



Newsletter 2025



Working Towards a Brighter Future
in South Africa

Children First

Dear Friends & Supporters (past, present & hopefully future),

In my previous existence as a social worker in Wales, I once had the privilege of working under Mick Millman, whose background was in community work rather than statutory social work. He engaged with all sorts of groups, created others, brought people together, changed attitudes and improved lives in one of the poorest, most disadvantaged areas in Wales.

When I look at Zisize, I see the same ethos, reaching out, bringing together people with similar problems to help each other, thinking outside the box, engaging in unconventional practices and reaching places other people don't touch! Zisize is, to use a social work term, an agent for social change. This newsletter will focus on Zisize's 'community outreach work' and an update on Ekukhanyeni.

In its earliest days, Zisize reached out to primary schools and worked with them to become 'caring schools' - an unusual concept in 1999. In addition it addressed the need for training teachers, feeding hungry children and gradually moved into communities and homes in the areas surrounding those schools. Holistic interventions followed:- social work to assist with securing documentation and grants, intervening in abuse and neglect situations; nursing expertise to encourage HIV testing and medication compliance and later full health screening for children; Psychological testing uncovered many children who had undiagnosed learning difficulties and counselling helped many bereaved and abused children; hunger was very prevalent so a combination of boreholes and both home and community gardens, helped relieve that, and in some cases, provided a source of income.

Zulu culture, which includes Tribal Chiefs and their Induna adjudicating complaints and disputes between community members, lends itself to talking through problems. The various dialogues Zisize conducts, engages all sections of the community. There have been dialogues for the whole community; sufferers of HIV/AIDS; parents of disabled children; married couples; pregnant teenagers; men and boys.



