

**BUILDING BETTER BUSINESSES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

**25 November 2024**

*“Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life. While poverty persists, there is no true freedom.”*

—Nelson Mandela

Dear Friends:

Thank you for your continued support during 2024, a year of joyful beginnings and sad tidings. Joyful beginnings: a new partnership in Soshunguve Township, enabling townships women and youth to learn their mechanics trade outside the formal school system and through a Virtual Reality program, both firsts in South Africa. Sad tidings: Jocelyn Pritchard, our Chair Emerita, with us on every step of our journey in The Townships Project, died, having lived 96 years of joyful service to humanity. Many thanks to those who made a donation in her memory.

**SOSHUNGUVE TOWNSHIP – Women and Youth Qualifying as Mechanics Right in Their Township!**



Sipho Mthimunye, Tumelo Kubyana, Nkateko Chauke and Tshepo Rahlogo have all earned their internationally recognized mechanics qualification at home in their township at a local repair shop. This achievement is amazing as these four young men had previously failed at school and were ineligible for further education. Society had largely abandoned them, severely limiting their futures. In a first for South Africa, Dr. Isaac Bashomane persuaded authorities to allow the youth and women he trains at Kgabo Cars (outside the school system) to take government exams. He himself started from a Grade 4 education and a learning disability. With utter determination and sheer willpower, he qualified as a mechanic and has become a brilliant teacher. He believes passionately in offering opportunities to non-traditional students, women and youth to learn at their own pace. UNISA recently conferred an honorary doctorate on Dr. Isaac in recognition of his continuing contribution.



During 2024, The Townships Project formalized a partnership with Kgabo Cars by purchasing a Virtual Reality training system which allows all students, including women (55 of 178 graduates so far), to learn at their own speed in a simulated environment. The results have been excellent. The second photo shows Ofentse Ledingoane, Dr. Isaac Boshomane, Queen Mogale and Annetjie Ramatlhape. Ofentse and Queen are expecting to earn mechanics qualifications during 2025. Annetjie volunteers as an English teacher with all of Dr. Isaac’s students. Both Dr. Isaac and Annetjie are Rotarians.

**ZANDSPRUIT AND LIV-LANSERIA TOWNSHIPS - Early Childhood Development (ECD) Business Training**

*“The true character of a society is revealed in how it treats its children.” —Nelson Mandela*

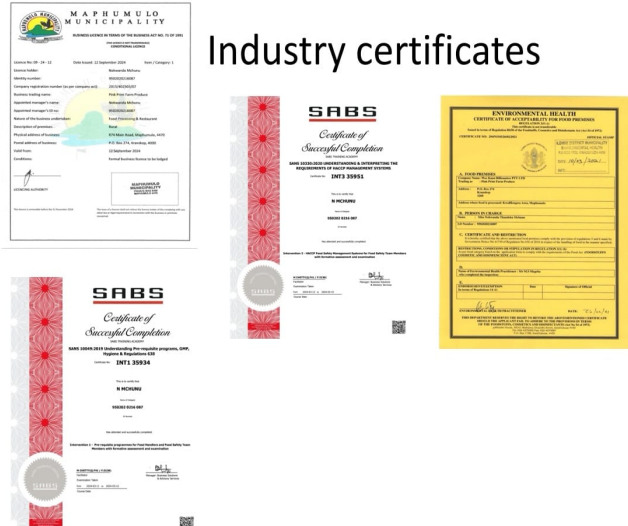


The Townships Project has supported 6 ECD training programs since 2020 when it teamed up with Sesego Foundation, founded by Rotarian Annemarie Mostert, to offer it in Soweto. Annemarie and colleagues at Sesego have been the bedrock on which our relationship with Rotary in South Africa has been built. Since 2022, the Charlottetown Rotary Club in Canada has joined us in offering these courses in the townships of Mathibestat (north of Pretoria), Zandspruit and Liv-Lanseria (near Johannesburg). This work is foundational to building healthy communities for the future. Each stable and growing day care business benefits 100’s, not only the women owners and employees but also the children and their parents, benefits that last a lifetime.

## OTHER UPDATES: Pink Print Butchery; Kagiso Plumbers and Martha's January 2025 Visit

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."*

—Nelson Mandela



### Industry certificates

Following our support in 2023 for Pink Print's recovery, Nokwanda reports that her butcher business now has 7 full-time employees (8 before the floods) and has returned to profitability. She expects to have two bulk buyers in place by year end, as she has obtained necessary industry certificates. She continues to expand her retail business, lifting up her whole remote rural community. She will attend the one-day symposium that The Townships Project will host in Johannesburg during Martha's January visit, together with individuals from three other projects we support: Dr. Isaac Bashomane's Soshungu mechanics, Shawn Theunissen and Desigan Chetty's Kagiso plumbers, mechanics and electricians, and, finally, the Early Childhood Development course leaders from Sesego Foundation, who delivered ECD training in Zandspruit and Liv-Lanseria during 2024.

All participants are eager to share their ideas and experiences, as all are working on unique projects offering great hope for building the townships economy in South Africa.

## BUILDING THE TOWNSHIPS ECONOMY IN SOUTH AFRICA

*"It always seems impossible until it is done."*

—Nelson Mandela

During Martha's January 2024 visit in South Africa, she spent a day with Shawn Theunissen and Desigan Chetty and their team in Kagiso Townships' Hub, where PropertyPoint is incubating 15 mechanics, plumbing and electrical trade businesses. Shawn is a Rotary member and currently the Chair of ANDE, the Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs, a global network of organizations that propel entrepreneurship in developing economies, the first person from the African continent to do so. He founded PropertyPoint and Entrepreneurship to the Point and is the Corporate Social Responsibility Executive at Growthpoint Properties, the largest listed property company in South Africa. He has international credibility and recognition. Desigan Chetty, Shawn's COO at PropertyPoint, is charged with developing townships businesses to maintain their clients' property portfolios. Annemarie Mostert introduced us to Shawn and Desigan. She serves on Rotary International's 2025 Calgary Convention team and encouraged us to offer a breakout session on that international stage focused on BUILDING THE TOWNSHIPS ECONOMY IN SOUTH AFRICA. We will learn before year end if we will be offering this session on an international stage. Stay tuned!

## THANK YOU!

*"A winner is a dreamer who never gives up."*

—Nelson Mandela

That's about it for 2024. Without your support, none of this could happen.

We hope that you will continue to change the lives of vulnerable entrepreneurs based in townships across South Africa. You can **donate securely by eTransfer/Interac** through your bank or credit union to **[donations@thetownshipsproject.org](mailto:donations@thetownshipsproject.org)**. You can also donate by mail, using the enclosed envelope with insert. All donations of \$20 or more will receive a charitable tax receipt.

Our best wishes for a safe, happy and fulfilling holiday season and New Year. And again, THANK YOU!

Sincerely,

F. Martha Deacon  
Founder  
[marthadeacon@thetownshipsproject.org](mailto:marthadeacon@thetownshipsproject.org)



Carole Rowsell  
Chair  
[carolerowsell@thetownshipsproject.org](mailto:carolerowsell@thetownshipsproject.org)



## YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT THE TOWNSHIPS PROJECT

[www.thetownshipsproject.org](http://www.thetownshipsproject.org)

\$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send to:**

The Townships Project, c/o Martha Deacon, 69 Upper Prince St, Charlottetown, PE C1A 4S6  
Charitable Registration #86418 8420 RR0001