

**Ihubalethu rural newspapers**  
**Noah**  
**~Volunteering for tomorrows leaders~**

HIV/AIDS will be the greatest factor shaping our communities and country in this century. The devastation wreaked by this disease is felt by children, siblings and parents. Despite the sadness and loss, communities are pulling together to care for those most vulnerable – the children left behind. It is heart warming to see the 1,000 volunteers working with Noah go house to house as they care for and provide support to these children in need. Noah volunteers are ordinary men and women doing an extraordinary job. Together with Noah they are building networks of care for orphaned and vulnerable children in KZN and Gauteng.

Noah works directly in the community empowering people through training, improving opportunities for education and ensuring food security for better nutrition. By working within communities most affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, Noah is able to reach into the heart of the pandemic and guide the youth of today to a brighter and more promising future. Since 2002 Noah has established 105 Arks – 71 in KwaZulu Natal and 34 in Gauteng. Arks are community networks. They are led by a dedicated committee of community leaders who mobilise volunteers to care for the vulnerable children around them.

Joslyn Walker, fundraiser at Noah, emphasises the importance of providing layers of support to children and communities: "Noah brings together partners from all walks of life to provide inspiration and support to children. We are proud of our record of partnership with government, private business and leaders in the community. Most importantly we celebrate the volunteers that are the driving force behind our success and we invite people to become a part of this by volunteering time, resources and knowledge."

Ntombenhle Kubheka is a young girl from Danhauser in Northern KZN. She is one of the 30,318 children in the Noah programme. Her mother died when she was little and she has never known her father. She and her brother, Nathi, live with her grandmother and attend one of the Noah after care centres. She was registered by one of the many volunteers that make house visits to children.

Ntombenhle had the following to say about being part of Noah:

*I would like to thank Noah for being there for me and my family.*

*Thank you Noah for helping my grandmother find government grants for us.*

*The good you do today will often be forgotten by tomorrow, but do good anyway. Noah you are our most precious gift, you give us a healthy meal everyday. I would like to thank the ragdolls that you donated to us. It was my first time to own a doll. Thank you very much I never had anything to own, thank you.*

*God Bless You.*

We are all involved in the changing of tomorrow. By empowering our communities to care for the most vulnerable citizens we can make the difference in all of our lives and our country's future as a whole.

Contact us to find out how you can get involved and where your closest Ark is located:

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