

BUILDING BETTER BUSINESSES IN SOUTH AFRICA

25 November 2025

Dear Friends:

“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

Thank you for your continued support during 2025, a year in which we were able to bring together the leadership of projects we support in South Africa at a Symposium arranged with the help of our partners in Kagiso Township west of Johannesburg. That was the first of several highlights outlined below.

20 JANUARY 2025 – KAGISO TOWNSHIP, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA



Participants at the one-day Symposium on South African Economic Development Projects sponsored by The Townships Project and organised with our South African partners.

On 20 January 2025, Martha attended a Symposium sponsored by The Townships Project to introduce the leaders of projects we support to one another. It was also Martin Luther King Day in the United States. All 22 participants were eager to share their ideas and experiences, proud of working on projects that are building businesses in their own neighbourhoods. All businesses involve a significant proportion of women, often in non-traditional trades: plumbers from Kagiso Township, mechanics from Soshungu Township, Early Childhood Development workers from Zandspruit and Liv-Lanseria Townships and butcher Ms. Nokwanda Mchunu, owner of Pink Print Farm Produce of Maphumulo Township. Mentorships were set up, friendships were formed: we anticipate ongoing benefits from this initiative.

JUNE 2025 – VANCOUVER AND CALGARY, CANADA

In mid-June in Vancouver, friends of the late Jocelyn Pritchard and our two Vancouver directors (Heather Read and Craig Hermanson) gathered with Martha and other supporters of The Townships Project at Canadian Memorial United Church to thank CMUC for its seminal gift to us in the year 2000, to honour Jocelyn’s memory as a founding director and Chair Emerita, and to share stories from the years of our work in South Africa.



Martha Deacon at CMUC Centre for Peace in Vancouver, at a gathering attended by a number of long-time supporters.

In Calgary the following week, long-time TTP director and Calgary resident, Brian Dodd, attended the Rotary International Convention with Martha, meeting with Annemarie and Hans Mostert and other Rotary partners from South Africa. The demonstration of a groundbreaking aquaponics greenhouse was prominently on view for the 20,000 Rotarians attending in Calgary. The Desmond Tutu Historic Home will be the site of the second of these vertical farming projects in the Soweto/Johannesburg area, producing year-round produce and fish, sustainable incomes and local employment. Archbishop Desmond Tutu approved this partnership with FreshMinistries in 2018. The Townships Project’s Rotary partners in South Africa are now planning to roll these systems out in South Africa and beyond. Martha visited the site of the first one built in 2024, now self-sustaining 18 months after being commissioned. The Townships Project is supporting the installation at the Desmond Tutu Historic Home in Soweto, planned to open by mid-2026.



The aquaponics system to grow plants and fish at the Desmond Tutu Historic Home in Soweto which we are supporting.

24 OCTOBER 2025 - SOSHUNGUVE TOWNSHIP – WE WERE PARTNERS IN AN AMAZING EVENT!

“Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.”—Nelson Mandela



Left: Ofentse Ledingoane, Dr. Isaac Boshomane, Queenie Mogale and instructor Annetjie Ramatlhale at the training centre
Centre: Mechanics Ofentse and Queenie graduating after 3 years
Right: Annetjie, Rotary Community Corps President in Soshunguue

One of the most moving experiences of 2025 was the graduation ceremony held at Kgabo Cars for 15 mechanics. We have supported these young people, including young women and neuro-divergent learners, during their 3-year pathway to graduation with internationally-recognized accreditation.

This celebration was shared by municipal, automotive industry, educational and community leaders. It was also attended by jubilant and tearful parents and family who never dreamed their children could achieve this certification. Its founder, Dr. Isaac Boshomane, has spent 20 years building to this watershed moment in townships economic development, where local children can become highly-skilled trade workers, gaining a superior education right in their home neighbourhood. This is a first in the country, recognized as such by the national government.



Left: Dr. Isaac Boshomane, Kgabo Cars founder, with wife Victoria
Centre: 2005 original Kgabo Cars garage and workshop in a shack
Right: 2025 Kgabo Skills Development Building in Soshunguue

OCTOBER 2025 – TWENTY MONTHS TO EARN NQF LEVEL 5 DIPLOMA IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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

We are supporting eight experienced ECD educators to earn their National NQF Level 5 Diploma which qualifies them for leadership and management roles in ECD in South Africa. They meet Monday to Thursday from 1 to 5 p.m. and follow a 20-month nationally-mandated curriculum. The Townships Project has been supporting nationally-recognized ECD training programs since 2020. On 26 January, Rotary District Governor Dr. George Senosha and Martha attended the graduation of 51 ECD owners and managers from a business training program.



January 2025 graduation of 51 ECD owners and managers, focused on helping them keep their ECD businesses financially sound.

BUILDING THE TOWNSHIPS ECONOMY IN SOUTH AFRICA

“It always seems impossible until it is done.” —Nelson Mandela

We are privileged and encouraged to see what can be achieved year by year, working with programs which generate large results for a small investment, benefiting pre-school children, women and youth, their parents and their communities by enabling them to earn recognized accreditation which qualifies them to work in or build their own businesses and educational environments in their home neighbourhoods.

THANK YOU!

“A winner is a dreamer who never gives up.” —Nelson Mandela

That’s about it for 2025. 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**. 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,

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