

Our story of hope

As told by Zoleka Sauli, MASANGANE community worker in Jabulani village and initiator of Yomelela children's centre



In May 2012, we received the amount of R 85 000 from the German Embassy, micro-projects support, to build a centre for our orphaned children. We held a community meeting and asked if people can assist with chores. From then on people came to the Yomelela committee and offered help. They came up with different ideas. Some wanted to assist with carrying water in buckets, others to cook meals for the labourers.

When we worked out all the costs for building material to build a proper centre with a good roof, we realized that we had hardly any funds left for paying a master builder to supervise the construction. We were depressed and prayed to God and then a miracle happened: A man and his wife came to visit me at my home and I recognized the wife but not the man. The wife explained: "You remember me, Zoleka . A year ago I came to you in tears. My husband had returned from Durban and he was very sick and weak. He had to leave his well paid job as a master builder and our family was without income. He wanted us to save the little money we had for his funeral. I cried day and night but then I thought of you and your AIDS project. I have been to your educational campaigns about AIDS and I recognized the symptoms. But how can I, as the wife, talk to him about this virus? I was too scared and I came to you begging to visit us and talk to my husband about treatment. You were kind and you showed understanding. You talked to my husband in a very gentle way. It took several visits and I shall never forget the day when my husband spoke: "I have decided to go with you and Zoleka to the hospital and seek treatment." Only then, did Zoleka recognize the man as the patient. He was very weak a year ago with hollow eyes and now he looked so strong and healthy.

Then the husband spoke: "I am here to thank you and your project for everything you have done for me and my family. I am alive today because of the help and encouragement I received from you. I am taking my medication every day at the same time and I am very strong again. Before I return to Durban I want to express my gratitude. I am a master builder and I will build the centre for you. **You have saved my life - I want to thank you.** "



When he started building, everyone in the village was praising God. The quality of his work is outstanding, he made sure we purchased the best bricks and it became clear that he is really a master in his profession. We feel deeply blessed.