



POSSIBLE DREAMS  
INTERNATIONAL

# FIELD ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

JULY 2019 - JUNE 2020

SERVING RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE  
KINGDOM OF ESWATINI (SWAZILAND)











# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The purpose of this Impact Report is to share the activities from the field with our Possible Dreams International (PDI) community. This provides greater transparency of our work and its impact on the rural communities of the Kingdom of Eswatini. We hope this report aids current and prospective donors to better understand the activities we have delivered, the people accessing our services and the opportunities we are planning for the year ahead.

With our global community facing extraordinary circumstances, PDI remained committed to seek and serve vulnerable communities this year. Highlights in this reporting period included The Sanitation Project where we built 14 toilets as part of our Dignity Program. Furthermore, we continued to empower women who are caught in transactional sex work by engaging them in our Income Generation Projects. We were able to support vulnerable families who were out of work during this pandemic with emergency aid, including baby formula, essential food (through our Mealie Meal Program) and medical assistance. Fortunately, our small organisation continued to receive support from our beloved community to withstand the impacts of this pandemic.

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# HOW YOUR DOLLAR HELPS PEOPLE

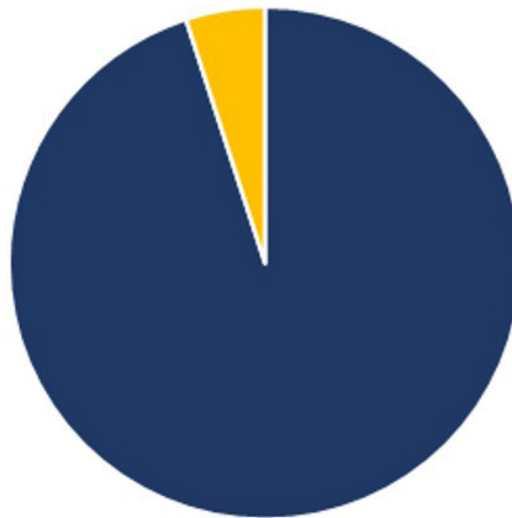


## 95 Cents Of Every Dollar Goes Directly To The Communities We Serve

We believe every dollar entrusted with our organisation to support vulnerable rural communities in the Kingdom of Eswatini should be spent preciously. We are proud to report that from our finance management in FY2020, 95 cents of every dollar you donate goes directly to the communities we serve, up from 93c the year before.

### HOW WE SPEND YOUR DONATIONS

95c 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



# SUMMARY OF OUR PROGRAMS



Our dual **aid** and sustainability model of care nested within a larger all-encompassing principle of honouring human **dignity** which informs the way the two project categories aid and sustain are conducted at every level.

STREAMS	PROGRAM NAMES	DESCRIPTION
<b>AID</b>	<b>Delivering essential food: Mealie-Meal (MM) Program</b>	Provides monthly emergency food relief to people in need
	<b>Daily Emergency Medical Fund</b>	Assists unwell people living in poverty with transport, medication expenses and consultation/admission fees at the Hospital. PDI also supports an outreach Home-Based Care Program under this fund.
	<b>Maternal Child Health Fund</b>	Provides financial support for infants who have lost their mothers to HIV/AIDS. This fund also helps mothers who cannot breastfeed and are unable to afford formula.
	<b>Soup Kitchen</b>	Preparing daily meals for vulnerable elderly people and those living in poverty. The Matsetsa soup kitchen also has a vegetable garden tended to by volunteers. It's grown to become a community centre of entrepreneurial grandmothers.
	<b>Housing Project</b>	Building permanent, secure houses for vulnerable elderly people, women and children orphaned by AIDS
<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<b>Income Generating Projects</b>	Encourages and supports MM Program recipients to begin an income generating project. This empowers these clients to become self-sufficient so they can eventually end their reliance on receiving essential food supplies
	<b>Handicraft Project</b>	A successful outcome from the Soup Kitchen is this project which encourages the vulnerable elderly clients to generate savings from selling handcrafted projects
	<b>Sitsatsaweni Farming Project</b>	PDI acquired land in Sitsatsaweni to grow maize and other crops. This produce is harvested and used in the Essential Food program and the Soup Kitchen to support the sustainability of these Aid projects.
	<b>Education - Scholarship Fund</b>	Funds school fees, books, bus fares and school uniforms for both boys and girls. These young people would otherwise be out of school.
<b>DIGNITY</b>	<b>Dignity Project - Home Assistance</b>	Provides comfort and care to people living with AIDS, terminal illness, disability or frail, elderly people
	<b>Sanitation Project</b>	Employing local people to build pit latrines (toilets) and provide sanitation education to reduce the burden of disease





# REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD ON OUR PROGRAMS



## 1. MEALIE- MEAL PROGRAM

The Mealie Meal (MM) Program continues to provide monthly emergency food relief to people in need in the Lumbombo region. This initiative remains one of PDI's major emergency aid programs since the charity's establishment eleven years ago in 2009.

Operations proceeded as normal until March 2020 which saw the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, the government of Eswatini implemented a partial lockdown, restricting travel in the country and instructing residents to stay indoors and/or within their premises. Initially, the MM Program was halted until it was declared organisations involved in food distribution were permitted to resume operations.

Many companies were forced to close and jobs were lost (some permanently). Families often needed greater support as relatives returned home, no longer able to provide for their families. The pandemic has added further demand for the MM packs this year, acting as a lifeline for many families.

The number of families receiving MM packs continues to fluctuate depending on the number of referrals. Beneficiaries or 'clients' of the program are predominantly grandmothers (Gogos) caring for children. Many of these children have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS.

On average, 28 families, counting the emergency cases, receive MM packs from PDI each month.

NUMBER OF FAMILIES:	32
NUMBER OF ADULTS:	81
NUMBER OF CHILDREN:	96
<b>TOTAL BENEFICIARIES:</b>	<b>177</b>

### ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Despite challenges in fundraising during the pandemic, sufficient funds were raised to allow us to continue to distribute MM packs this year.
- Similar to past years, these packs were supplemented with maize from the *Sitsatsaweni Farming Project*.

### CHALLENGES:

- The pandemic has impacted a large population of the working class. This leads to an increased need for our services. While this demand was challenging to meet with our limited resources, we were able to continue to provide these food packs.
- The Lubombo and Shiselweni regions were invaded by Army Worms, leaving subsistence farmers with very poor to no harvest at all. The chemicals required to treat these worms were expensive. Unfortunately, many could not afford to purchase them.

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- The retrenchments and lockdowns lead to a record rate of individuals engaging in backyard gardening. We are considering sourcing seedlings and actively encouraging families to continue to establish small home gardens. Unfortunately, this activity could be difficult to implement in most areas in the region due to a lack of rainfall. However, those with sufficient rain could become involved.



# REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD ON OUR PROGRAMS



## 2. DAILY EMERGENCY FUND

The Daily Emergency Fund assists unwell people living in poverty with transport, medication and consultation/admission fees at the Good Shepherd Hospital (GSH). This allows referred clients to access responsive and affordable healthcare when needed. PDI also funds a Home-Based Care Program where GSH healthcare workers provide outreach medical care to clients in their homes. This reflects PDI's holistic approach to clients as we aim to recognise an individual's financial and geographical barriers to healthcare. This year saw the numbers of beneficiaries increase slightly.

NUMBER OF ADULTS: 81  
NUMBER OF CHILDREN: 19  
**TOTAL BENEFICIARIES: 100**

### CHALLENGES:

- Funding lengthy hospital admissions proved to be expensive at times. In such circumstances, PDI engaged with the hospital to discuss splitting the bill (with the hospital) or paying the fee in instalments. Otherwise, there were no major challenges.



## 3. MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH FUND

The Maternal Child Health (MCH) Fund financially supports infants who have lost their mothers to HIV/AIDS. It also supports mothers who cannot breastfeed and are unable to afford formula. In this program, providing baby formula means a child receives continued support for six months. The MCH Fund covers costs of hospital admission (or covers the gap when families cannot pay the entire bill) and formula.

Before the pandemic, the PDI team would refer clients who came with requests under MCH to CARITAS. CARITAS is a Catholic Church relief organization that would provide them with baby formula. Unfortunately, CARITAS ceased providing formula following the onset of the pandemic.

In this reporting year, PDI helped fewer children than in the previous year, although due to COVID-19, there has been an increase in one-off requests for baby formula due to working parents being restricted from their work and therefore their income.

**TOTAL BENEFICIARIES: 2**  
(OTHER FAMILIES WERE REFERRED TO CARITAS)

### CHALLENGES:

- Some hospital bills are expensive.



# REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD ON OUR PROGRAMS



## 4. DIGNITY PROJECT

The Dignity Project was established to provide comfort and care to people living with AIDS, terminal illness, disability and/or elderly people. The PDI team assists with personal hygiene (a focus for elderly people who live on their own), washing clothes, house cleaning, and water deliveries for washing and cooking. For example, we delivered 1000L of water to a client to meet his hygiene and cooking needs.

This year, there were three clients enrolled in this program.

**TOTAL BENEFICIARIES: 3**

### CHALLENGES:

- Water scarcity
- Most families do not have beds or mattresses and instead, sleep on a thin mat.

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- We hope there will be improvements in funding after the COVID-19 pandemic settles. A fundraising drive to purchase sponge mattresses remains a goal.



## 5. HOUSING/ EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

The Housing Program was established to empower families by providing essential, practical, and safe housing. This program remains one of PDI's anchor activities.

In this past year, PDI assisted with the completion of a one room house for a family who had run out of funds. We helped with the provision of roofing materials, windows, floor, and doors. Through the Sanitation Project, we were able to build a toilet for this family. In another household, gaping holes were patched, windowpanes were replaced, and a proper door was installed.

The requests for housing assistance remain very high. However, limited funding meant these needs were difficult to meet this year. Consequently, there were no complete structures built in the past reporting period (FY2020). At the end of FY2020, we initiated a Housing appeal to help two very vulnerable families: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/homesappeal>. The number of houses built by PDI at end of FY2020 remains at 31.

**NUMBER OF HOUSE REPAIRS/ SUPPORTED BUILDING HOUSES: 2**

**NUMBER OF HOUSES BUILT IN FY2020: 0 (IN THIS REPORTING PERIOD)**

**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:

- There is still a large number of families needing assistance with adequate shelter. The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of this need. In some cases, social distancing requirements cannot be followed as large families have to cohabit in small spaces.





## 5.1 SANITATION PROJECT

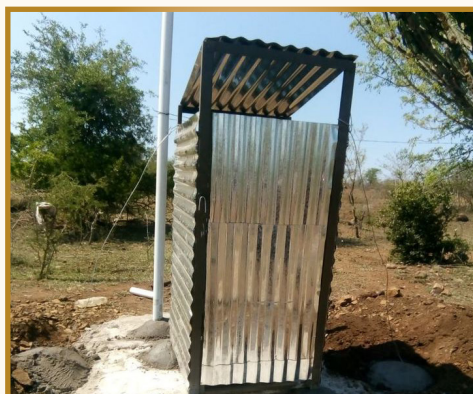
The Sanitation Project was established in the previous reporting period and continued this year with improvements in funding. It aims to address the lack of basic sanitation in Lubombo by building pit latrines (toilets). Poor sanitation is an issue nation-wide; however, it is particularly an issue in Lubombo and the needs were highlighted through the health pandemic's reliance on strong hygiene practices.

Increased funding enabled a grant for the provision of 14 pit latrines. This grant also funded hygiene education within the community and the connection of clean water to families who could not otherwise afford it.

This year, the project experienced two months of inactivity following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns. When lockdowns were relaxed, building materials were no longer as readily available as the stock had been depleted over the lockdown. As the borders were closed, these materials could not be imported into the country, further interfering with the progress of this project.

Nearing the end of this reporting period, the hygiene education workshops had been conducted in two benefiting communities. Furthermore, the digging of pits for the toilets had begun. Only one toilet had been completed by the end of June.

<b>NUMBER OF TOILETS BUILT IN FY2020:</b> (IN THE REPORTING PERIOD)	<b>1</b>
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF TOILETS BUILT SINCE PDI'S INCEPTION:</b>	<b>7</b>





# REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD ON OUR PROGRAMS



## 6. INCOME GENERATING PROJECTS

Income Generation Projects (IGPs) were initiated to empower MM recipients to generate an income, become self-sufficient, and then be discharged from the MM Program. This would free resources and enable other families to access the program. Families/individuals are encouraged to propose an IGP that harnesses their skills while meeting a need in their community. The PDI team considers the viability and assesses potential issues of the proposed IGP. Barriers to starting an IGP include poor management of finances, remote location and/or a lack of product demand.

There are currently eight successful IGPs. Three of these were started during this reporting period.

An IGP that was initiated in the past year is the Sewing Project (also known as the Amandla Project: <https://au.gofundme.com/f/crhgan-the-amandla-project>).

It was discovered many women in the area of Magwanyana were engaging in transactional sex to ward off poverty. The Amandla Sewing Project trained these women with sewing skills, allowing them to make school uniforms and face masks which could be sold for income.

### NUMBER OF IGPS

(INCOME GENERATING PROJECTS): **3**



### TYPE OF IGPS

#### (INCOME GENERATING PROJECTS):

- Sewing Uniforms, Face Masks & 'Aprons'
- Raising Chickens
- Raising Pigs

### ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The Sewing Project was affected by the closure of schools in response to the pandemic. Fortunately, the ladies had already made some sales of uniforms before this occurred. When the lockdown was relaxed, the ladies pivoted to making face masks and Tidziya (similar to an 'apron' - a piece of cloth worn over your main clothes when performing housework), allowing them to sustain some form of income.
- Both chicken and pig raising projects are ongoing and successful. The team assists the ladies with the transportation of animal feeds when required.

### CHALLENGES:

- The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has seen some IGPs not being able to operate.
- There is an ongoing IGP involving a Gogo (Grandmother) raising goats. Unfortunately, she lost some of her goats to wild animals and disease. She still has a good amount of goats left.

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- Vary the IGPs and establish Mobile Money IGPs for those who are in areas which have no Mobile Money. Mobile Money (the ability to store, send and receive money electronically linked to a mobile number) is always in demand.
- We are looking into increasing the capital for our clients, allowing a substantial IGP to gain more profit.





# REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD ON OUR PROGRAMS



## 7. SOUP KITCHEN

The Soup Kitchen was established in 2017 following a successful crowdfunding initiative in 2016: <https://au.gofundme.com/f/2d3qs33s>.

It continues to provide food to vulnerable elderly people in the Matsetsa area, while also serving as a social space/ community centre. Clients contribute to the program, growing vegetables at the kitchen and gathering firewood for cooking.

### 7.1 HANDICRAFT PROJECT

Within the Soup Kitchen, The Handicraft Project was started to encourage the bogogo (grandmothers) and bomkhulu (grandfathers) to create handcrafted projects which can be sold to generate income. These projects also keep them occupied while they wait for food at the kitchen. The number of participants in this program fluctuates. For example, during the ploughing season, we see a slight dip in numbers.

**NUMBER OF GOGOS (GRANDMOTHERS): 24 - 35**



#### ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Vegetable Garden at the Soup Kitchen
- The resourceful collection of firewood by the bomkhulu (grandfathers) cuts costs from our budget
- Handicrafts Projects (Grass sleeping mats, traditional necklaces and skirts, bags, egg-laying nests for Chickens (Tilulu), fence making)
- A bank account has been opened by bogogo (grandmothers)

#### CHALLENGES:

- There are insufficient savings to enable bogogo to take bigger orders for the fence-making project. This is as they need to deliver and get paid for each project before being able to take the next order. This limits their productivity.
- Some elderly clients are no longer able to go to the Soup Kitchen, sending their grandchildren to retrieve food for them. Consequently, they are not able to socialise with their peers in that space.

#### OPPORTUNITIES:

- We could raise funds for the bulk purchase of fence-making materials, allowing bogogo to take bigger orders and increase their productivity. This project has the potential to succeed.



## 8. SITSATSAWENI FARM

PDI has acquired land in Sitsatsaweni to grow maize and other crops which can be used for the MM Program and the Soup Kitchen. This farming project aims to increase self-efficacy within the community. This farm began from a crowdfunding initiative in 2017:

<https://au.gofundme.com/f/pdi-sitsatsaweni-appeal>

The past season started well, however, there was decreased rainfall as time progressed. While there were more fields cultivated, the cobs themselves were smaller in size, decreasing this year's total harvest.

NUMBER OF ADULTS: 81  
NUMBER OF CHILDREN: 19  
**TOTAL BENEFICIARIES: 100**

### ACHIEVEMENTS:

- In this reporting period, we gained 17 x 50 kg bags of maize. This is a decrease from last year's harvest which sat at 30 x 50 kg bags of maize.
- The farm has been successfully fenced off to prevent live stock from eating the crops.

### CHALLENGES

- The early disappearance of rain left us with less than expected harvest. In response, more fields were cultivated.

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- We could choose a different type of seed/crop that can better withstand shortages of rainfall.







## 9. SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In 2019, a scholarship fund was established with support from former United States Peace Corps Volunteers who had worked in Eswatini several years ago. This fund aimed to support girls, particularly orphans, who are vulnerable to intergenerational, transactional sexual relationships to finance their basic needs. In most cases, these relationships have led to girls becoming pregnant, dropping out of school, and/ or acquiring HIV.

Several surveys found that girls who engaged in transactional sex often came from impoverished families who cannot afford their school fees. With the support of the RPCVs, PDI can buy books, school uniforms, bus fares and pay the school fees for these children.

While the scholarship fund was established to mainly support girls, this year, it was agreed that 15% of the awardees could be boys.

### ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Since its inception in 2019, the project has enabled a total of twenty-two (22) students who would otherwise be out of school, to attend school. In 2020 itself, 15 new students were supported through this fund.
- Of these 22 children, PDI's individual donors have assisted two students with the payment of their school fees and bus fares. These students would have otherwise been out of school.
- The inclusion of deserving boys in the Scholarship Project was accepted by our funders this year. This was a great achievement.

### CHALLENGES

- The numbers of children in need of educational support are greater than what we can cater for. Unfortunately, we have had to turn down many student applications.

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- We hope to find methods to raise more funds for this program in the future.



# REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD ON OUR PROGRAMS



## 10. ADMINISTRATION & TEAM MAKING IT ALL HAPPEN

This year began with great enthusiasm. The Field Team was excited and equipped to reach out to vulnerable communities and serve people in need.

Unfortunately, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted these plans as field programs were curtailed due to travel restrictions. In response, the team wrote official letters to the Government and we received a travel exemption to distribute food supplies.

This pandemic has increased the number of people needing our assistance with food and essential support. It is expected that these circumstances will take time to normalise, especially as there is no certainty for how long this pandemic will last.

The PDI Field Team office/workspace and two of our project sites were equipped to protect them during their work servicing our clients, by procuring face masks and hand sanitiser. This gave the Field Team the confidence to continue their work in the community.

The Field Team continues to have 5 key members: two on a part-time basis and three members working full time. They remain grateful to our very active Board and International Team who continues to find innovative ways to raise funds and ensure the fieldwork continues. The Field Team were also able to remain employed which was a big morale boost. This was certainly a challenge during the tough economic times of the pandemic.

In July 2019, Dr Maithri (our founder) paid his annual visit to PDI Eswatini, accompanied by four Australian medical students who were there to learn about global health from visiting the local rural communities. The students were able to provide medical support to our clients and relayed back to the Field Team any clients that needed further assistance. The students also provided financial support to purchase building materials and food for families. The support of the students is very valuable to the Team and their work in the field.

### ACHIEVEMENTS:

- With the support of the PDI Board, the team was able to implement almost all of the planned activities/projects, despite facing financial constraints.
- The increase in funds for the Sanitation Project saw more families benefiting from this initiative. This is a positive step towards creating a more hygienic and safe community.
- Helping mkhulu (grandfather) Timothy Gamedze to finish his house was very rewarding. This project brought pride to the family as they admire and feel empowered by their beautiful new house

### CHALLENGES

- The COVID-19 pandemic was a major challenge this year, impacting many of our projects;
- There was a shortage of building materials for the toilets due to lack of imports from neighbouring countries. This was a considerable challenge, and the situation is yet to normalize.
- Commodity prices rose by an average of 20% due to the pandemic. It is doubtful that these numbers will return to normal, making the situation for the underprivileged even tougher.
- Due to funding constraints, no complete houses were built during this reporting period.

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- We want to continue to look into more avenues for funding.



# CONCLUSION



Possible Dreams International continues to be a lifeline for many people in the rural areas of Eswatini. As we expand our programs, they can reach and benefit more people in the community. The PDI Team and truck are a symbol of hope for many and clients are full of gratitude and praise. This reflects the hard work by our International Team and volunteers who tirelessly continue to bolster support and raise funds to ensure the survival of PDI and its great work. The COVID-19 pandemic's effects will be long-term on underprivileged communities and the global economy at large, so we continue to be thankful every day for how our community supports our clients to make their dreams of living dignified lives defying abject poverty possible.

*All photos have been used with consent from the individual or parent.*

# SIYABONGA (THANK YOU)!



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