

TIMELINE OF OUTREACH INTO AMAOTI

November 2001 – Small beginnings: After hearing about the plight of the many orphans and neglected children in Amaoti, Noleen Chetty, Pastor Derrick Gumede and Joan Smith started to feed these hungry children, with peanut butter sandwiches and milk. (A group of retired ladies from Church of the Good Shepherd helped to make the sandwiches). The feeding took place in Gogo Khumalo's garden under, the now famous, tree, come rain or shine. The numbers grew very quickly from 50 to over 200 and we were invited to make use of the Meseleku family hall next door.

Over the next 2 years we slowly developed relationships and built trust with the members of this community who we came to love. Our feeding increased to 3 days a week with soup once a month. The children were so hungry we decided to 'step out in faith' and produce soup on a weekly basis. Our precious Sherry Leo-Smith, who was living at a residential hotel after a debilitating car accident, used to collect potato peels from their kitchen which formed the base of our soup. We had learnt that the most nutritious part of the potato was just beneath the skin which most of us throw away! This was the most nutritious soup and turned these malnourished, lethargic and sickly children into lively, healthy and happy kids! Sherry was in charge of stirring the soup and on many occasions burnt herself and almost burnt down the church! Occasionally we were given loaves of bread and cakes and this usually ended up in a riot during the distribution process. Jesus took us to the scripture where He fed the five thousand – He told the disciples to get them to sit down and then to feed them. We always remember this lesson and never again allowed the children to 'line up' for their food.

In **January 2004** our Back-To-School project was born as we began the process of helping children to go to school. In faith we registered 120 children in our first year with no sponsors! Brookdale Primary School was the only school who could help us with our many grade 1 children. Dr Soman, the headmaster, opened an extra class to cater for these children. This was the start of a very special and ongoing relationship between ourselves and Brookdale Primary. After this step of faith we found sponsors for each child. Volunteer, Judy Carter, took over the management of this project, visiting the schools regularly to check on 'our' children's progress.

Musa Mofokeng was a 10 year old orphan who had never been to school. His mother had abandoned him as a child, leaving him with a stranger whilst she went to the 'shop'. Musa came each day we fed the children and never smiled until the day he tried on his school uniform. He has been smiling ever since and is now one of our volunteer leaders at our holiday clubs.

Annie, who, with other volunteers, used to help us feed the children, started a crèche in the Meseleku hall with 100 little ones and we continued to feed them daily.

Monthly 'Sunday school' was held on Sunday afternoons at Brookdale Primary School, with our sponsored children, followed by sports, fun and food.

In July of 2004 an NPO called INDLELA (The Way) was registered to oversee the Amaoti projects along with two other projects operating out of Church of the Good Shepherd, Fairhavens Babies Crisis Home and Door of Hope.

2005

We first met Mike Pilavachi and his team from Soul Survivor Ministries and Soul Action U.K., in 2005. This was the beginning of a special relationship which continues to grow as they send long term and short term volunteers from the U.K. to work with us. It was also the time God broke Tich's heart for this community.

We met three special young ladies, Zanele Brown, Nozipho, and Nomusa. They offered to volunteer with us and introduced us to a number of their friends. We connected with Joe White and World Changers Academy, at this time, through Joe Cele. W.C.A. came to the community and ran a 6 week Christian based life skills programme for young adults. Thirty five of these were chosen to go to the WCA three month leadership training course. They returned with a desire to make a difference in their community and began to work alongside us in Amaoti as volunteers.

The Amaoti Community Church was born in July of 2005. Derrick and Maureen Gumede and their family moved into their new home in Brookdale, overlooking Amaoti and Tich and Derrick ran the church together, with Derrick taking over the reins in January 2006.

In the September of 2005 our beloved Annie, the head of our crèche, was murdered outside her home. Her life had been transformed through the love of Jesus and we look forward to meeting her again in heaven. Thembe took over the reins of the crèche later that year.

In July and December we ran our first five-day holiday clubs with +/- 300 children.

2006

Tich and Blake Phillips rebuilt Annie's home to care for the 5 orphans she had left behind.

Nozipho joined Judy to assist with our Back-To-School programme which had increased to over 300 sponsored children in 14 schools. Zanele Gumede started a homebase care programme to assist the Aids sufferers, and their families, in their homes.

Our crèche moved to Peniel Church in Brookdale along with the Amaoti Community Church. Nikki Matkovich and Margie Jeursen came alongside Thembe to help build up the crèche. Nikki also started the After Care programme at the church which later moved to Brookdale Primary School. Maureen Gumede took up the challenge of running a sewing and beading group for unemployed ladies and Gogos, many of who were struggling to care for orphaned grandchildren. They were taught different skills. In 2007 we received an order for 600 knitted stuffed toys for a chain of stores. This gave 7 Gogos from Amaoti a regular income for the next 6 months. The ladies' speciality are their beaded bags and cushion covers which has become their trademark. Many of the bags have been purchased by visitors from around the world.

Joan De Meillon joined L.I. to run the administration of the Back-To-School project.

2007

In 2007 the Amaoti projects were growing rapidly and the decision was taken to separate 'the Siamese twins' to operate more efficiently. Lungisani Indlela Trust was formed to focus solely on the work in Amaoti. Tich Smith headed up the new NPO. The relationship between Indlela and Lungisani Indlela continues to expand as we work together, as sisters, in this community, with Indlela focusing on a longterm lifeskills programme into the primary schools and the feeding programme into the crèches.

Our Teenage Empowerment Programme (TEP) was established, with the financial support of Soul Action. 4 youth workers were trained to run the Campus Crusade CrossRoads life skills programme into the Amandlethu High School working with 520 teens in grade 8.

Theo and Zanele Brown joined the staff in the January of 2007, and soon took a leading role in the running of the projects. Renske Aerts joined us from Soul Action in the november, first as a volunteer, and brought with her many administrative and teaching skills as well as managing the visiting Soul Action teams. These short and long term teams have been coming annually to assist us in the different projects.

In July of 2007, Judy passed the running of the Back-To-School on to Zanele Brown. Judy's focus shifted to helping children to get birth certificates and IDs, and caregivers to obtain social grants.

Angela Dube introduced us to the southern part of Amaoti where she was running a crèche, Home Base Care programme and fostering a number of orphans. Our support expanded as our relationship with Angela and her helpers grew. We added on two rooms and toilet to her home for her orphans, moved their crèche to Primrose's house where we fenced their property and added on a toilet and shower.

2008

Margie Jeursen was appointed Administrator on behalf of the Board of Directors and was later opted on to the board as a director.

The Creche Development Project emerged as our involvement increased with other crèches in Amaoti. Renske became the project leader working with Thembe. Together they set up monthly training sessions for the crèche teachers and entered into a partnership with them and Lungisani Indlela where we committed to upgrade, train and equip them.

Four very special young Soul Action volunteers joined us for the first 6 months with Claire Thomas who came for the year. They worked tirelessly in the crèches, reading programme, and After Care.

Theo was appointed General Manager with Zanele as his assistant. The Community Development Seta sent 10 young volunteers from Amaoti to do their practical training with Lungisani Indlela.

In November 2008 Ann Moodley joined L.I. to concentrate on staff development, mentoring and counseling, and putting in Godly principles and structures.

2009

Claire Thomas went back to England to raise her salary and returned in February for 3 years as a volunteer and works with Zanele Mzimahkwe (formerly Gumede) on the newly formed Children and Family Care Project. Claire is a qualified Social Worker with 8 year's experience in running homes for the homeless.

Tich and Joan passed on the baton of the day to day managing of the projects to the team.

Zanele Brown became the Chief Operations Officer (C.O.O.). Theo was appointed as Director of Sports Development and general management.

Colleen Turner has taken over the reins of administration of the Back-To-School programme from Joan De Meillon and the general bookkeeping. Joan's focus is now on the street children.

Our Holiday clubs are attended by over 1,000 children. The weekly youth clubs are growing all the time.

We now support 27 creches.

Our TEP life skills programme is in 3 high schools impacting many lives.

There are over 600 children sponsored on our Back-To-School project.

The staff has grown to 20, with 16 of them from the Amaoti community, who were all previously unemployed.