

*Celebrating 10 Years of Serving
Rural Communities in Need
Together, We Can!*



**POSSIBLE DREAMS INTERNATIONAL
IMPACT REPORT**

Eswatini Swaziland

FIELD ACTIVITIES ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2018 TO JUNE 2019



POSSIBLE DREAMS INTERNATIONAL

We Can.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Impact Report is to share the activities from the field with our Possible Dreams International community for greater transparency to better understand the impact of our work for the rural communities of the Kingdom of Eswatini. We also intend for this Impact Report to help current and prospective donors understand the activities delivered, the people helped and the opportunities for the year ahead.

Highlights for 2019 included a fundraising campaign to buy a new truck (enabling the team to reach remote communities), piloting a sanitation project to build household toilets to support dignity and health, a handicrafts program by the women of Matsetsa who collectively pooled their profits into a community kitty, and funding thirteen student scholarships. 2019 marks our ten-year anniversary, celebrated with a fabulous fundraising dinner with the Melbourne PDI community.

Siyabonga (thank you)!



hello@possibledreams.org

www.possibledreams.org



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HOW YOUR DOLLAR HELPS PEOPLE

STREAMS	PROGRAM NAMES	DESCRIPTION
Aid	Delivering Essentials	Providing food and other urgent items such as emergency housing repairs for vulnerable elderly people, women and children in poverty
	Soup Kitchen	Preparing and providing meals for vulnerable elderly people and those in extreme poverty
	Medical Support	Providing transport, hospital treatment or medicines for very sick and poor adults or children
Sustain	Housing	Building permanent secure housing for vulnerable elderly people, women and children orphaned by AIDS
	Latrines	Employing local people to build pit latrines (toilets) to improve hygiene and reduce disease due to poor sanitation
	Income Generation Projects	Empowering people to become self-sufficient through their own small businesses (this includes 'Swazi Innovators for Change' project)
	Farm	Farming project in Sitsatsaweni for cultivation of basic crops like maize, beans and vegetables for soup kitchen meals and emergency food aid
	Education	Funding a child's school education so that they can attend school (i.e. school fees, school uniforms, bus fare)
Dignity	Home Support	Providing comfort, care and dignity to people who are bedbound, terminally ill or too frail to take care of themselves
	Choir	emaSwati people of all ages who lift the spirit of clients through the power of music
Team - Making it Happen	Staff	Our emaSwati team works cohesively as well as each taking responsibility for different portfolios
	Community Champions	Local change agents who are caregivers or Rural Health Motivators and advocate for their local communities
	Paying it Forward	Everyone supported by PDI is encouraged to support others by "paying it forward" through whatever creative means they can



WHERE YOUR DOLLAR GOES

We believe that every donation we receive should be spent preciously. We are proud to report that **91c of every dollar** spent goes towards implementing programs in the Kingdom of Eswatini (Swaziland).

Our international community, including the Executive Board and the Fundraising Committee, are volunteers. The **only paid members** of our organisation are the Swaziland Field Team.

How we spend your donations

91c of every \$1 spent goes towards implementing programs in the Kingdom of Eswatini (Swaziland)



■ Our programs in Eswatini ■ Operational expenses in Australia*

*Costs for banking, website, accounting software, PO Box, and fundraising merchandise



1. MEALIE-MEAL PROGRAM

Possible Dreams International continued to provide monthly emergency food relief to the people most in need in the Lubombo region. The Mealie Meal (MM) distribution program has been one of PDI's major emergency aid programs since its inception ten years ago.

The number of families receiving MM packs fluctuates according to the number of referrals. Our beneficiaries or 'clients' are predominantly grandmothers (Gogos) caring for children, typically orphaned by AIDS. Some families receive MM due to unforeseen tragedy such as loss of parents/guardians, or homes destroyed in fires or storms. Where children/adults are on antiretroviral therapy, MM is critical to allow them to tolerate their medication.

The MM packs are a lifeline for these families. On average, 28 families receive monthly MM packs from PDI.

NUMBER OF FAMILIES: 28

NUMBER OF ADULTS: 52

NUMBER OF CHILDREN: 81

TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES: 161

ACHIEVEMENTS

In spite of the transport challenges experienced during the first half of 2019, we still distributed monthly MM to all of our clients. As in 2018, the MM packs were supplemented with maize from the Sitsatsaweni Farming Project.

CHALLENGES

- **Discharging Gogo led households:** While MM is usually a short-term measure, families of Gogos and young children are difficult to discharge given the Gogos are frail and children too young to work.
- **Acute Food Insecurity:** The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification estimates that **22 percent of the rural emaSwati population faced severe, acute food insecurity and required urgent humanitarian aid.** This includes 157,000 people in a 'crisis' situation. Some of the key drivers are a **high unemployment rate**, unusually high prices of commodities, natural disasters such as torrential storms and inaccurate drought information which led to some families not cultivating their fields.

OPPORTUNITIES

Providing income opportunities such as community garden schemes or group income generation projects (IGPs).

2. DAILY EMERGENCY FUND

BACKGROUND

The Daily Emergency Fund was set up to assist unwell people living in poverty with transport, medication expenses, and consultation and admission fees at Good Shepherd Hospital (GSH). GSH's Social Welfare Office often refer patients to PDI who require hospital transport or assistance with the social determinants of health. PDI also allocates funds for the Home Based Care Program, where GSH health care workers provide outreach care to PDI clients in their homes. This is a function of PDI's holistic approach to healthcare which addresses financial and geographical barriers.

NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES: 89
ADULTS: 64
CHILDREN: 25

Note some of the patients required multiple follow-up visits to hospital.

CHALLENGES

This year, we noted an increasing number of elderly people requiring hospital admission.

3. MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH (MCH) FUND

BACKGROUND

MCH Fund was set up to support babies whose mothers have died from AIDS, and mothers who cannot breastfeed and cannot afford formula. MCH Fund covers special care nursery admissions for babies (or covers the gap when families cannot pay the entire bill), and formula costs.

Number of beneficiaries: 4

CHALLENGES

Hospital admission fees and formula can be very costly, and we saw a decrease in the number of infants assisted compared with 2018.



4. DIGNITY PROJECT

The Dignity Project was established to provide comfort and care to people living with AIDS, terminal illness, disability or frail elderly people. Similar numbers were assisted in 2018 and 2019. The PDI team assisted with personal hygiene and bathing, washing clothes, house cleaning, and water deliveries for washing and cooking (we delivered 1000L of water for one remote client).

NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES: 3

CHALLENGES

- Water scarcity
- Lack of funds for working material
- Most families do not have beds or mattresses, and instead sleep on thin sleeping mats

OPPORTUNITIES

- Establishing water connections to homes would allow neighbors to assist them with food and laundry.
- Funding an extra community champion to provide more regular visits
- A fundraising drive for sponge mattresses

5. HOUSING PROGRAM

Secure housing provides practical essential shelter as well as dignity. The team provides an initial housing assessment of the existing shelter (if any) and prioritises need. This year PDI built a two-bedroom house for a family who has long been on the waiting list, in collaboration with Home Based Care. PDI also assisted with house renovations for two families.

NUMBER OF HOUSES BUILT: 1

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSES BUILT SINCE PDI'S INCEPTION: 31

TOTAL NUMBER OF WATER TANKS SINCE PDI'S INCEPTION: 23

TOTAL NUMBER OF TOILETS BUILT (WITH HOUSES) SINCE INCEPTION: 26

CHALLENGES

Housing represents an ongoing area of great need in this region. The number of requests for housing assistance are overwhelming, and the need is dire, with people living in tragic conditions. Funding limitations and the cost of houses have required us to put people on lengthy waiting lists, decline requests, or redirect them to other organisations.

OPPORTUNITIES

Fundraising to build more houses

6. SANITATION PROJECT

This year, PDI piloted a Sanitation Project to address the lack of basic sanitation in the region. Houses built by PDI come with pit latrines (toilets), however, other clients are vulnerable to disease and suffer indignity due to lack of sanitation. This year, we built pit latrines for six families, restoring dignity and providing a basic human right.

NUMBER OF TOILETS: 6

OPPORTUNITIES

Funding to upscale the sanitation project to build more pit latrines and provide community sanitation education

7(i). INCOME GENERATION PROJECTS

Income Generation Projects were conceived to empower MM recipients to generate an income, become self-sufficient, and be discharged from the MM program. Families/individuals are encouraged to propose an IGP that harnesses their skills and meets community demand. The PDI team considers the viability of the proposed IGP and anticipates potential issues such as poor management of finances, remote location, and lack of product demand. Number of current successful IGPs: 8 (1 new IGP this year involving sale of second hand clothing)

ACHIEVEMENTS

The woman selling second hand clothing is now paying her own rent and hospital visits, and takes pride in her self-sufficiency.

CHALLENGES

- Addressing small business threats such as seasonal demand or vendor competition.
- Ongoing small business education. For instance, a client with a goat IGP only sells their goats when there are pressing financial needs, preferring to see a swell in numbers rather than optimising their sales.

OPPORTUNITIES

Invest in more IGPs and/or provide more capital with the aim of weaning clients off the MM program



7(ii). SWAZI INNOVATORS FOR CHANGE

The Swazi Innovators for Change Project developed as a side project from the soup kitchen to enable bogogo (grandfathers) and bomkhulu (grandmothers) to generate income. Different handicrafts created include beadwork, grass sleeping mats, mats, bags, vaseline, and Indlamu (bead skirts worn during the annual reed dance). The number of participants fluctuates; for example, during the ploughing season, we see a slight dip in numbers. This year, the project has evolved with members creating a small savings scheme. The plan is for members to be able to borrow from the community kitty in times of need and return the money with a little interest. Profits are to be shared equally at the end of the year. We will continue to monitor the project's progress.

NUMBER OF GOGOS: 34 - 45

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Maintenance of the vegetable garden and collection of firewood for the soup kitchen
- Ongoing and diverse handicraft production
- Opening of a savings account by members of the project

OPPORTUNITIES

We are encouraging women to go to Manzini on Thursdays (popular market day) to sell their wares, which will hopefully improve stock turnover.

8. SOUP KITCHEN

The soup kitchen was implemented in 2017 after a successful crowdfunder to provide daily meals for elderly people in Matsetsa. A secondary benefit of the soup kitchen has been the positive social interaction which mitigates loneliness. The elderly people contribute to the soup kitchen by cultivating vegetables and gathering firewood.

CHALLENGES

- Numbers fluctuate during the year. During months when bogogo do not receive their quarterly government grants, the monthly food allocation for the kitchen can be used up before the end of the month.
- Due to the clay-like soil and rain, the pit toilet has started developing cracks and sinking. We need to build a new toilet from bricks and mortar, preferably a flushing toilet system.
- Some of the frail elderly clients are sending their grandchildren to collect meals for them, which denies them social interaction.
- Increasing fuel costs have seen an increase in the cost of commodities including food.

RECOMMENDATION

Find a donor for some food items to supplement the PDI budget.



9. SITSATSAWENI FARM

With a view to increase our self-sufficiency, PDI acquired land in Sitsatsaweni to grow maize and other crops for the MM program and soup kitchen. We have not yet cultivated the whole land as it was allocated to PDI late in the season, however, the portion of land we have cultivated has produced a reasonable yield.

ACHIEVEMENTS

This season, we harvested 30 x 50 kg bags of maize (an increase of four bags from last year).

CHALLENGES

The late harvest after a very rainy season and lack of vehicle resulted in some maize being spoilt. Thanks to the international team's efforts, we now have a truck to assist with harvesting.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Fencing the farm
- Growing beans this season on a section of land

10. EDUCATION

In the past, individual board members or visitors have helped fund school fees and uniforms for isolated cases, but the number of requests for assistance is overwhelming. A scholarship fund was established with assistance from former United States Peace Corps Volunteers who had worked in Eswatini several years ago, as long as 30 years ago. The scholarship fund priorities girls, including orphans, as they are particularly vulnerable to intergenerational, transactional sexual relationships where older men provide their basic needs in exchange for sexual favours. In most cases, these relationships have led to girls becoming pregnant, dropping out of school, and often acquiring HIV. Several surveys with girls engaged in transactional sex have revealed they come from impoverished families who cannot afford school fees.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- This project has **benefitted 7 students** who would otherwise be out of school. It has paid for school fees, bus fares, school uniforms and exam fees.
- Individual donors have also **assisted 5 students** with school fees and bus fares, who would otherwise be out of school.

CHALLENGES

- The project priorities girls given their vulnerability, however, there are also a significant number of boys in dire need.
- The funders require students to demonstrate high grades to be eligible for ongoing funding. The challenge with this is that some students may not perform at their best due to the lived experience of poverty and stress about where money will come from.

OPPORTUNITIES

Fundraising for a scholarship fund for both genders, that also caters for students who, on consideration, have potential but may not achieve the highest grades due to their circumstances.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PDI continues to bring hope to rural areas of Eswatini. The gratitude from communities is rewarding for our field team, who are the beating heart of our organisation. The field team would like to thank the international team and volunteers for their tireless fundraising and donations, and to the Parish Priest and Good Shepherd Mission for minimising office rent expenses.



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All the photos have been used with informed consent of the individual or parent.





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