

By 2050 the AIDS pandemic will be the most significant factor to shape the forthcoming century.

SASA And Umkhumbi ka Noah Etsheni Ark “Market Gardening Project” Greening our World for Tomorrow’s Leaders

An old African proverb once said that if you give a child a fish, that child will always keep coming back for more, but if give them a fishing rod, then you have empowered them for eternity. That is what the South African Sugar Association has vowed to do. By partnering with Noah and identifying a community that was in desperate need of assistance within the sugar belt of the Swayimane District, SASA and Noah have come up with self sustaining income generating projects in the form of market gardening ventures.

Noah being an organization that primarily focuses on the well being of orphaned and vulnerable children, founded the Umkhumbi ka Noah Etsheni Ark in 2002. Located in the Midlands of KwaZulu Natal, near Wartburg, Etsheni Ark was established after Dr Ash, Mr. James Holley, Mr. Mpungose and Mr. Mkhize paid a visit to Chief Gcumisa who is presiding in that area. This was the first of 105 Arks that Noah has started. Out of his own compassion for the children, the Chief further granted 4 hectares of land to help start a market gardening project. With such an amazing gesture, the Noah team approached the South African Sugar Association to partner with them in making this dream of a market garden a reality. With great enthusiasm, the SASA team gave a generous donation of R60,000 to kickstart this project and cater for all the setup costs involved in starting a project of this magnitude.



These potato plants will sustain children in the area

When good things are happening, the good news spreads like wild fire, and soon word got out that a grand project at the Etsheni Ark was about to get underway. An Agricultural Advisor from the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Wiseman Ndlovu heard of the project at Noah and decided to come on board. He offered his expertise to help accelerate the project. He has tested the allocated land for the market garden determining its suitability and advising which plants and fertilizers would yield the best results. He further arranged for the clearing and preparation of the land. There is great excitement from the volunteers and staff at Umkhumbi kaNoah Etsheni Ark as they will not only be developing new skills in farming, but that they will also have the opportunity to impart this newly acquired knowledge to the children. This will help build food security in the region and will help the children and their families have control of their own destiny.



Staff at Etsheni in the heart of the Ark – the

It is important to note that this project not only brings about a monetary value but that it actually helps to develop a sense of responsibility and a nature of caring for a living organism for the children. The children at Noah are truly special and their family backgrounds and upbringing are traumatic. They have had limited access to love and caring people and their access to the Ark provides them with an opportunity to find love and laughter. These are children who have had one or both of their parents die as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. They have known extreme poverty and are vulnerable to the ills of this world. Projects like these empower them to work hard and see the fruits of their labour and encourage them to strive to have a better tomorrow.

kitchen

Having had an opportunity to speak to the Ark Manager and the Ark Development Officer responsible for this Ark, I was introduced to two outstanding and amazing teenage girls who are currently being cared for by the Etsheni Ark. Both young ladies are matriculants who have set themselves specific goals and dreams. Coming from very similar backgrounds, these young women have had the traumatic experience of losing their parents and are currently living with their aging grandmothers. Not only has life dealt them tough blows of having to grow up in the harshest of circumstances but they have been witness to harsh realities, such as teen pregnancy and the associated feelings of helplessness and loss of control. They have been given rejuvenated strength through looking forward to the market gardening project. One of the young women expressed her happiness at being able to be involved in this project. When I enquired about their hopes and dreams, they both indicated to me that they would like to become professional social workers, to help the other children in the same way they have been helped.

It is through such initiatives, and awesome partners like the South African Sugar Association that dreams come true. At Noah we are sincerely and deeply encouraged when partners like SASA catch on to our vision and respond to the Noah model which we believe is an answer to the global crisis of the we are currently facing. We are extremely grateful for all that you have done and are currently doing for the children of Noah. Your contribution helps Noah build and sustain strong community networks to care and support orphaned and vulnerable children. Together we can greatly reduce the devastating effects of AIDS in our country by taking care of our children because today they live in our world, tomorrow we live in theirs.

For information on how you can help please contact:

Joslyn Walker
Fundraiser – Noah

Ph: +27 (0) 31 566 5395
Cell: +27 (0) 83 413 5514
Fax: +27 (0) 31 566 5054
joslyn@noahorphans.org.za

Zandile
Stakeholder Liaison

Ph: +27 (0) 11 234 2270
Fax: +27 (0) 11 234 2271
www.noahorphans.org.za
zandile@noahorphans.org.za



Sport is life's training ground at Noah



Learning to grow your own vegetables provides food security



Celebrating life with Noah