marginalised communities and to eradicate chronic poverty was the extension of the organisation's Flagship Programme to include disabled people in gardening and agricultural activities. The Flagship Programme encompasses Mhani Gingi's environmental activities.

Prominent among Mhani Gingi's projects to include disabled people was the unique Rose Geranium Farm proposal that took Mhani Gingi to Copenhagen, Denmark, to complete among the 50 finalists of the University Startup World Cup 2015. In line with Mhani Gingi's mission to alleviate unemployment and poverty by assisting vulnerable communities to create a sustainable living, the Rose Geranium Farm proposal aimed to empower disabled women in agriculture by making it possible for them to work on vertical hanging gardens. The farm would incorporate ramps to enable the wheelchair-bound individuals to work in gardens despite their disability.

Another objective of the Rose Geranium Farm, which would employ both able and disabled workers, is to stimulate the local economy in an area where the incidence of unemployment, poverty and other social problems is high. The proposed Rose Geranium oil production farm would also make organic compost and Rose Geranium products such as soap. Presently Mhani Gingi is investigating land outside of Cape Town for its plans that are likely to extend the Flagship Programme agricultural activities into other possible new directions as well in 2016.



Vertical gardening for Langa Cheshire Home

Donations received from Soroptimist International Stratford on Avon Club in London, England, funded the erection of vertical gardens that enabled disabled individuals at Langa Cheshire Home for Disabled Adults in Langa, Cape Town, to participate in gardening. Other assistance from Soroptimist International Rhyll and District Club, England, helped to fund the installation of irrigation systems for some of the Mhani Gingi community gardens.

Soroptimist International member, Gloria White, and her husband, Tim, with Lillian Masebenza at Langa Cheshire Home for Disabled Adults.



Flagship Programme

ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY GARDENS PROMOTES HEALTHY NUTRITION

Mhani Gingi's Flagship Programme promotes better nutrition among the needy and boosts food security by teaching the community to produce and eat healthy food. At the heart of the Flagship Programme is the organic Mhani Gingi Herb and Seedling Nursery, situated at Old Mutual Head Office in Pinelands, where women are trained in gardening and gain an income from being employed in the cultivation of organic herbs and seedlings.



In addition to this, Mhani Gingi targets land and "open spaces" belonging to schools, clinics, hospitals, crèches, office parks or even prisons where community vegetable gardens could be established. Women in the surrounding communities are then assisted to work collaboratively with the institution to cultivate and produce nutritious food. Mhani Gingi is currently establishing another community vegetable garden at South African Red Cross Society premises in Langa, Cape Town. Mhani Gingi has helped establish more than 20 community vegetable gardens in townships of Cape Town this way and has trained more than 50 community gardeners at an incubation garden in Gugulethu. The organisation also provides education on healthy nutrition.

Partners in alleviating poverty by boosting food security

Support from the Ackerman Pick n Pay Foundation helps to sponsor the community gardens. Synergy between the objectives of Mhani Gingi and United States food company, General Mills, also resulted in funding in 2015, which went towards Mhani Gingi's work in the area of food security and education. According to the General Mills *Global Responsibility 2015* report, the giant American food concern's efforts to nourish communities globally include attempting to alleviate hunger and advance nutrition wellness through addressing barriers to food security around the world and by promoting nutrition wellness. Another strategy is to build brighter futures through education. "We support hunger-relief efforts that feed people in need and uncover barriers to food security," the report said.

A further significant development in 2015 was the receipt of sponsorship from the Department of Agriculture for the purchase of machinery that assists in the process of filling seedling trays at Mhani Gingi Nursery. Mhani Gingi also received assistance from the Western Cape Department of Social Development.

Helping to provide access to healthy food

Other welcome support for the Flagship Programme followed the visit to Cape Town of Marita and Carl-Gustav Eriksson, parents of the former Co-ordinator of the 1.6 Million Club South Africa, Karin Eriksson. The Erikssons were introduced to Founding Director of Mhani Gingi Social Entrepreneurial Network, Lillian Masebenza, and the Mhani Gingi team. On touring Mhani Gingi's activities, the Swedish visitors were so taken with the concept of the Flagship Programme that they were inspired to contribute a shed to the community gardens for keeping implements safe as well as to provide shelter for the gardeners and volunteers during inclement weather. Not only was the shed erected at one of Mhani Gingi's training sites in Langa with the assistance of a local company, Freight Innovations. The Erikssons' donation also stretched as far as purchasing new boots for the women who cultivate the gardens.



This shed for Mhani Gingi's community gardening activities was provided by Marita and Carl-Gustav Eriksson from Sweden. It was erected in Langa, Cape Town, with the aid of local company, Freight Innovations.

Training in Urban Vegetable Gardening

Mhani Gingi's Flagship Programme in 2015 hosted Cape Peninsula University of Technology horticultural student, Zandile Maninjwa, as an in-service trainee. Meanwhile Flagship Programme Co-ordinator, Tabisa Mahlathi, and volunteer, Nosipho Mbamdezelu, attended training entitled Intro to Urban Vegetable Gardening Workshop presented by Tarryn Rice and the City of Cape Town in the Company Gardens.

SHOWCASING SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

During 2015 a range of organisations helped provide opportunities for the network members of Mhani Gingi to showcase their businesses and to sell their products such as beadwork, sewing, vegetables and pottery. Mhani Gingi empowers women to develop small, social enterprises through a variety of income-generating activities that include arts and crafts, gardening, catering and tourism. Mhani Gingi provides technical skills to support the enterprises and also links the women to funding and marketing opportunities.

Among opportunities afforded the Mhani Gingi members in 2015 was an invitation to share and sell at an International Women's Club (IWC) event in Cape Town. This was followed by a visit to the member enterprises by the international women. In addition, every month-end the network members are given an opportunity to display and sell their products at Pick n Pay Head-office in Kenilworth and, on the last Friday of the month, at the Market Day at Old Mutual Head Office in Pinelands. During 2015 network members also displayed their goods at RCS Media Group's old and new Head Offices in Goodwood and Pinelands. Another welcome opportunity for members of Mhani Gingi was receipt of a sales consignment secured by one of the pottery interns.



BUILDING A SOUND FOUNDATION FOR TOMORROW'S SOCIETY



Mhani Gingi's Social Responsibility Programme supports Early Learning Centres (ELCs) in townships of Cape Town in various ways, based on the organisation's firm belief in building a sound foundation for the society of tomorrow and dealing with the root causes of social problems. Mhani Gingi has adopted six ELCs in the Nyanga and Philippi area of Cape Town.

Not only are Mhani Gingi and partner organisations such as Afri-CAN Charity attempting to ensure a daily meal for the children at ELCs. Mhani Gingi also supports ELCs by developing educare teachers and learning programmes; assisting ELCs with administration and documentation; helping to provide safe and appropriate structures for the children; and establishing vegetable gardens to improve the children's nutrition.

Addressing the 'hidden hunger' at schools

Mhani Gingi experimented with healthy muffins that are fortified with palm oil as part of its exploration of ways to address nutritional deficiencies and hunger among pre-school children and other learners in Cape Town communities in need. Mhani Gingi Trustee and leader of the Social Responsibility Programme, Joan Wright, heard about The Red Palm Bakery project based at Kylemore High School in Stellenbosch. It aims to address what is known as the 'hidden hunger' — nutritional deficiencies — in marginalised communities through production of healthy, affordable muffins. The muffins are fortified with palm oil and other ingredients to deliver the nutrients needed for healthy child development. Moreover, the muffins are intended to provide a meal for hungry children in poor communities who attend school on an empty stomach.

Project Manager and Chairperson of the Governing Body at Kylemore High School, Graig Brown, said The Red Palm Bakery project has now come full circle, 12 years since it first provided muffins to Kylemore Crèche, Primary School and High Schools. This is because the first learners to receive the muffins matriculated in 2015.

The Red Palm Bakery, a project which falls under the umbrella of the Imibala Trust, supplies 6 000 muffins a day in the Cape Town metropole which are sold for R2,25 each. The project's vision is to increase its retail foot print nationally to enable it to become self-sustainable and to supply muffins for free to the needy, said Brown.



Interacting with children in the classroom and the community.



Enhancing daily programmes.

Social Responsibility

Upgrading Early Learning Centres

An important milestone achieved in 2015 was helping Early Learning Centres (ELCs), such as Ivy Nyovane Early Learning Centre in Nyanga, to gain compliance with regulations. Achieving its re-zoning status made Ivy Nyovane ELC eligible to apply for monthly grants. Meanwhile, student volunteers at Mhani Gingi also assisted Red, Green and Gold Early Learning Centre in Marcus Garvey community, Philippi East, with administration.

Assisting the ELCs to upgrade the physical structures in which the children are cared for is another priority that Mhani Gingi achieved with the help of a number of sponsors and helpers. International intern student Esmee van den Hoek, from the Netherlands, collected about R7 000 from ELCs, family and friends in that country for the development of a playground at Red, Green and Gold ELC. LegalWise contributed funding to erect a perimeter fence at Siyaphila Early Learning Centre, another ELC in Philippi East adopted by Mhani Gingi. Pinelands North Primary School's Early Act Club donated R 4 500 for equipment for various ELCs and TRAVELBAGS collected R2 000 for the ELCs at their Christmas lunch.



Esmee van den Hoek from Netherlands with baby Africa at RGG Early Learning Centre.

Mhani Gingi Teacher-Training Workshops

Early Childhood Development (ECD) practitioners from 10 Early Learning Centres (ELCs) situated in Philippi, Crossroads and Khayelitsha townships in Cape Town attended the six-week series of Mhani Gingi Teacher-Training Workshops funded by Afri-CAN Charity in 2015. A group of 12 ECD practitioners consisting of head teachers and their assistants attended the workshops series launched with the help of Mhani Gingi. The workshops instructed the teachers on how to use their own potential and resources at hand, such as recyclable materials, to develop their centres and the learning programmes for the children.



The workshop series was such a success that while support groups continue with the 2015 trainees, a new workshop series is underway in 2016. Mhani Gingi provides training to educate teachers in the use of recyclable materials together with Lighton Education. These efforts employ a key mantra of Mhani Gingi, which is to 'use what you have to attract what you need'.

The beautiful game

Saskia and Andre van den Hoek, parents of intern Esmee van den Hoek donated soccer jerseys that Saskia had knitted for children taking part in a winter holiday programme. The jerseys adorned the children in a soccer tournament held at Beautiful Gate.

Other people and organisations who contributed to Mhani Gingi's Social Responsibility programme in various ways during 2015 include Nell Brown of Lifestyle Focus; Green's Cool Early Learning Centre at Old Mutual; Renee Lighton of Lighton Education; Merrypak; Pinelands Postnet; Stark Ayres, and numerous volunteers who provided hands-on assistance.



1.6 Million Club South Africa

LAUNCH OF THE 1.6 MILLION CLUB SOUTH AFRICA

Mhani Gingi Social Entrepreneurial Network strengthened its focus on the health and wellness of women with the launch of the 1.6 Million Club South Africa on 17 February 2015 in collaboration with the 1.6 Million Club Sweden. The 1.6 Million Club South Africa aims to promote women's health and well-being in the country and developed out of the Women's Innovation Trade Fair 2014 hosted by Mhani Gingi. The 1.6 Million Club South Africa has raised awareness around sexual assault, gender-based violence, drug abuse and other topics with partner organisations such as the Saartjie Baartman Centre for gender-based violence and the Cape Town Rape Crisis Centre.



Thembisa Konayo



Thandi Mbo



Dr. Karin Schenck-Gustafsson



Interactive Women's Health Seminar

Mhani Gingi and the 1.6 Million Club South Africa hosted a Women's Health Seminar on 22 August 2015 that brought together more than 350 women from local communities including Bellville, Bonteheuwel, Delft, Gugulethu, Khayelitsha, Manenberg, Mitchell's Plain, Nyanga, Woodstock, and various women's organisations and the Western Cape Departments of Social Development and Health, to discuss health issues and hear expert advice from local and international specialists on women's health. The seminar was the culmination of a special focus on women's mental health during National Women's Month.

At the interactive seminar a panel of local and international experts led a discussion on various aspects of the mental health challenges that need to be met to unlock the great potential of South African women. The topic was debated from the perspectives of Gender-based Violence, Substance Abuse, Nutrition/Exercise, HIV/AIDS, Pregnancy and Motherhood (perinatal phase) and Economy/Education.

EMPOWERING WOMEN WITH WELLNESS

As a Lead-up Event to the Women's Health Seminar in August, a first Interactive Women's Health Seminar was held in Tambo Village on 25 July in which the topic of Women's Mental Health and Substance Abuse was addressed by Integrative Medicine practitioner, Dr. Leila Sadien, and other speakers. A second Interactive Women's Health Seminar, hosted on 1 August in collaboration with the Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women and Children, focused on Gender-Based Violence.

In order to address social problems and ensure impact and sustainability, Mhani Gingi first engages the community on a subject to identify issues and pinpoint the problems. After this an event is held at which the people with experience of the problem are able to engage experts with knowledge on the topic.

Linking women in health

An outcome of the successful Women's Health Seminar held on 22 August was the relationship that has formed between Desiree English, Certified TRE® (Tension and Trauma Release Exercise) provider, and the Bonteheuwel Walking Ladies. Since meeting the group at the seminar, English volunteered to attend the weekly meetings of the fitness and health group and has instructed them on breathing, exercises and relaxation.

English has conducted a short workshop on the grieving process with the women and has shared other tension and trauma release methods with them – and attended their end-of-year event. Soraya Salie, founder of the Bonteheuwel Walking Ladies' group, said that meeting up with English had been “the best”.

Salie said that after eight years in existence the women's group consists of about 70 women who support each other and share education on a range of pressing health and social issues.



The Bonteheuwel Walking Ladies.

MHANI GINGI FINALISTS IN THE UNIVERSITY STARTUP WORLD CUP 2015

Mhani Gingi Social Entrepreneurial Network was one of 50 top teams from around the world who were selected to be finalists in the University Startup World Cup 2015 competition that took place in Copenhagen from 14 to 18 September 14 to 18 2015. Mhani Gingi Founding Director, Lillian Masebenza, and Ian Kosasa, a student from Michigan University in the United States of America who volunteered as an intern at Mhani Gingi in South African during 2015, travelled to Copenhagen to present their ideas, meet investors and other finalists in the competition to be voted the best student startup in the world.



Ian Kosasa (left), from Michigan University in the United States of America, and Lillian Masebenza, Founding Director of Mhani Gingi Social Entrepreneurial Network in South Africa, were chosen from among 2 500 000 students and 4 000

Most Influential Women in Business and Government awards for Lillian Masebenza

Lillian Masebenza, Founding Director of Mhani Gingi, won two Most Influential Women in Business and Government Awards in 2015 for her contribution to her industry and the positive impact this has made on the country. The awards made by CEO Magazine were presented at a function in Johannesburg on 28 July 2015.

Lillian was announced both Winner for South Africa and Regional Winner for the SADC (Southern African Development Community) region in the category of Education & Training: Private.



Networking

Out and About

- Lillian Masebenza, Founding Director of Mhani Gingi, attended the House of the Future event from 16 to 20 November 2015 that promoted links between South African and Netherlands stakeholders. The five-day event in Johannesburg, Gauteng, discussed such topics as solar lighting for women and children; cost-effective horticulture; addressing water questions relating to women; and arts and entrepreneurship.
- Lillian Masebenza was a speaker at the Incomati Basin Women in Water Conference (IBWiC) 2015 held in White River, Mpumalanga, from 1 to 2 December 2015.
- Mhani Gingi was the Guest of Honour at an International Women's Club (IWC) event in Cape Town in April 2015. Mhani Gingi Trustee, Joan Wright, delivered a presentation on Mhani Gingi and the network members had an opportunity to showcase their wares. In turn, the IWC women visited Mhani Gingi's community projects on 25 June.
- 11 Graduate students from the St Catherine's University Master of Arts in Organisational Leadership (MAOL) programme visited Mhani Gingi in January 2015.

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