

HAND IN HAND ZIMBABWE NEWSLETTER

JAN - JULY



HAND IN HAND
ZIMBABWE

2019



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8000 women, youth get entrepreneurship training

Hand in Hand Zimbabwe, a local non-profit organisation, is this year targeting to empower 80 percent of disadvantaged women and young girls in seven national districts it is operating in through its poverty alleviation interventions. HIH is using its five key projects, implemented in Bulilima, Nkayi, Gwanda, Chikomba, Shurugwi, Churumanzu and Lupane, to bring about economic transformation to various women living in these marginalised areas.

Since 2015, the organisation has supported over 8000 women and youth through entrepreneurship training and access to credits for resource limited and marginalised people living in the above mentioned districts. Research has shown that women are key drivers of economic growth and that wealth in the hands of women leads to much more equitable outcomes in terms of the quality of life of families and communities. Hand in Hand Zimbabwe Director of Pro-

grams Emmanuel Makiwa said the organisation decided to target 80 percent women after realising that the shrinking economic activities in the country have caused a perceivable reduction in household incomes and left 80 percent of the population, mostly located in rural areas, living below the World Bank international poverty line of US\$1.90 per day (established 2015) and women and youth are among the most affected groups.

“These highly vulnerable groups are the most prone to suffer economic, social and environmental shocks. At the same time, they represent fundamental pillars of the Zimbabweans’ communities. Women are predominantly the breadwinners in the rural areas and are the primary keeper of the household,” he said in an interview.

“Despite their key role, they often dispose only of a fraction of the generated income and own a nominal percentage of assets in terms of land, farming and credit. In addition, rural women have limited space in

decision-making and economic development in both the family and community," Makiwa added.

He further indicated that youths are also largely excluded from the economic development.

With diminishing opportunities for formal employment and secure incomes, most young people are highly dependent on their families and are forced to subsist on informal economic activities.

"Those who should be driving the regeneration of the Zimbabwean economy are instead the ones most threatened by decreasing opportunities in terms of employment and investments," Makiwa said.

He noted that the organisation will continue to support women and youth entrepreneurs in rural areas through entrepreneurial technical skills training, marketing and business managerial skills such as savings and elementary financial management.

HIH will also strive to provide a fund to support some of the emerging businesses in the marginalised areas.

Makiwa said inadequate entrepreneurial and technical skills, as well as financial support and market linkage have been a major hindrance for women and youth entrepreneurs in the rural areas

"The absence and inaccessibility to microfinance schemes is another element that has adversely hindered development opportunities for rural entrepreneurs. Insufficient funds to create or enhance economic activities are often the reason at the basis of the inability to escape the poverty trap," he said.

Most rural folks are facing high economic vulnerability, social exclusion and, in many cases, food insecurity.

Jennifer Kabete a beneficiary from rural Shurugwi, who now owns a viable business in the district, said HIH is really working tirelessly to empower women in rural Zimbabwe.

"Most women in this district have been empowered by Hand in Hand Zimbabwe and I pray that they continue to reach out to more," she said.

The conditions of these rural vulnerable groups are further worsened by the degrading conditions of the local environment.

Frequent droughts have become a common feature of the region, with severe droughts occurring every 3-5 years.

These social, economic and environmental conditions are particularly harsh in both Matabeleland North and South regions.

The two provinces are some of the least developed in terms of infrastructure, hence employment opportunities are limited.

Several other philanthropists, government and nonprofit organisations have, however, slipped in to help the rural folk. Recently Econet founder Strive Masiyiwa and his wife Tsitsi announced a US\$100 million revolving fund for the support of rural businesses in Zimbabwe.

Hand in Hand Zimbabwe is a non-Profit organization that helps resource limited and marginalized people in rural communities, particularly women, to create better livelihoods for themselves and their families through its flagship series, the Jobs Creation Programme (JCP). JCP encompasses a self-help approach that is premised on a four pillar model involving Social mobilization into self-help groups (SHGs), Training in entrepreneurship and economic development, Facilitating access to microloans and Facilitating market linkages and value addition.

Apart from the Jobs Creation Programme, the organisation has over the past three years incepted the Motivated and Entrepreneurial Youth (MEY) Project, Community Upliftment Project (CUP), Green Enterprises Project (GEP) and Jobs for Zimbabwe.

The organisation is presently supporting communities in seven districts namely Bulilima, Chikomba, Chirumanzu, Gwanda, Lupane, Nkayi and Shurugwi.

Hand in Hand Future Trust Zimbabwe is part of the HIH Network. The Network is a group of Hand in Hand organizations that have a global shared vision to alleviate poverty through job creation.

HIH Zimbabwe also commits itself to implementing sustainable interventions that contribute to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) such as No poverty, Zero Hunger, Good health and well being, Gender Equity, Climate Action, Life on land and Partnerships for the goals.



HiH hosts inaugural schools competitions

HiH hosts inaugural schools competitions. Hand in Hand Zimbabwe on Friday held its inaugural schools' competition, which ran concurrently in Chirumanzu and Shurugwi, as part of the organisation's desire to equip students with knowledge and skills in motivation, health and entrepreneurship under its Motivated and Entrepreneurial Youth Project (MEY).

The competition, which ran under the theme "Building a motivated, healthy and entrepreneurial youth begins now", attracted 15 schools in each district.

In Chirumanzu, Leopold Takawarira Secondary School took the first prize, followed by Hillview Secondary School and Siyahokwe Secondary school which came second and third, respectively, in the quiz competitions. In the poetry competitions, Mukomberamwa Secondary School took the first prize, while Leopold Tawawira High school took the

second and Driefontein High School the third. In Shurugwi, Chironde Secondary school took the first prize, while Kushinga Secondary and Zviumwa Secondary took the second and third prize respectively in the quiz competitions. In the poetry competitions in the district, Kushinga Secondary took the first prize, Gato Secondary the second and Bokai the third prize.

On top of the trophies, winning teams walked away with stationery and prize money, which will go towards starting enterprises or scaling up of existing ones.

Other schools that did not make it to the podium also received consolation prizes which included stationery and Hand in Hand Zimbabwe Star for life t-shirts.

Various stakeholders from Government Ministries, National Aids Council, Midlands Aids Service Organisation (MASO) and educationists were in attendance at the

schools competitions.

Hand in Hand Zimbabwe MEY Project Coordinator Rejoyce Moyo said the schools competition is part of the Motivated Entrepreneurial Youth (MEY) learning project, where Hand in Hand works with schools and train students in entrepreneurship and health as a way of equipping them for the future.

"The competition component is a new initiative that came about through interactions we have had with school patrons who believe that for the students to remain motivated and interested in MEY activities, we should bring in an element of competition and rewards," she said in an interview.

"After careful considerations we couldn't think of a better way of testing the knowledge that we would have imparted into students, with regards to entrepreneurship, than a schools competition. Through the MEY Project students are trained in health, motivation and entrepreneurship, so there is a need that we test the knowledge that they have gained through training sessions. This knowledge will be tested through quiz, poetry and drama competitions," she said.

Chirumanzu Acting District Schools Inspector Bornface Chimbiya said the schools competition is a good initiative as it supports the National Schools' curriculum.

He commended Hand in Hand Zimbabwe for the work it is doing in Chirumanzu and Shurugwi through the MEY project

"The work Hand in Hand Zimbabwe is doing is the first of its kind in our district, where schools are so involved, teachers and learners are given so much prominence, we haven't had this kind of exposure for a long time in our districts and this thrust of the new curriculum is being immensely supported.

"Hand in Hand Zimbabwe is doing a wonderful peace of work which I would urge other organisations to emulate because the practical skills that our learners are acquiring will go a long way in enhancing what we are doing in the new curriculum," he said.

Chimbiya added that the hands on approach being advocated by the programme equips students with practical skills they can apply to their daily lives, at school and in the community.

"That kind of impact is what the new curriculum is focusing on," he said.

Chimbiya also said learners should be consistently exposed to the competition as it keeps them motivated to continue learning.

"Some of the students come from schools that are in remote areas and this opportunity to meet with colleagues a very important experience, the sharing of ideas and the moulding of friendships. I feel it should be done on a more regular basis," he said.

Midlands Aids Service Organisation (MASO) Programmes manager Jabulani Mapingire said their partnership with Hand in Hand Zimbabwe on running the programme has been very fruitful.

"The project has greatly impacted lives of students as accurate information pertaining health, entrepreneurship and motivation is being disseminated.

"This has positioned these youngsters at the right place, as they are getting information at an early age before they even experiment, to a point that even when they want to experiment, they do with full knowledge of the consequences," he said.

Deovelance Mpofo, a 16-year-old form four student at Driefontein, said she and 20 other Star-for-life club members under the MEY Project have managed to open a tuckshop at their school where they sell fresh chips and make profits of up to \$2 000.

The Hand in Hand Project MEY project contributes to sustainable development in Zimbabwe through improving health awareness, motivating the youth to believe in themselves and providing entrepreneurial skills among students (13-18 yrs) and young adults (18-35 years) who are out of school.

The three-year project commenced in April 2017 and will end in March 2019. The project is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals 1, 3 and 17 and with UNAIDS 90-90-90 goal of eradicating HIV.

The MEY project contributes to sustainable development in Zimbabwe through Improving health awareness and entrepreneurial motivation among adolescents who attend school (15-18 years). This is achieved by offering customized training to strengthen the school children self-confidence, motivation and hope for the future.

The training is based on health and motivational programs, combined with an inspiring introduction to the training in entrepreneurship. The project also aims at strengthening health awareness, self-esteem and motivation of the unemployed and disadvantaged young people (18-35 years) who are not in school. The project component

targets the unemployed youth who dropped out of school, or find themselves in vulnerable situations.

These are mobilized into social and economic "Star Clubs" where they get a tailor-made training based on health and motivational programs and complete entrepreneurship training. The expected project outcomes are 1) An increase of young men and women's (15-35 years) motivation and capacity to maintain good health and livelihoods and 2) An increase in strengthening health awareness, motivation and economic activity of young people who are not in school (unemployed and disadvantaged young people, 18-35 years).

This project is implemented in Shurugwi and Chirumanzu districts collaboratively with all the relevant Government of Zimbabwe Line Ministries, Arms and Departments. Three (3) strategic partners, Hand in Hand Zimbabwe, an enterprise development oriented organization, Midlands Aids Services Organisation (MASO) who have extensive experience in health awareness and Star for Life (South Africa) who are experts in motivation coordinate the project.

Hand in Hand Zimbabwe is a non-Profit organization that helps resource limited and

marginalized people in rural communities, particularly women, to create better livelihoods for themselves and their families through its flagship series, the Jobs Creation Programme (JCP).

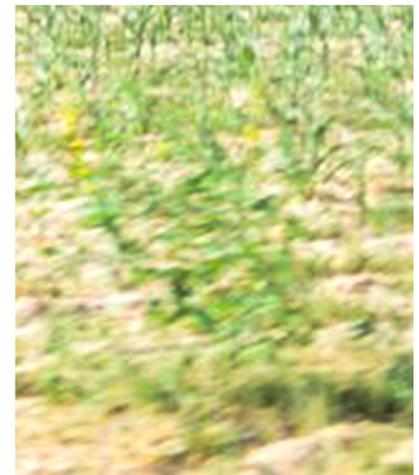
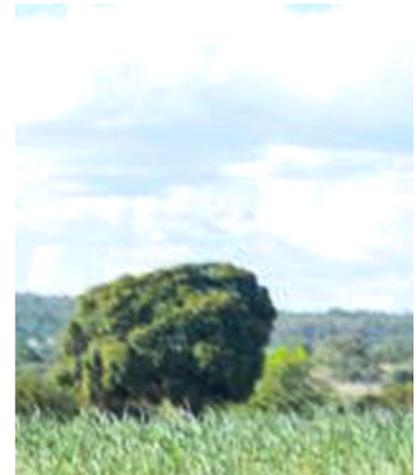
JCP encompasses a self-help approach that is premised on a four pillar model involving social mobilization into self-help groups (SHGs), training in entrepreneurship and economic development, facilitating access to microloans and facilitating market linkages and value addition.

Apart from the Jobs Creation Programme, the organisation has over the past three years inceptioned the Motivated and Entrepreneurial Youth (MEY) Project, Community Upliftment Project (CUP), Green Enterprises Project (GEP) and Jobs for Zimbabwe.

The organisation was registered as a non-profit trust in Zimbabwe in July 2015 and is presently supporting communities in seven districts namely Bulilima, Chikomba, Chirumanzu, Gwanda, Lupane, Nkayi and Shurugwi.

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Hand In Hand refreshes drought-prone Shurugwi

Meandering through the different wards in Shurugwi district, 32 km (21 miles) to the South of Gweru, one cannot help but notice the drying crops, which have borne the brunt of hot weather patterns being experienced in some parts of the country.

Shurugwi, which is in natural region four, is characterised by poor rains and is perennially prone to droughts resulting in most people in the area being hinged to the poverty trap as their livelihoods are not sustainable.

The situation is however, about to change, with gratitude to a local organisation Hand in Hand Zimbabwe, which has trained and equipped approximately 11 percent of the people in the district with entrepreneurial skills that will potentially shift their focus from surviving on agriculture.

This intervention has come through in a bid to improve the lives of vulnerable people in the district and has transformed people into

successful entrepreneurs.

Through its Jobs Creation Programme, Hand in Hand Zimbabwe has taught people in the rural community, modern ways of saving money and starting successful enterprises.

In an interview Shurugwi Agritex Supervisor David Barnabas, said although the region is clearly heading for a major drought due to the wilting of crops, most villagers will be sustained by business skills they have received from the organisation.

“The situation is bad, there is going to be a serious drought here, I foresee a drought as crops have dried up.

However, I commend Hand in Hand Zimbabwe for the work that they are doing as villagers here can now generate their own income and do not solely depend on agricultural produce,” he said.

Barnabas applauded Hand in Hand for the business trainings and mentoring the organisation conducted, adding that these will eliminate donor syndrome and will enable

villagers to be self-dependent.

Ward 24 Shurugwi Councillor Norman Sibindi encouraged more villagers to join Hand in Hand programmes, which empower people to be self-sufficient and self-reliant, especially during drought periods.

"We want to see people who are doing well and have something to live for as things are now hard in the nation.

"We want to see women and youths in this village who do not depend on men," he said.

The Hand in Hand, Jobs Creation Program targets at least 80% women in support of Millennium Development Goal 3, which aims at promote gender equality and empower women.

Shurugwi Ministry of Youth Entrepreneurship and skills trainings Supervisor Elijah Mutero said Hand in Hand has contributed 20 percent of youth employment since 2015 and improved livelihoods of many.

"Nutritional value in the district has improved due to the work Hand in Hand is doing. The organisation is sustaining life through various projects and we hope that in a few years' time our district would be free from poverty.

"At the moment we are witnessing a significant reduction in delinquencies as most young people are kept busy and are eking out a decent living."

Mutero added that the projects have helped in shifting the attention of youths from taking drugs, gambling and other toxic behaviour.

Hand in Hand in Zimbabwe Director of Programs Emmanuel Makiwa said the organisation will continue training and supporting poor and marginalised people in rural Zimbabwe to create better livelihoods.

Graceful Shumba a villager who benefited from Hand in Hand said the organisation has indeed empowered many entrepreneurs in Shurugwi through trainings.

"In 2013 I was known as the feeble-looking tailor who sat behind a shop at Chachacha doing her daily sewing routine. However, six years later I'm now a proud owner of a vibrant shop – the one I used to sit behind.

"Like many women here in Shurugwi, I worked hard to make ends meet in the drought and hunger prone district, but without the right knowledge and skills, it was an uphill task.

"As fate would have it, my life dramatically changed when I met Hand in Hand Zimbabwe in 2015 the organisation and received

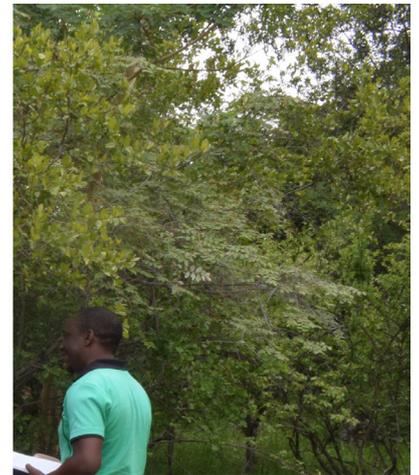
business development and financial literacy training," she said.

Hand in Hand Zimbabwe is a non-Profit organization that helps resource limited and marginalized people in rural communities, particularly women, to create better livelihoods for themselves and their families through its flagship series, the Jobs Creation Programme (JCP) which aims at alleviating poverty through jobs creation.

JCP also encompasses a self-help approach that is premised on a four pillar development model involving social mobilization into self-help groups (SHGs), training in entrepreneurship and economic development, facilitating access to microloans and facilitating market linkages and value addition.

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Reprieve for Gwanda community

A LOCAL non-governmental organisation, Hand in Hand Zimbabwe has launched a Green Enterprise Programme in Gwanda which is set to benefit more than 200 individuals with economically and environmentally viable climate smart enterprises aimed at fighting poverty.

Through the programme a total of 300 people living in poverty and vulnerable situations in Gwanda District will benefit through nutrition gardens that use green energy for provision of water and bee keeping interventions.

The individuals will also receive entrepreneurship and technical skills trainings. Five horticultural gardens will be established and supported by the organisation through the drilling and installation of five community-based boreholes equipped with solar driven water pumps while the bee keeping

entrepreneurs will get support through bee hives and sheds.

In an interview Hand in Hand chief executive officer, Mr Felix Tete said the project is meant to benefit 240 women and 60 men with skills and support that will diversify their livelihood options.

He said the project's overall objective was to contribute to improved sustainable economic activities and strengthen resilience to climate change for women and youth in the district. "The targeted groups for this programme are extremely resource limited female headed households facing low incomes and food insecurity as well as challenges in looking after their children and other dependants within the households.

We are also targeting child headed families and vulnerable individuals belonging to highly

disadvantaged groups such as orphans, youth and people affected by HIV and Aids," he said.

Hand in Hand Zimbabwe Gwanda area manager Ms Unami Dube said since the inception of the programme, the response from the district has been overwhelming. She said the organisation is still selecting more target groups in the district.

"The identification of target groups will be further supported by the collaboration and consultation with the traditional and other community leaders. This will help to add legitimacy to the project activities and avoiding potential risks of conflicts within the communities," she said.

Hand in Hand Zimbabwe is a non-profit organisation whose main aim is to help poor and marginalised people create better livelihoods for themselves and their families

in rural Zimbabwe. This is done through a help to self-help approach, mainly aimed at women and youth. Through its interventions, the organisation has made great strides in the fight against poverty in Lupane, Nkayi, Bulilima, Gwanda, Shurugwi, Chikomba and Chirumhanzu.



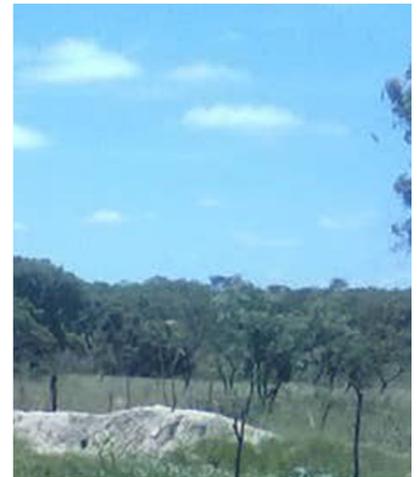
An emerging young entrepreneur: Tinashe Mugandani

Tinashe Mugandani is a 17-year-old young man who belongs to Kubatana Star Club in Chirumanzu, where he is one of the founding members. The club has eight members to date and has potential to grow. Tinashe had a difficult upbringing as he was reared by his mother following the death of his father at an early age. The Mugandani family did not have it easy, as they struggled to get a decent meal and other basic necessities. Tinashe's mother worked tirelessly to enable him to complete his secondary education at Chengwena Secondary School in 2017.

In an effort to assist his mother look after the family, he got himself employment at a local shop where he would sell commodities such as soap and cooking oil in the community. In 2017 Tinashe got introduced to Hand in Hand Zimbabwe by the Enterprise Development Facilitator (EDF). He became one of the earliest members of Kubatana Star Club. By then, the club members were only saving \$2 per month and not every member could borrow from the savings since these were

little. When he got trainings up to module 5 and having gained business experience from retailing, Tinashe asked his mother to lend him \$30 as business capital in November 2017. He used the money to order 20 packets of jiggies and realised a profit of \$10 within a week. By the end of 2017, which was just a two-month period, Tinashe had a net profit of \$360. Off the profit, he gave himself a dividend of \$140 that he used to help his family and the balance as capital for 2018. In 2018 February he managed to get a loan of \$100 to scale up his business.

By mid-September 2018, Chengwena Secondary School offered him a contract to run a tuckshop after observing his business acumen and organisation. Since then, Tinashe is running his new enterprise effectively. He has exhibited business shrewdness from the trainings that he received from Hand in Hand Zimbabwe. Tinashe has a fully stocked tuckshop (community grocery kiosk) and has diversified his businesses to include broilers



Joannes's journey as a horticulture entrepreneur

Joannes Gwatipedza is an outstanding entrepreneur of Hama Maoko Star Club from Hillview Village One (1), who recently embarked on a lifelong journey of attaining his dreams.

The 34-year-old visionary and energetic man has a big vision of becoming a leading horticultural entrepreneur supplying big urban markets in Mvuma, Gweru and Harare.

Before he was introduced to Hand in Hand Zimbabwe, Joannes was already operating a horticultural garden only as a way of earning a decent living, but had given up his dream of becoming a successful businessman.

"My world was collapsing around me. I had no motivation, no business acumen and skills, no capital to boost my business. This really affected the quality of my crops because I didn't have enough knowledge in investing and running a successful enterprise," he said.

Faced with a challenge of fending for his small

family comprising his wife, daughter and aged mother, Joannes had thought of giving up on the business to pursue other options.

"I was at my wits end and did not know what else to do. I want to applaud Hand in Hand for coming to my rescue," he said.

Joannes' vision was resuscitated after attending a Motivated Entrepreneurial Youth Star Club graduation ceremony in his community project conducted by Hand in Hand Zimbabwe and MASO. He also had the privilege of visiting a successful MEY support Star Club enterprises for Kupfuma Ishungu, Budiro and New Canaan.

He got the motivation to mobilize other young people into a Star Club and be like other youths that he saw graduating and had enterprises that were doing well with assistance from MEY.

"If I look back I have no regrets that I took this important decision of my life to be part of the

MEY project. I thank God for this wonderful opportunity he afforded me," he said with a contagious smile on his face.

The motivational, health business development trainings that he, and his group, received from the project gave him a new hope, motivation, requisite business knowledge and skills that have made him believe in his dream again.

The young man now produces quality sweet cabbages and leafy and fruit vegetables, which he sales locally within his community, other surrounding villages and even Lalapanzi mining community.

He sells an average of 70 bundles per month with each bundle costing \$2. As way of further boosting his business which had water challenges, Joannes used part of his proceeds from the enterprise to dig a well to ensure constant water supplies for his thriving enterprise.

Joannes asserts that each training session he attends is a building block to the growth and expansion of his horticulture business.

"All my life I never knew how to develop a business plan and make budgets for my business. But now I can safely say I am equipped to take my business to another level, thanks to the trainings I received from the MEY project.

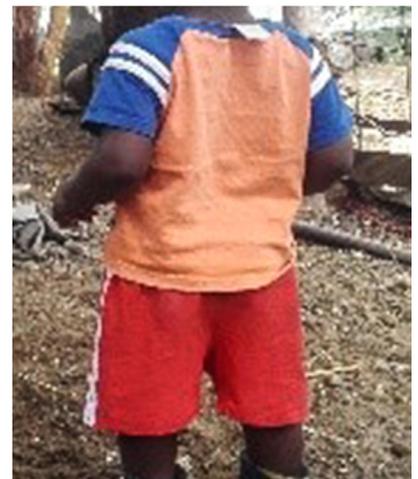
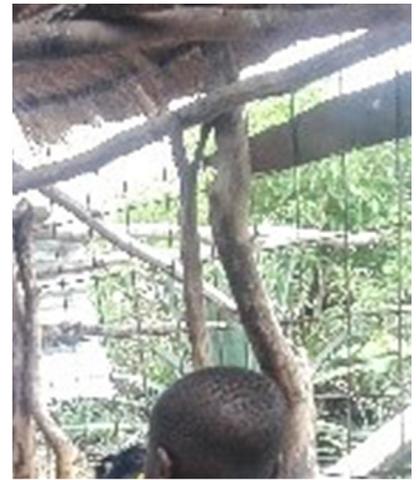
The entrepreneur is happy that he cut off

unnecessary costs that he used to incur in his enterprise before being trained. Since June 2018 his business has traceable records that he keeps, something which he could not do in the past.

He now boasts of improved marketing skills, which he is using to produce high quality vegetables that are in high demand from clients.

"I now have the confidence to engage with different customers and stakeholders because my products speak for themselves," he said.

To Joannes, better is not good enough and he inspires himself to scale new heights.



The rise of Witness Mutsvunguma

WITNESS Mutsvunguma never dreamt that he will one day run a successful business empire. The 29-year-old young man thought that, like his parents, he will live and die a pauper. But that was his thoughts until he was introduced to Hand in Hand Zimbabwe's Motivated Entrepreneurial Youth (MEY) programme and his life improved significantly for the better.

Witness grew up in a poverty-infested environment in Rambanapasi village in Chengwena Ward 4, Chirumanzi. Although he grew up with his both parents, the family lived in dilapidated buildings and rarely had enough food on their table as his parents are not formally employed and have no means of a constant income.

Things got worse for the Mutsvunguma family when Witness got married in 2017 and added an extra mouth to be fed in the homestead. But as luck would have it, Hand in Hand Zimbabwe launched its Motivated Entrepreneurial Youth programme in Chirumanzi in 2017 and taught

people that Entrepreneurship accompanied by health and life motivation is a viable means of earning income, acquiring assets and promoting self-development. Faced with rising poverty and no hope for the future, Witness did not take time to be convinced.

He quickly fell in love with the MEY programme where he learnt during mobilisation that entrepreneurship is an act of initiating, creating, building and expanding an enterprise and gathering resources to exploit an opportunity in the market place for long-term gain. In view of this, Witness concluded that rural entrepreneurship can be pursued as an option to improve his life. In pursuit of this life-changing concept, the father of one attended HIH's entrepreneurship training and completed five modules. He also attended motivation workshops 1 to 4 as well as health workshops to satisfy his hunger for more knowledge.

"When I attended the trainings on MEY project, my mind changed for the better. I used to be wasting money and with no hope for the

future. Now I am good at saving, planning and conducting business," he said in an interview.

"I can now keep my records and be able to track down my business history and tell whether the business is making a profit or loss. The trainings helped me to redefine my life when I had already lost hope and I am happy to say that my life is now on track. I am living a healthy lifestyle after my wife and I went for HIV testing and we know our status," he said.

A few weeks after attending the trainings, Witness and five other villagers sat down and established Kubatana (Unity) star club and promptly made a decision to save at least \$5 per month. In February 2018, Witness borrowed \$100.00 from his group and bought four goats and \$25 each. He worked very hard to service the loan and he is grateful of trainings he received as he is now running a small livestock enterprises.

In May, two of his goats gave birth to two kids (one each). In September he went back to the club and borrowed \$80, which he used to buy two young female goats and two female turkeys. With his livestock business slowly growing, Witness thought of diversifying his portfolio and ventured into broilers and guinea fowls rearing. It was during this time that he also discovered that he was a talented builder.

He started the chicken business with 25 broilers, which he bought at \$1.50 each, and also made sure that he had enough feedstock for the birds. To that end, he bought two 50 kilograms of starter crumbs, and growers. He bought these at \$69.00 each. While his businesses is currently generating revenues of between \$250 and \$300 per month, Witness is already thinking of growth.

To date, Witness boasts of 10 goats (9 females and one male), 21 turkeys, 25 broilers, 23 free range chickens and 19 guinea fowls, which is a far greater achievement for someone who didn't have anything in his life except his name.

Witness appreciates the work Hand in Hand in the country through its MEY project.

"It's pretty amazing that since I started this project my family can now afford to have three decent meals a day, something that was unheard of before. What I liked most about the trainings I received from Hand In Hand is the idea of working together as a group to accomplish life objectives.

"I also want to thank my group Kubatana for working hard and helping me with ideas to

improve my life," he said.

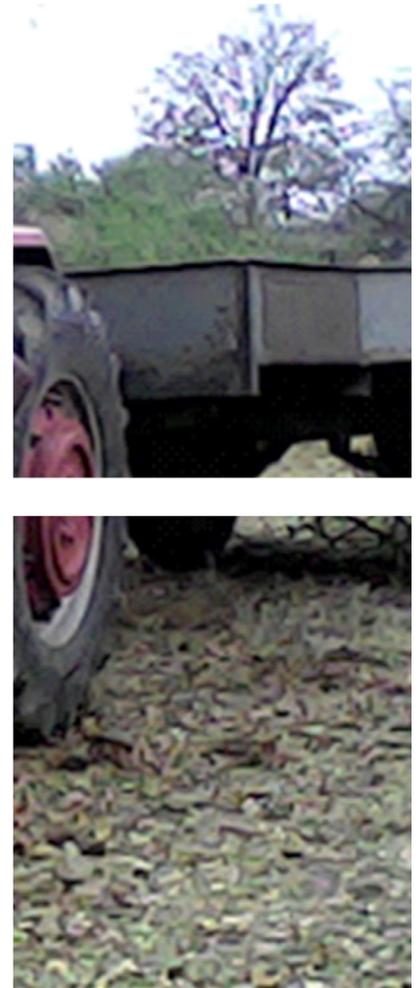
Witness' stock in the community is slowly rising after he recently bought two cows at \$230 and \$290 each. Cows in African tradition not only represent wealth, but are also a source of inspiration and good standing in society. With his business making decent profits, Witness also renovated his two rooms, which now boast of nice floors, painting and other furniture.

"My family is now living in peace and it gives me joy to take care of my parents who sacrificed so much for me. I generally spend between \$40 and \$45 per month buying food for the family," he said.

"We also can now afford to buy and wear good clothes. I grew up wearing torn clothes and I don't want my children to live the same way. We have a budget of at least \$200 every year for buying new clothes. I am also working hard to ensure that my children attend better schools, where they are more opportunities for them to do well in life, something which I didn't have while growing up," he added.

In line with Hand in Hand's vision of poverty alleviation through job creation, Witness has created a job for Mr Mandikanganwa, who helps him with his building business. The assistant's salary depends with available jobs, but on average takes home at least \$50 per month.

"I would like to urge Hand in Hand to continue with this good work and empower thousands of people, who like me, had lost hope. If my life was changed dramatically, I am very confident that the MEY model can be implemented successfully across more for fragile communities in Zimbabwe," Witness said.



Bizani successfully establishes business with Hand in Hand aid

Bizani Moyo is a 43-year-old man who lives in Makwe village in Ward 20 Gwanda. The married father of four, 3 boys and a girl, joined Hand in Hand Zimbabwe (HiH) in September 2016 under the auspices of Thokozani SHG – a group made up of 10 females and three males.

In January 2017, Mr Moyo was chosen to lead the group and has been instrumental in ensuring that members put aside \$40 per month, which is then stored in a savings fund. Under the Internal Savings and Lending Scheme (ISAL), group members can loan each other money at an interest of 25%.

Before joining HIH, Mr Moyo earned a living as a sole trader. He had a small business stall outside Makwe business centre, where he sold a variety of goods, including food. After being trained on Opportunity Identification and Enterprise Planning, Mr Moyo then realised that there were several business opportunities in his community.

Makwe area has numerous small and medium scale gold mines. He saw an opportunity to meet clothing and food demands for the ever-busy miners, who are not keen to venture out to the nearby town to buy clothes and food stuffs. He took it upon himself to travel to South Africa to purchase clothing items for resale to miners in his area.

Mr Moyo used profits from his buying and selling enterprise to religiously contribute towards group savings. In December 2017, Thokozani group decided to share their profits and savings.

The budding entrepreneur received USD\$2 700 as his savings share plus ISAL profits, which he used to purchase a tractor with a trailer in February 2018. Using his newly acquired assets, Mr Moyo did not waste time as he immediately established a new transport service to cater for miners in his community. The transport business, where he carries gold ore from the mine pits to the stamp mill at a \$40 per load, is flourishing.

On average, he carries three loads per day and makes an average of \$2 000 per month from his transportation enterprise. In June 2018, Mr Moyo used part of his profits to purchase an electrical generator and a water pump. He hires out the water pump and generator to miners who wish to drain water out of their mines for \$400 a month.

Ever since his new business venture as a mining service provider, Moyo and his family live happily. He pointed out that all his children are in school. One is at primary school while three are in secondary school. All his children's school fees are fully paid up and he even affords to pay for their children's educational school trips. Furthermore, Mr Moyo has extended his home stead. During the time of visit, he had just completed building a stone wall around his homestead. It is clear that Hand in Hand Zimbabwe has positively changed the life of Moyo and his family.

Although business is going well for him, Mr Moyo said he is not spurred by various challenges affecting the country's economy. He noted that cash shortages that the country is facing are also affecting his operations as mobile money payments affect his ability to order spare parts for his assets in neighbouring

South Africa as they are not readily available locally.

Recent fuel shortages and the ban of fuel containers by some fuel stations has greatly affected his business as he needs to carry diesel and petrol for his tractor and generator in fuel containers. As a result, he at times goes for days without working because of fuel shortages and he is now forced to purchase fuel in South Africa though that increases his expenses.

Moyo pointed out that he plans to purchase a mine compressor so that he can also hire it out to miners.

He is also planning to diversify into cattle pen fattening as a way of increasing revenue streams, spreading risks and hedge himself against inflation, cash and fuel shortages. Moyo is really grateful to Hand in Hand for the trainings and support as he points out that they opened his eyes to unlimited possibilities.



Chirumanzu students defy the odds

Three teenagers from Rambakombwe Secondary school in Chirumanzu District have defied the odds after they successfully set up a solar-powered barbershop at their school with the aid of Hand in Hand Zimbabwe and their two patrons.

The three young entrepreneurs, Praymore Nzombe 16, John Kakoni 15 and Tafara Chivige 18 are part of the Hand in Hand Zimbabwe's Motivated & Entrepreneurial Youth Programme (MEY) Star Club, which contributes to sustainable development in the country through improving health awareness. The programme also motivates youths to believe in themselves and provide entrepreneurial skills among adolescents at schools (13-18 years) and the Out of School youths aged between 18 and 35 years.

The young students commenced operations in July last year after going through extensive

training on life skills and entrepreneurship from the Hand in Hand Zimbabwe.

With the aid of their patrons, the three bought two electric scissors, borrowed the school's solar power and started servicing the community and other school children during lunch hour for \$1 per head.

In an interview one of the two boys Praymore said he learnt that one can make a living by starting a business venture at an early age after going through the MEY project entrepreneurship training.

"We were motivated to start the business by the desire to help our parents to fend for the family. We don't come from rich families and we are hoping that we will be able to pay our school fees and do other things at home with the money we get," he said.

The other entrepreneur John said they have plans to diversify their operations and have

already started buying rabbits and traditional chickens (road runners) for resale.

"We want to grow our business so that in the future we will be able to employ other young people in this district as well," he said.

Dumisani Nkiwane, a skills patron at the school, said he was proud of the two boys and will continue supporting them.

"The boy's idea of starting a businesses started at the Hand in Hand Zimbabwe's star club under the MEY project last year and in partnership with the organisation we have guided them from the business proposals stage," he said.

Dumisani added that he was impressed by the fact that the two boys' intention was to get money to further their education, create employment and help their parents at home when they came up with the business idea.

Rambakombwe headmaster Tafadzwanashe Chese commended Hand in Hand Zimbabwe for the work that the organisation is doing at the school.

"I can safely say – without hesitation – that Hand in Hand Zimbabwe has become a part of us. The organisation is actually working hand in hand with Rambakombwe secondary school," he said.

Mr Chese further indicated that HiH was indeed empowering both his school and the individuals who make up the institution.

"The idea of having learners who are affiliated to the organisation who are running a viable barbershop during lunch hour is impressive," he said.

He said through the MEY project, students have been equipped to manage the barbershop business and have proper income and balance sheet statements.

Mr Chese noted that the organisation's interventions have also helped with raising the pass rate at his school and will go a long way in helping the students.

The Hand in Hand Zimbabwe MEY project extends to 30 schools in Churumanzu and Shurugwi district respectively. Most schools in the two district confirmed that they have recorded positive impact through the project. Churumanzu district Schools' Inspector Bornface Chimbiya said the entrepreneurship training being availed by the organisation are in tandem with the new curriculum which includes skills training.

"There is a lot of impact being made through

the Hand in Hand MEY project at schools in Churumanzu. Children are getting more skills and becoming responsible at an early age as can be noted by the barbershop project.

"They are able to get hands on experience from projects they are doing with Hand in Hand Zimbabwe," he said.

Mr Chimbiya said the Primary and Secondary Education Ministry is looking forward to more collaborative work with the non-profit organisation and hope to get more support in terms of resources, workshops.

Hand in Hand Zimbabwe is a non-Profit organization that helps resource limited and marginalized people in rural communities, particularly women, to create better livelihoods for themselves and their families through its flagship series, the Jobs Creation Programme (JCP) which aims at alleviating poverty through job creation.

JCP also encompasses a self-help approach that is premised on a four pillar model involving social mobilization into self-help groups (SHGs), training in entrepreneurship and economic development, facilitating access to microloans and facilitating market linkages and value addition.

Apart from the Jobs Creation Programme approach, the organisation has over the years implemented the Motivated and Entrepreneurial Youth (MEY) Project, Community Upliftment Project (CUP), Green Enterprises Project (GEP) and Jobs for Zimbabwe.

The organisation was registered as a non-profit organisation in Zimbabwe in July 2015 and is presently supporting communities in seven districts namely Bulilima, Chikomba, Chirumanzu, Gwanda, Lupane, Nkayi and Shurugwi.



Chisungo Investment the masters in moulding the three legged pots

What started as a small business family is slowly turning into a burgeoning enterprise that is making waves in the Midlands area. Chisungo investments, a pot moulding group from Hillview village one (1) in Ward 22, Chirumanzu, is dreaming of better days ahead.

Chisungo investments started as a family project in 2015, and the group soon realised it could make more money after they joined Hand in Hand Zimbabwe programmes in 2018 where they were promptly trained on entrepreneurship, health and motivation. The group quickly married these three components within the MEY project with their already existing idealistic plan of expansion. This was done by equipping the young stars to come up with innovative ideas in enhancing, marketing and making sure they keep business records in an arranged orderly manner.

To date, Chisungo investment star club is one of the most ambitious, determined and most focused group one would be privileged to come across. Having a conversation with them in reference to their future plans one would be intrigued by the kind of vision they have as a group.

The group is enjoying brisk business in areas such as Mvuma, Lalapanzi and Ward 22 but they dream to be well known as the best three legged pot moulders and suppliers within the whole Midlands and even advance further to other provinces.

After joining forces with HiH, Chisungo group members were encouraged to take part in the ISALs activities, which helped them to boost their business. Within a few days, the group started off by saving at least \$10 per month in June last year, but was forced to

revise it downwards to \$5 per month due to general economic hardships that were being experienced in the whole country.

The most unique trait about the star club, is that the group is made up of family members only – two married brothers and their wives, a single brother and sister.

With HiH advocating for knowledge sharing as one of the most important value within a group, as trained in module 1 (group strengthening), Chisungo Investment has proved to be one of the exemplary group. Information at hand shows that only one sibling of the group had prior pot moulding skills, which he later shared and trained his other family members. As it stands, everyone within the family has become very skilled in the moulding these pots and this has made the sharing and distribution of tasks easier for the group.

The star club members stay in one homestead with their aging parents who are very

supportive and encourage them to work very hard to improve their living standards.

One of the challenges the group faced in the past was lack of capital to inject into the business and to procure raw materials needed in the moulding process.

“We tried several times to secure loans from other microfinances but each time our attempts hit brickwalls. What was even more frustrating was the fact that demand for our products was very high and we couldn’t meet demand due to lack of capital,” Talent Matandauro one of the family member said.

However, the group’s fortunes were turn for the better after they were selected to benefit from HiH’s pilot revolving fund.

“We used to produce 50 pots per month, which was not enough to meet demand from our local market. But since the time the four of us applied for \$300 loans each to invest into the business, the group is now working on producing over 100 pots per month to supply the market,” Matandauro added.



From sitting behind a shop to owning it Shumba's story

In 2013 Graceful Shumba, 39, was known as the feeble-looking tailor who sat behind a shop at Chachacha doing her daily sewing routine. However, six years later Graceful has become the proud owner of vibrant shop – the one she used to sit behind.

Like many women in Chachacha, Graceful worked hard to make ends meet in the drought and hunger prone district, but without the right knowledge and skills, it was always going to be an uphill task.

As fate would have it, Graceful's life dramatically changed when she met Hand in Hand Zimbabwe in 2013, after which she joined the Batanai Self Help Group which consists of 10 women.

The organisation took the women through a six-month training in which they were taught 6 Hand in Hand business modules. The women contributed \$50 per month at a 20% return rate and this helped their individual businesses to grow. Within six

months, the group's revenue topped \$5 000, which they shared equally among themselves. Each woman walked away with over \$500.

In November 2015 the owner of the shop which Graceful used to sit behind decided to sell the shop and the 39-year lady, who had gone through the module Opportunity Identification and Enterprise planning, did not think twice about the offer and promptly borrowed money from her Self Help Group to secure the shop. Equipped with her new entrepreneurial skills, she quickly divided the shop into three departments – a grocery store, a tailoring shop and a takeaway restaurant.

Without wasting any time, Graceful stocked her grocery store with the profits she had made from the tailoring business.

"It's worth noting that I only started making notable profits in my tailoring business after going through the Hand in Hand Zimbabwe managing module," she recalls.

Within six years, Graceful had risen from being a hopeless tailor to a shop manager and created jobs for young women in her community who work at her budding enterprise as a store keeper, an assistant tailor and a cook.

"Hand in hand has taught me to manage my business from implementation stage up to where I am now. I was taught how to expand my business from a small enterprise to one of the biggest businesses in this district.

"Before I met Hand in Hand I was in living in abject poverty, there was no hope for the future and things were hard," she said.

Graceful's success is not only in words, but she has a lot to show for it and has become an inspiration to many people in her area.

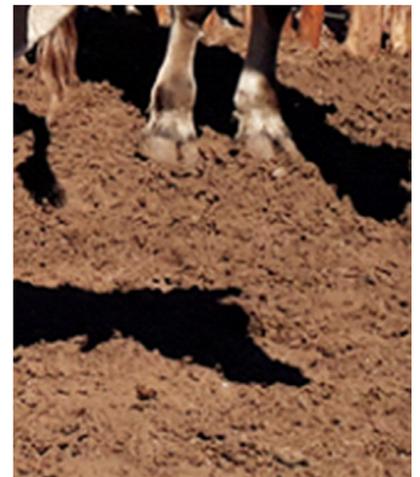
"I used to stay in a one-roomed house but from the excess profits I have made over the years, I have managed to build a 9 roomed house. In addition, I have also managed to buy two family cars and a commuter omnibus, which we use to transfer our goods from different wholesales," she said.

"I make a profit of more than \$1000 each month, which I use to pay school fees for my two children and a nephew," she added.

The 39 year old mother says she will continue to be part of Hand in Hand Zimbabwe's Batanai Self Help group and is looking forward to learn more from the organisation.

"The sky is now the limit for me. If all goes well I am planning to open another shop in Shurugwi town. My vision is to empower as many women as possible," she said.





Gwanda cattle fattening project pays off

Bambanani Self Help group members made a profit of \$5 666,48 after they sold their 12 cows at one of Zimbabwe's largest abattoirs. The group from Ngoma Village 20 in Gwanda sold the cows for \$12 578,48 following the completion of a Hand in Hand Zimbabwe supported cattle fattening project.

The group which was formed in 2018 comprises of 11 members (8 females and 3 males) who expressed interest on cattle fattening and the lessons conducted by Hand in Hand Zimbabwe on Module 3: Opportunity Identification and Enterprise.

In May 2018, the SHG attended the cattle fattening training which was organized by Hand in Hand Zimbabwe and facilitated by the ward-based facilitator from the Crop and Livestock Department.

The technical skills training impacted the SHG with deeper knowledge and skills on cattle fattening and they started saving \$20 each on a monthly basis. The group members borrowed the money amongst themselves at

an interest rate of 20% per month as this was meant to grow the fund for cattle fattening project.

The group managed to gather 11 cows valued at \$3 500 and monthly savings worth \$2 645 which was used to purchase and transport stock feeds from Gwanda Town.

On the 6th of October 2018, the pen fattening process started and the 11 cows were fattened for a period of two (2) months. Shortening the fattening period was deliberate as during the rainy season most cows gain weight due to the availability of green grass and water.

The group's dedication and commitment resulted in them being part of the SHGs that were taken for a look and learn visit at Matopos Research Institute on 18 July 2018. The aim of the look and learn visit was for the SHGs to learn more about cattle fattening.

These experiences provided the participants with access to knowledge and information about cattle fattening, which gradually gave them greater empowerment. As a result, this

look and learn visit enabled the Bambanani SHG to further design a methodology that improved the preparation, organization and adoption of new practices for cattle fattening .

The look and learn visit further instilled in-depth understanding on cattle fattening practices which led to the success of their business venture.

The expenses incurred during the project life cycle included value of purchasing cows, stock feeds, vaccines and transport costs which amounted to \$6 912. The gross income realized was \$12 578.48 and this enabled the Bambanani SHG to make profit of \$5 666.48. The members paid themselves and each got \$50 and the rest of the money remaining (\$9 450.00) will be invested back into the project in the next production phase.

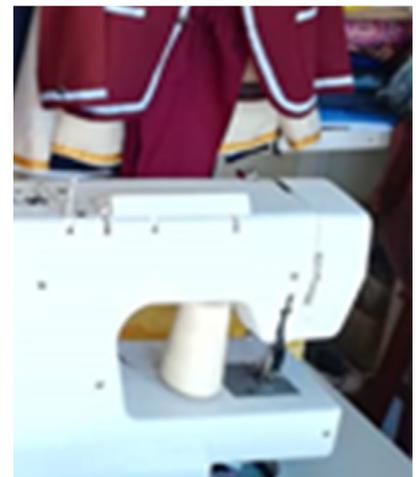
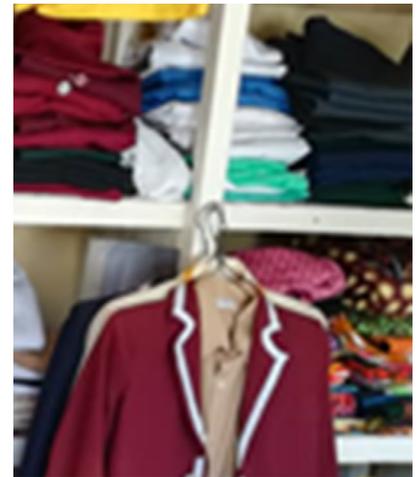
In an interview, the team leader Hawelo Moyo 55 said the initiative had immensely transformed the lives of group members as they moved from being mere poverty stricken villagers to being business people who can

actually sell to national abattoirs.

He commended Hand in Hand Zimbabwe for the modules training and guidance citing that it had contributed to the growth of their enterprise.

“Hand in hand has helped us by teaching us on technical skills training, cattle fattening and linking us to the market

“Personally before meeting Hand in Hand Zimbabwe I never thought I would be able to manage such a viable business,” he said.



Hand in Hand changes widow's narrative

Jennifer Kabete is a 65-year old widow who stays at Donga Business Centre in ward 10, 26 km south-east of the scenic Shurugwi.

Like most people of her generation, Jennifer – who looks after six grandchildren, three of them are school going and three infants – has endured a difficult life in Zimbabwe and she has scars to show for it. Life is difficult in this part of the world to the extent that citizens are struggling to provide food. The situation gets worse among women-headed household.

The friendly granny, who is a member of the Batanai SHG which consist of 10 members, seven females and three males, says she was once trapped in chain of poverty working hard in trying to make things happen in the red zone area of Shurugwi. Shurugwi is in region 5 which is characterised with little and below normal rainfall and droughts are frequent in the area.

Mining is only profitable business in this dry area, but then it is capital intensive and also requires physical stamina, attributes which are all not on Jennifer's side. For an ordinary tailor, who conducted her business at Chachacha growth point, Jennifer had lost all hope about the future.

However, her fortunes quickly changed in 2015 when Hand in Hand Zimbabwe made inroads into Shurugwi and Jennifer did not think twice about joining Batanai SHG, which by then had 10 female members.

Over the years, Hand in Hand has proved that it has a master key to unlock hidden treasures. After going through HiH's 6 modular trainings on business enterprise development, Jennifer's eyes were opened and her horizon widened.

Jennifer's group contributes \$50 per month and members pay a 20 percent interest when they borrow money from the fund. This

money is only used to finance their individual's business/ enterprise since the group does not have a group enterprise.

The group, through its policy and constitution, agreed to share the dividends after every six months that means per year they have two cycles. On average every member walks with around \$450-500 after sharing. With trainings on Managing Money and Opportunity Identification Enterprise Planning, Jennifer got the skills to diversify her business and ventured into school uniforms making. After realizing some profits from her new business, she constructed her own shop at the busy growth point, which was completed in January 2019 and is now operational.

"Hand in Hand Zimbabwe helped me a lot to be who I am today. The trainings were not only fantastic but also an eye opener as they unlocked potential in me, potential which I never thought I had," she said in an interview.

Jennifer further alluded that before joining Hand in Hand she "was unable to provide food for the children that I have, but now I am able to feed my grandchildren, as well as employing other women from the community. As we speak my business has created three more jobs, and this means the business is supporting three families."

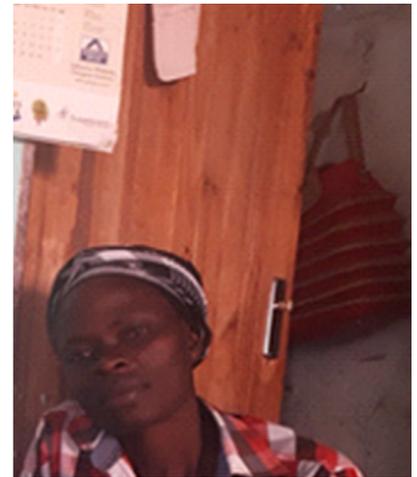
Jennifer's is now a role model among other widows in her community as she can now afford to pay school fees for her three grandchildren – one in secondary school paying \$55-00 per term and the other two at primary level paying \$20 each per term, which was an uphill task prior to meeting Hand in Hand. In addition to that, her shop is now well equipped with standard equipment such as four sewing machines including the overlocking and heavy duty machines.

Jennifer's business has grown in leaps and bounds and is popular in Shurugwi that every new school term she rakes in an average of \$200 from uniform sales and when business is low she earns around \$30 per week.

During the course of the interview, Jennifer made it clear that she wants to continue to be part of the Hand in Hand family as it made her to be a recognised woman in community after unlocking her hidden treasure.

"I also want to thank my colleagues at Bata-

nai Self Help Group who keep on encouraging me to go an extra mile in my work. I believe that with the help of God my business is going to expand and help so many women in various communities. The almighty has been very gracious to me," she said.



Hand in Hand changes widow's narrative

Alice Mugodoki from Dangwa village in Ward 15 Chikomba District is a proud mother as she can now afford to take her eldest daughter to University from the financial independence she has gained through the Hand in Hand Zimbabwe business and Entrepreneurship trainings.

Her life changed when she joined Hand in Hand Zimbabwe under Tashinga B Self Help Group in 2016 and went through entrepreneurship modular trainings.

Mrs Mugodoki then borrowed money to start her business from Tashinga B where 10 members of the group contribute \$20 per month.

She started buying products such as soap, cooking oil, blankets and clothes from South Africa for resale in her community.

In an effort to expand her savings base she joined a second group Chika Chika where

members contribute \$20 per month.

Her business grew immensely and she could now afford to pay school fees for her children and cater for other monetary responsibilities in her home.

"My business has done so well, I now own a beautiful house and I no longer depend on my husband who is unemployed.

"One of the reasons which prompted me to venture into entrepreneurship was the hope of sending my daughter to university but I now do it effortlessly.

Hand in Hand Zimbabwe in its entrepreneurship modular trainings has managed to empower Mrs Mugodoki in her entrepreneurial endeavours. Module 3 on opportunity identification and Enterprise planning has helped her plan for her enterprise well and now she has started going to Harare to acquire some of her products.

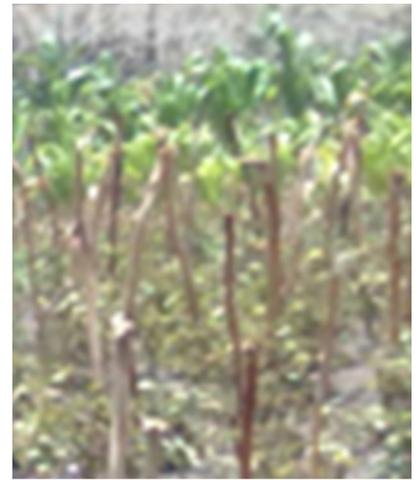
Module 2 on managing money helped her

to manage her monies well as she now pays school fees for her children and food in the house.

Mrs Mugodoki, attests that the entrepreneurship trainings helped her in getting more income.

"I now earn approximately \$500 as compared to around \$200 per month which I used to get.

"My dreams and hopes are to ensure that my children get the best education so that they can have better lives," she said.



Mlinga's Dream a Reality

Tafara Mlinga is a 32-year-old man from Ifafa Village 1 in Chirumhanzu, who has fought his way out of poverty through the Motivated Entrepreneurial Youth (MEY) project and has done exceedingly well for himself and his family.

The father of three works with his wife on their small plot to produce enough food for the whole family. Over the past few months, Mr Malinga has used the skills and resources he received from the MEY project to help his family afford three (3) meals a day at a time when other people in the country are struggling to put food on the table. In addition to being self-sustainable, the Mlinga homestead supplements its income by selling maize to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) in Mvuma.

Mr Mlinga is a member of a Star Club called kupfuma Ishungu, which is loosely translated to mean that wealth comes through hard-work and dedication. Members of the club

contribute a monthly premium of \$3 per individual towards a savings fund. When Mr Mlinga thought of converting his garden into a viable enterprise, he borrowed \$50.50 from the Club to buy vegetables and tomato seedlings. With the help of his brother Tichakunda, he was able to expand his garden and made use of poles and branches as a hedge to prevent goats and cattle from breaking into his plot and destroy the crops.

The garden is strategically located in a wet land area and Mr Mlinga does not incur huge expenses when watering his plants. Mr Malinga began his project in June this year and has since then been earning an average monthly income of \$280 from his business. He indicated that he sells vegetable bundles from \$0.50- \$2.00, tomatoes from \$0.50 to \$7.00 a bucket to members of his community, who are his main market source.

The Voice of Tafara Mlinga

"I used to have a garden before, but only worked on it as a hobby and never thought I

could make a sustainable living from it. After my brother Mr Tichakunda Mlinga introduced me to Hand in Hand (HiH) model my life and that of my family has greatly changed for the better and am grateful for this life-changing opportunity presented by HiH in partnership with MASO.

From the entrepreneurial training he has received, Mr Mlinga mainly appreciated module 3 on Opportunity Identification, which made him realise a hidden opportunity to run his garden as an enterprise. Most people in his community are neither into horticulture nor taking advantage of the wetlands where his garden is located.

"In June this year, when most people in the country were involving themselves in politics, I slowly converted my idea into a money-making venture by supplying a variety of vegetables, which are on demand and in short supply in my community.

"My main challenge at the moment is to meet the ever increasing demand for my horticultural products as some days am failing to satisfy my customers' needs.

"I am living my dream, doing something that I am passionate about while at the same time earning a decent living," he said.

Mr Mlinga indicated that he appreciates the motivation trainings he has received as they have helped to boost his confidence and self-esteem.

"I used to look down on myself and never once in my life did I ever thought that I would achieve anything meaningful. But after I went through the trainings, I came to realise that I am very valuable and have the capacity to go for my dreams. Since then, my life has never been the same.

"I am now looking forward – with confidence – to a better tomorrow not only for me but for my family as well," he said.



Nkayi Self Help Group on a mission to end poverty.

Sibonelo Self Help Group is on a mission to end poverty. The group, which consists of eight women and two men, quickly sprang into action after it was established on February 18, 2016 at Shushine Business Centre following a sensitization meeting conducted by Hand in Hand Zimbabwe (HiH).

In an interview recently, the Group's Chair Musa Mahlangu said members were motivated to kick out poverty after they received valuable lessons from the HiH meeting two years ago on how to fight scarcity using local resources. After the meeting, establishing the group was not a difficult assignment, as participants screened themselves based on their mutual understanding.

It suffices to say that before enrolling for the HiH Jobs Creation program in Nkayi and formation of this group, members conducted business individually and in a haphazard manner. Although the members were already

in business – making baskets and buying and selling various goods – the ventures were not successful, as most of the revenue quickly went towards consumption.

But shortly after joining the HiH Job Creation program, the group got a new breath of life as they got entrepreneurial skills training which gave them the third eye of seeing things (opportunity identification). The group agrees that the HiH business trainings helped them to grow their businesses as they were encouraged to utilise the local natural resources efficiently in creating enterprises. With the abundance of fan palm (ilala) the group became more organised and agreed to meet every Thursday to train each other and improve their weaving skills.

After a few months of getting HiH marketing trainings, which encompass pricing, promotion, place and product, the group members not only improved quality of their craft wares, but also saw demand for their

products increasing.

Mahlangu had an opportunity, which was made possible by HiH, to travel to Lupane for craft look and learn tour. Such an opportunity yielded positive results for the group as the member brought new knowledge and skills, especially on product quality and control, marketing and pricing.

Mahlangu says Sibonelo members are also grateful that they were afforded an eye-opening opportunity when they attended district hand work/craft workshops, where they shared notes, experiences, knowledge and skills with other SHG members from different locations.

He highlighted that all the members of the group now earn a decent living through crafts sales within the community and is very appreciative of HiH efforts in trying to search for a sustainable market for their wares.

"The members are satisfied that their wares have been exhibited at district, provincial, national and international events such as the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair, Hlanganani Tourism Expo and Victoria Falls Agric Show among others," he said.

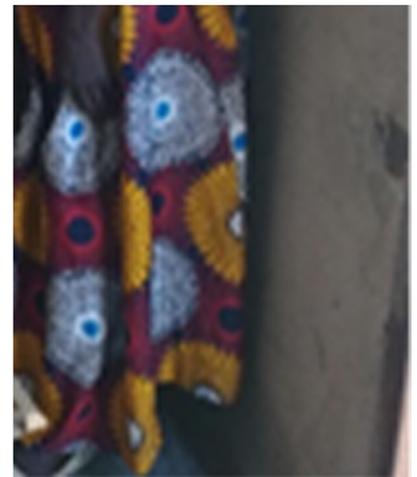
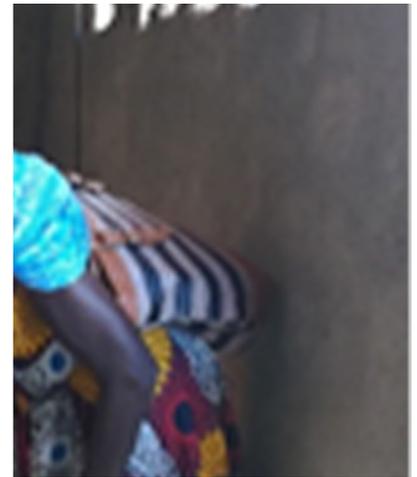
He further pointed out that their craft work

has also attracted visitors from outside their district although they are yet to get a reliable market.

"Within a few years of getting HiH assistance and improving their business acumen, group members are now in a better position to pay school fees for their children and meet other financial obligations," Mahlangu added.

To date, Sibonelo Self Help Group boasts of a bull, pigs, which currently have 20 piglets, and and thirty chickens. And refusing to be limited to group enterprises, members also continue to pursue their individual enterprises that have achieved varied success.

"We will forever be indebted to HiH and its network, which showed us light and gave us hope and skills that are transforming our socio-economic lives at an alarming rate," Mahlangu said on behalf of the group.



Vukuzenzele SHG success story

Vukuzenzele SHG has seven female members who unleashed their business potential into broiler production. The SHG is located in Solwezi village peri-urban of Plumtree Town. The group was formed in 2016. The economic situation in Zimbabwe of high inflation, shortage of cash had made the group to lose hope in the business sector.

However, the monitoring visit conducted by Hand in Hand motivated the group and encouraged them not to focus on one enterprise but should be creative and be able to adapt to the changing environment.

As Vukuzenzele was still identifying the business venture to do they attended the broiler cluster training which inspired them to start a broiler enterprise. The SHG raised \$770 bond and each member contributed \$110 bond towards the enterprise because the group savings were not enough. They used the knowledge attained from the five modular training to identify different possible sources of start-up capital. Self-help group strengthening module helped them to work as a team towards their goal. One of the members had a fowl run which was easy for them to raise 100 birds.

When they started they had a high mortality rate of 10% and after receiving a technical training the mortality rate dropped to 5% as they managed to identify the causes of deaths. The group commended the technical

trainings that support the modular trainings. To have a successful business you need knowledge and skill of the business.

The cost of producing 100 birds was \$770 and when their birds matured they sold them at \$18 per bird and got \$950. Vukuzenzele used its marketing techniques to identify the needs of their clients. It produced high quality birds. To enter the market, they used the price penetration strategy. The SHG priced their broilers at \$18 per bird, while others sold at \$20. The SHG managed to establish a market with local restaurants who collected 30 birds a day. This motivated the entrepreneurs to scale up their production.

The project has had great impacted on the livelihoods of the members. The women testify that they are now able to meet some family basic needs and live decent live. The group indicated that broiler production is paying better than other enterprises since beef price in the market is high. Moreover, the production cycle of broiler is shorter than indigenous chicken so you realise your income early. Vukuzenzele was empowered through the enterprise development skills training, market linkages and technical skills. It was motivated by the encouragements that hard work, innovation and determination lead to the success in the competitive world of business.

BEAUTIFUL WOVEN PRODUCTS



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