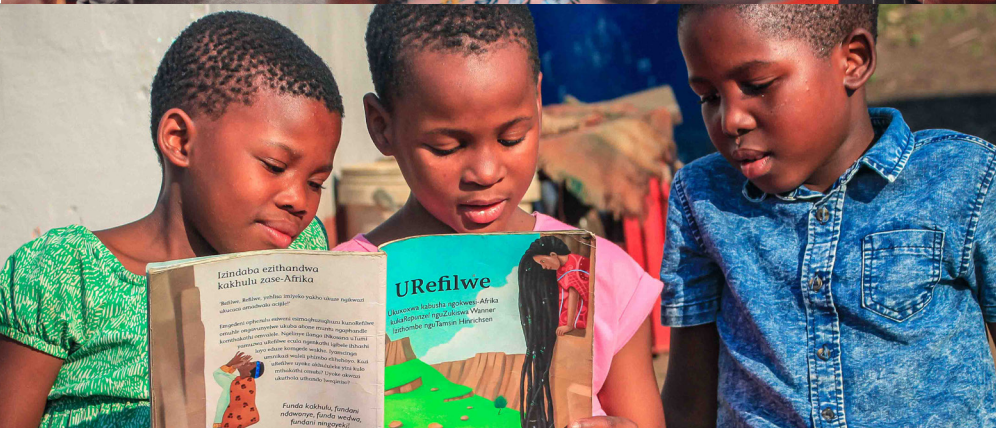




BUILDING RESILIENCE

IMPACT 2023 & A LOOK BACK IN TIME

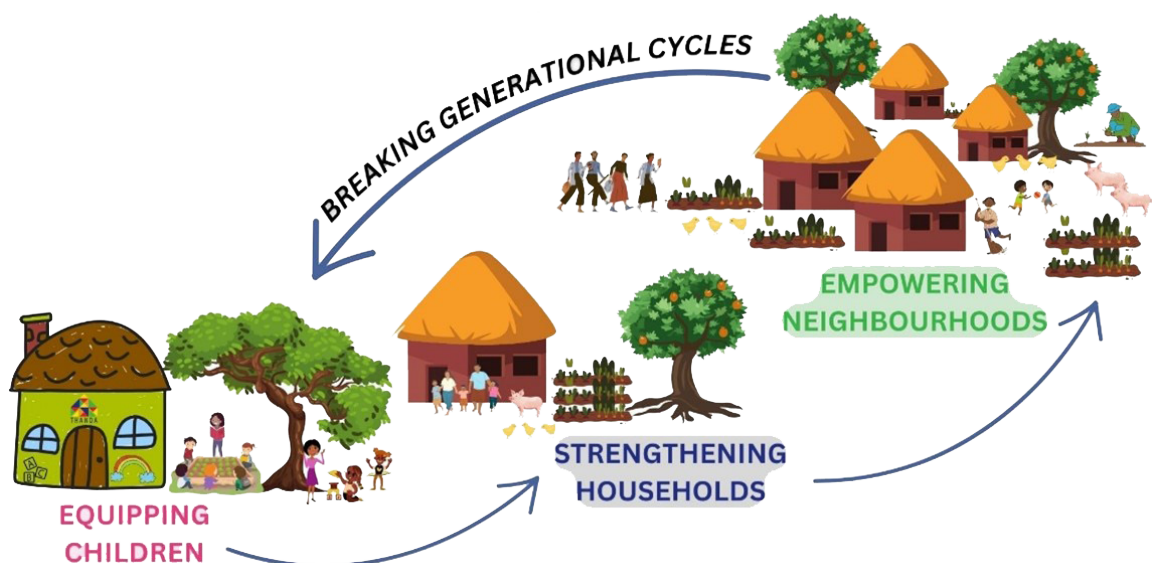


WHAT HAS CHANGED IN 2023?

After 15 years, we shifted from a model that focused on each individual child, to one that focused on the child AND their family, and now, to a model that offers support to the children, the family AND their neighbourhood. This ecological systems model allows for deep and lasting impact since, with the entire community on the same page, concepts take hold within families in a more sustainable and long-lasting way, ensuring that each individual receives the maximum benefit of our interventions.



By building resilience at multiple levels, we are breaking generational cycles. Our ECD and Education programmes equip individual children, while home visits and our household gardening initiative support their families and enhance food security. We also empower neighbourhoods through group meetings and workshops that strengthen community bonds and foster organic problem-solving.



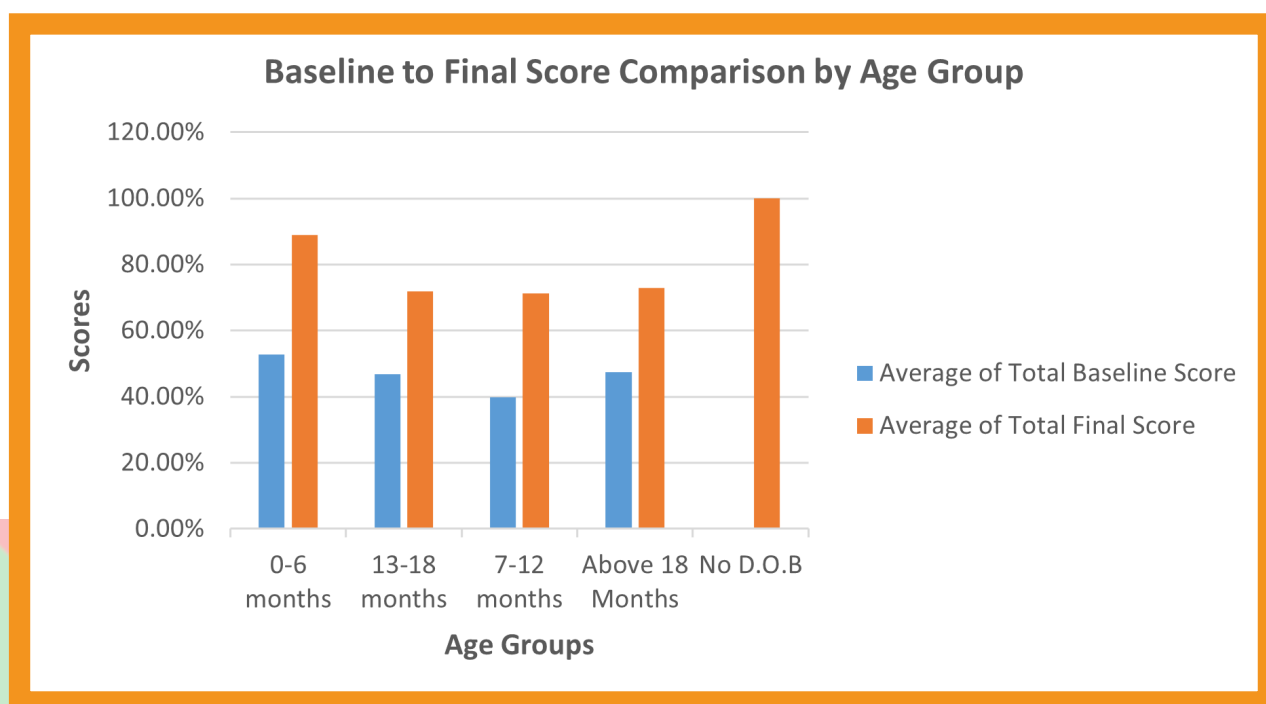
EQUIPPING INDIVIDUALS: STARTING FROM BIRTH

Our Baby Programme fosters playful interactions between guardians and babies through home visits and neighbourhood playgroups, aiming to achieve key developmental milestones in social-emotional growth, physical health, and language and cognitive skills.

In 2023, we had **67** babies enrolled in this programme.



Overall, **73%** improvement in babies' scores towards reaching developmental milestones from baseline to final in 2023.

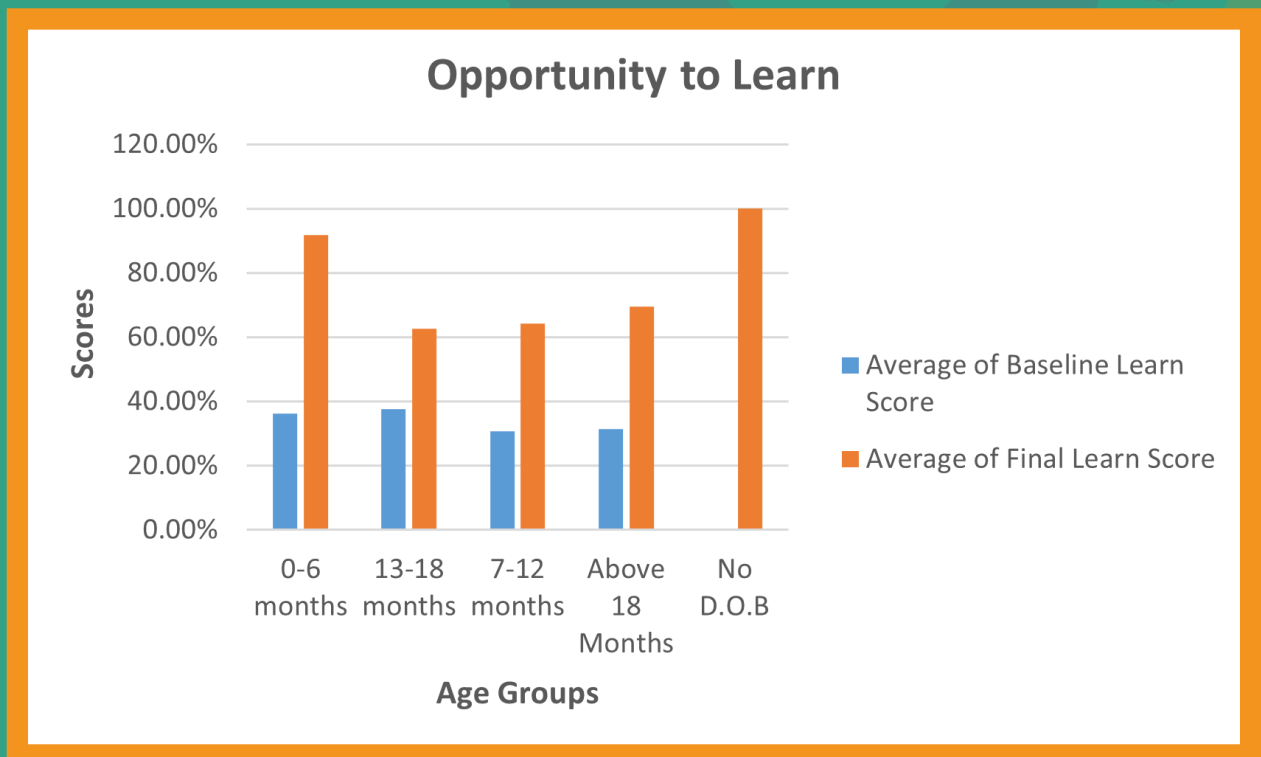




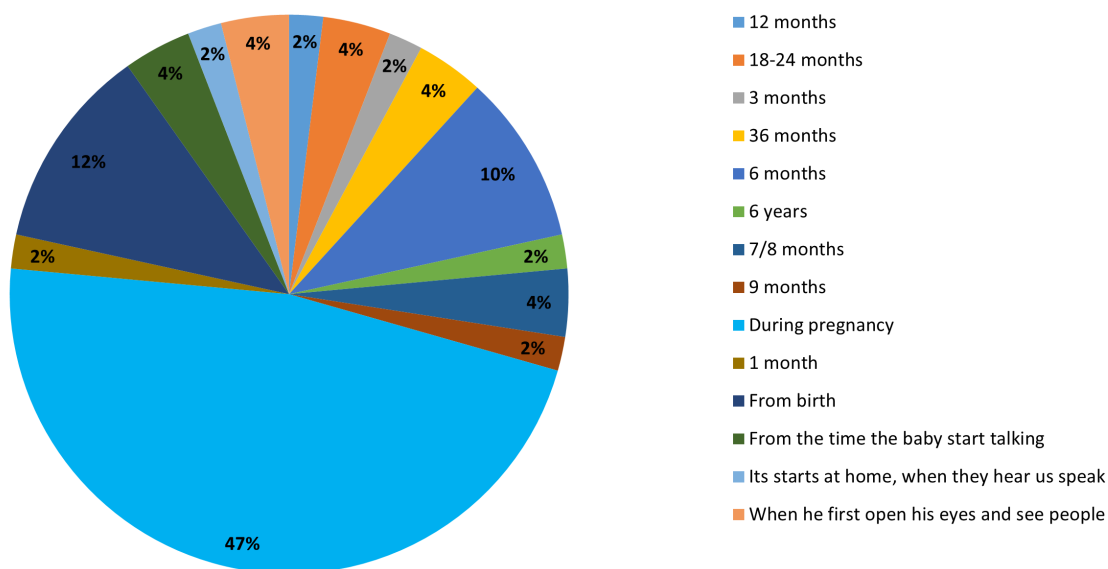
SPOTLIGHT ON CHANGE IN LEARNING



The greatest improvement (**135%**) was within the Opportunity to Learn category, which works towards age-appropriate milestones for babies' vision & coordination, language, and cause & effect.



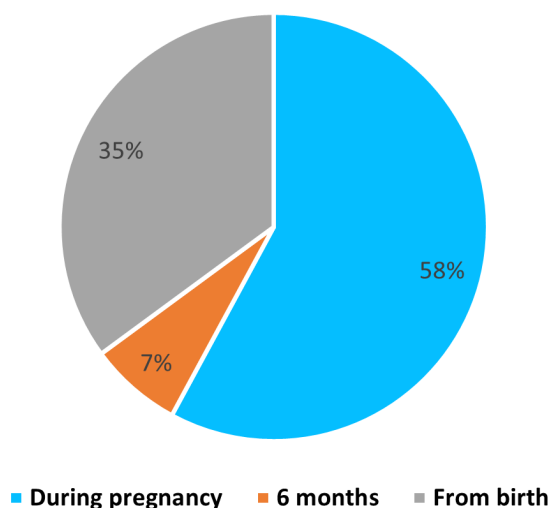
Baseline: When do children start learning?



There was a notable shift in guardian’s understanding of when a baby starts learning. At the beginning of the year, **63%** guardians believed babies start learning from pregnancy birth, but this had increased to **93%** by the end of the year.*

Overall, the shift in perspectives between the baseline and end-line in 2023 seems to reflect a deeper understanding and articulation of parental responsibilities... The most notable changes include an increase in responses related to attention, love, support, as well as an emergence of new categories such as emotional support and education and learning in the end-line assessment. This proves that due to Thanda’s Baby Programme, guardians developed an understanding of their multifaceted role in teaching their babies.*

Endline: When do children start learning?





**Moyo, Sobongile, External Report on Thanda's Baby Programme 2023*

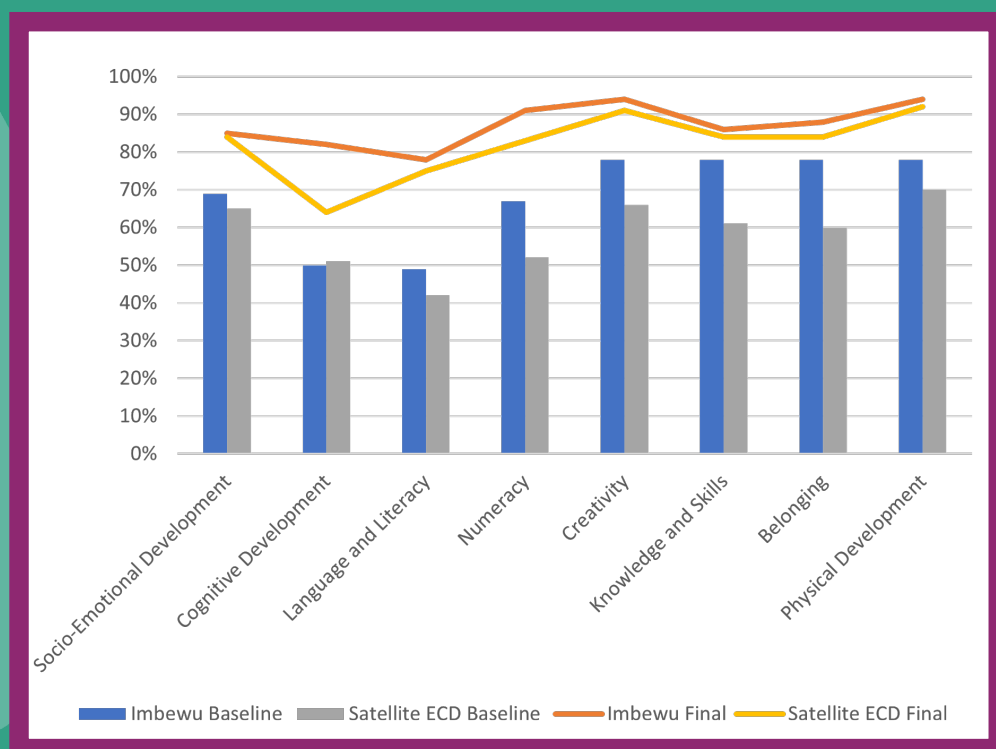
EQUIPPING INDIVIDUALS: ENABLING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Our Community Centre-based Imbewu ECD, Satellite ECDs, and Fun Foundations ECD groups ensure that children receive learning opportunities, regardless of how isolated their location may be.

In 2023, 287 children attended these programmes, gaining access to Early Learning opportunities they otherwise would not have had.

Our curriculum, designed specifically for the rural South African context, has been validated by independent assessments, which have shown significant improvements in children's skills.

In 2023, children in our Imbewu ECD programme improved by 53% on average and those in our Satellite ECD programme improved by 42% on average.





55
Tune
Kantelwa
Nangoma
Finger
The



EQUIPPING INDIVIDUALS: INCLUDING CHILDREN LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

Thanda offers children with learning and developmental challenges the chance to learn alongside their peers, fostering a sense of belonging within their community. This inclusive environment also encourages their classmates to accept, support, and include friends with challenges, just as they would any other child.

20

of children with disabilities supported

2

Facilitation of child dependency grants

30

of therapy sessions for ECD children (with an occupational therapist)

217

of therapy sessions for ECD children

In 2023 we helped children with a range of disabilities including:



Cerebral Palsy

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Speech Delay

Down Syndrome

ADHD

Diplegia

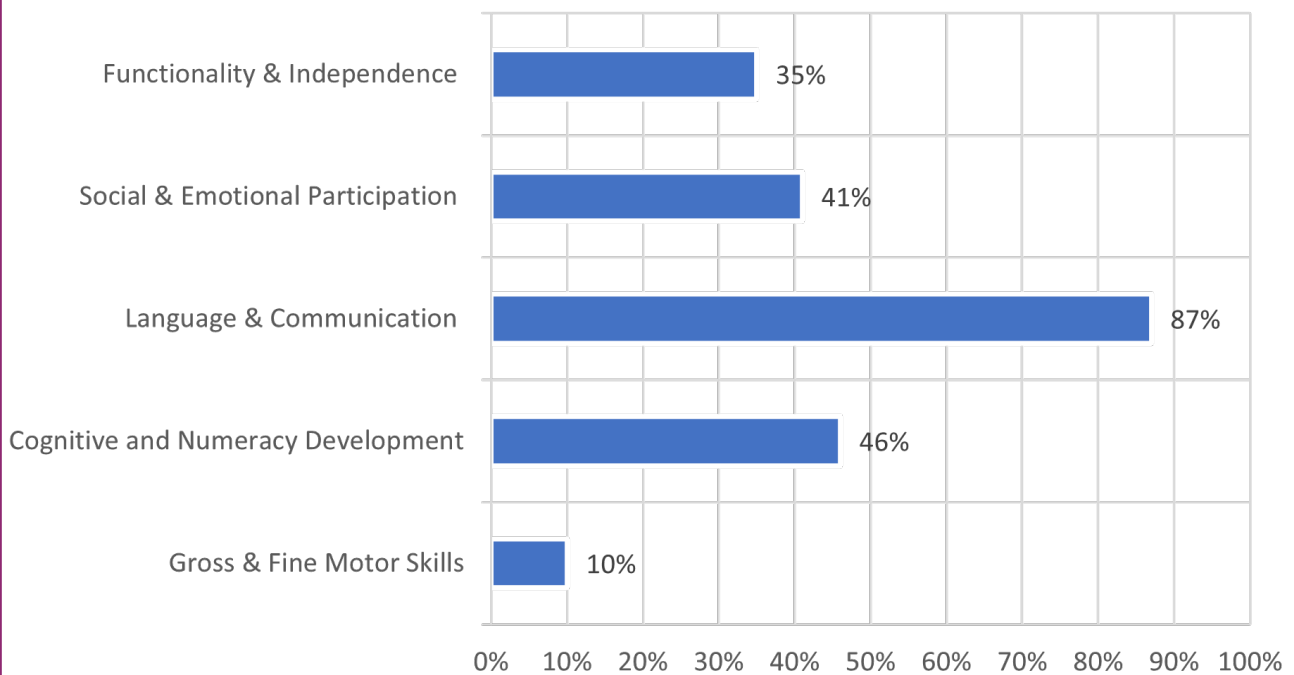
Hemiplegia

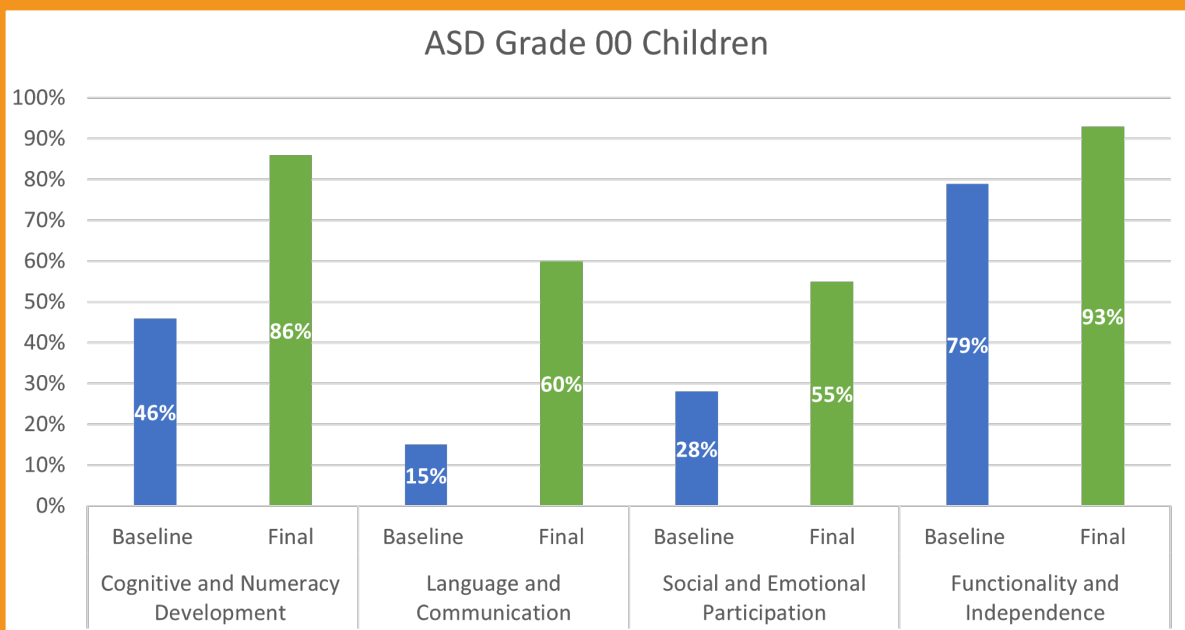
Epilepsy



In 2023, we observed improvements across all assessed skills in our 0-7 year age group, with an outstanding **87% increase in language and communication abilities.**

Percentage Change Per Skill





Two children in our ECD (Grade 00) are living with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In 2023, both made significant progress, obtaining new skills and reaching milestones across various categories. These include following a beat, matching shapes and colours, sorting, creating simple patterns, using basic sign language to communicate, engaging in parallel play, expressing moods and emotions, independently using the toilet, eating and drinking, and maintaining concentration for short periods.





MPILO (4), AUTISM

Mpilo enrolled in 2022 and initially struggled with listening to his teachers, following instructions, and participating in classroom activities. He was very withdrawn, avoided interaction with other children, and had difficulty managing his emotions, which led to frustration when trying to communicate. He also had trouble using utensils for self-feeding.



Since joining Thanda, Mpilo has shown remarkable improvement. He now enjoys classroom activities, is more empathetic towards his classmates, and actively participates in play and sharing. With Thanda's support and a referral to the local clinic, he has started medication to help manage his frustrations and has become better at communicating with his teacher and peers. He listens to and follows instructions more effectively and can now feed himself independently!

Overall, Mpilo demonstrated a **163%** improvement in Functionality & Independence in 2023, including learning to use the toilet on his own and communicating some preferences and needs through gestures, signs, symbols, or words.

EQUIPPING INDIVIDUALS:

ENABLING CHILDREN TO CATCH-UP

Our Thandukwazi Programme, designed for children in grades R-2, uses the Red Flag Assessment tool to track individual progress. Developed by our partners, Siyakwazi, this tool evaluates whether children are meeting their cognitive and motor skill milestones for their age group.

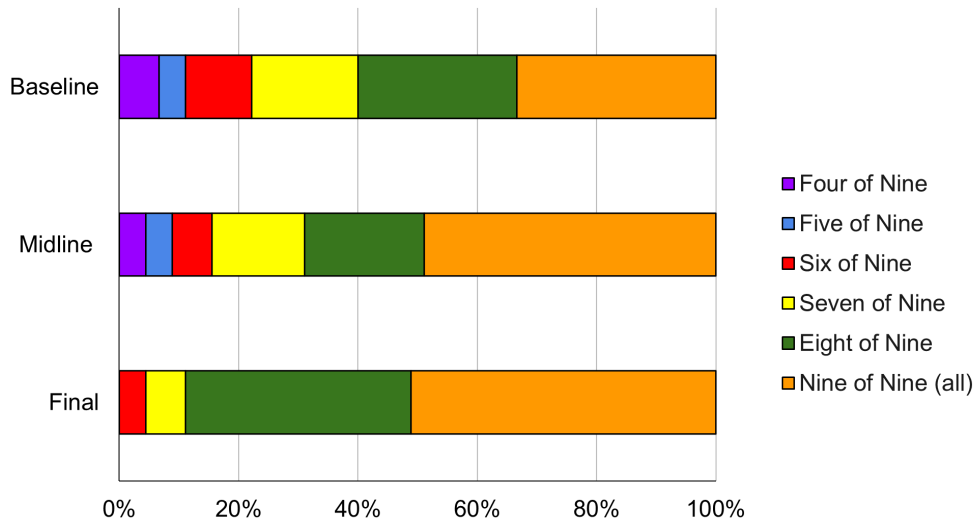
Our facilitators conduct a series of nine activities with their groups, including games that assess abilities such as coordination, writing, memory, counting, pattern recognition, and following instructions. Children who successfully complete six or more activities are classified as 'no red flag,' while those who complete fewer than six are 'red flagged.'

The graphs below illustrate the children's progress during 2023 by depicting their results at baseline, midline and final assessment in 2023. Across all grades the number of children who could successfully complete all 9 activities increased between baseline and final assessment. In grades R and 1, at the final year assessment there was no longer a single child red flagged in either of these assessed grade groups.

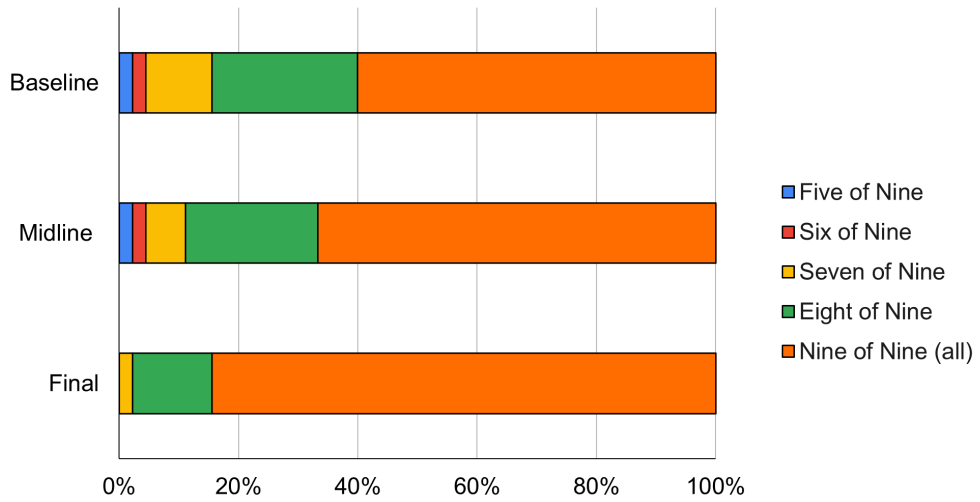
Notably, none of the red-flagged children had participated in a Thanda ECD Programme. Of those who completed baseline, midline, and final assessments, 53% of the Grade R children, 40% of the Grade 1 children, and 33% of the Grade 2 children had attended Thanda ECD.



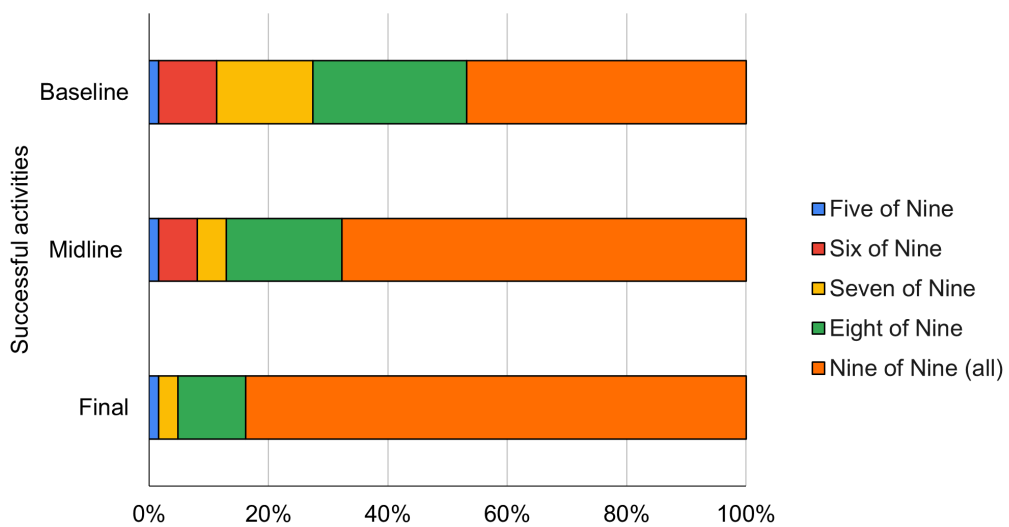
Red Flag: Grade R - Successful Activities



Red Flag: Grade 1 - Successful Activities



Red Flag: Grade 2 - Successful Activities



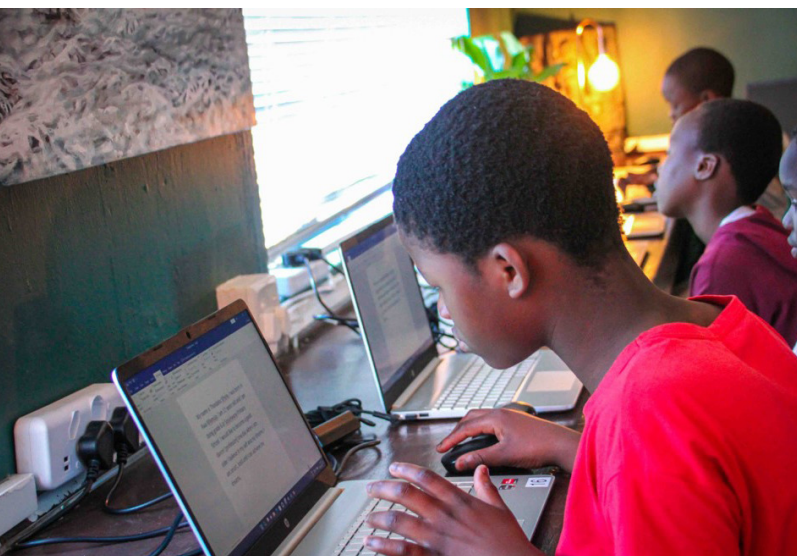


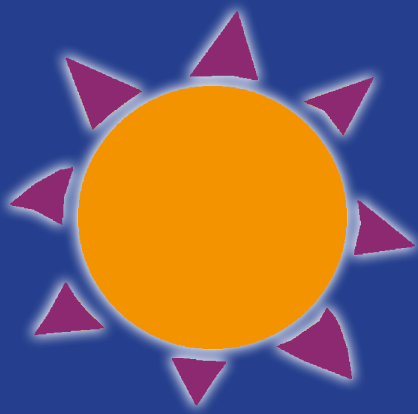
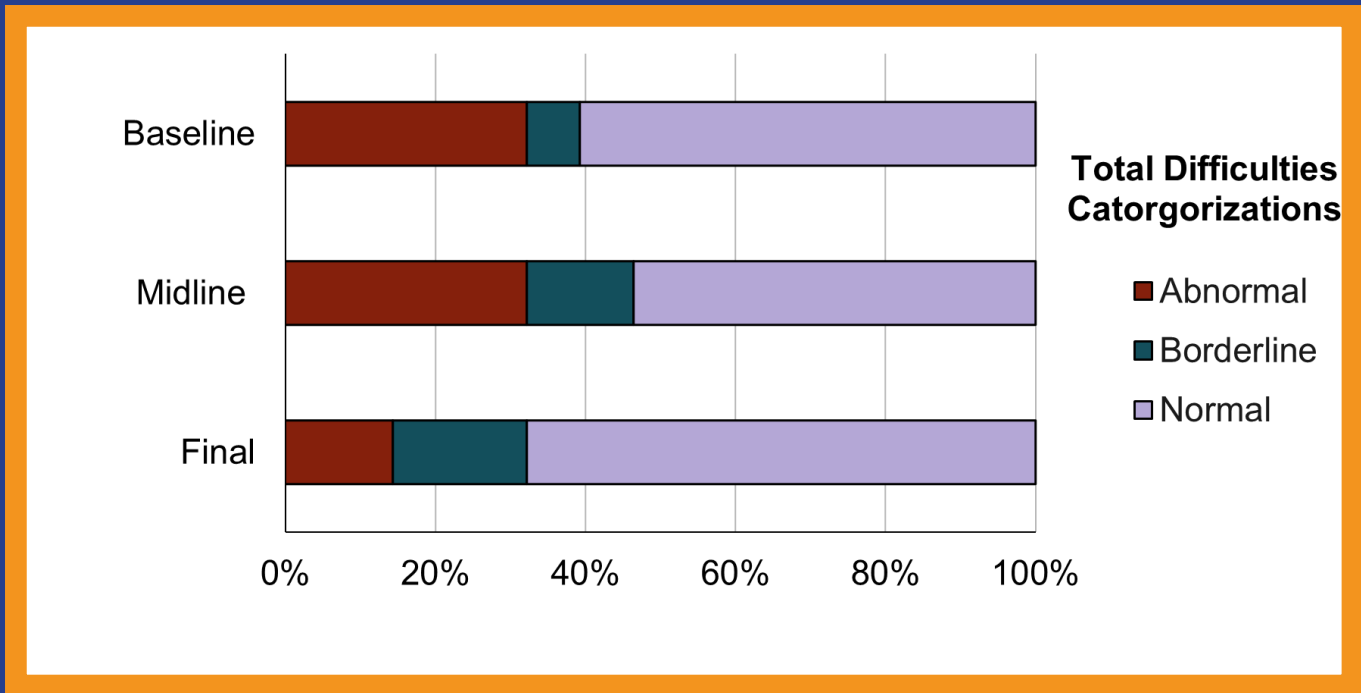


EQUIPPING INDIVIDUALS: BUILDING AGENCY AMONGST GIRLS

Our Girls Leadership Programme (Amaqhawekazi) is an intensive 2-year-long programme designed to enhance girls' judgement and decision-making skills, foster a greater sense of community responsibility, and develop their leadership capabilities.

The programme features a range of activities aimed at helping girls develop essential skills in financial management and budgeting, digital literacy, food cultivation, and resume writing. This multifaceted approach equips girls with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the real world.





The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a short emotional and behavioural screening tool used around the world. The SDQ evaluates five categories: Emotional Problems, Conduct Problems, Hyperactivity Problems, Peer Problems, and Prosocial Scale. The first four categories are combined to produce a total difficulties score for the children.



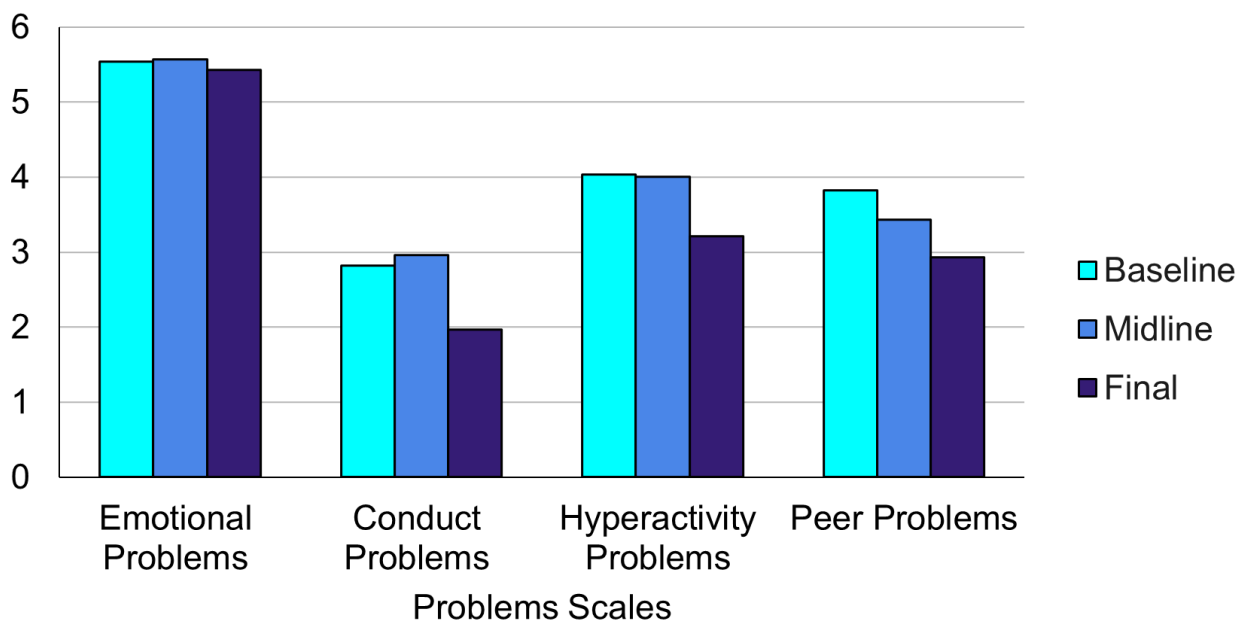
As shown in the graph above, girls in Amaqhawekazi demonstrated positive improvements from their baseline to final assessments, indicating that fewer experienced issues in these categories by the end of the programme compared to the beginning. When compared with the control group, these results suggest a positive correlation between participation in Amaqhawekazi and a reduction in problems in the assessed areas.



In percentage change terms, the average from baseline to final decreases (in other words the number of difficulties experienced improves) as follows:

- ◆ Emotional problems: 2%
- ◆ Conduct Problems: 30%
- ◆ Hyperactivity, Problems 20%
- ◆ Peer Problems: 23%

Average Problems Scores Across Subscales: Baseline, Midline and Final





BOYS PROGRAMME & GIRLS PROGRAMME

These gender-specific programmes are available to children from Grade 5 onwards. They explore topics crucial for those navigating the complexities of adolescence.

2023 ENROLMENT

Girls Programme – 190

Boys Programme – 120



SIYAZAZI

Siyazazi means ‘KNOW YOURSELF’ as this programme aims to develop a child’s inner voice so that they have the confidence to make intentional decisions about their life. It caters to children from Grade 3 to Grade 4.

2023 ENROLMENT

332

EQUIPPING INDIVIDUALS: BUILDING STRONG BODIES & MINDS

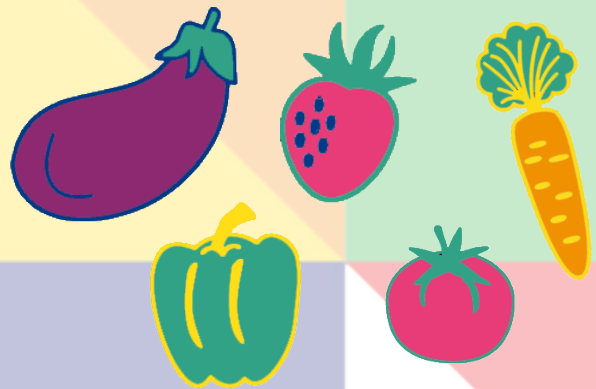
Meals provided 2023

130,798



Meals provided 2008-2023

1,304,413



STRENGTHENING HOUSEHOLDS:

SUPPORT FOR HOUSEHOLDS OF
CHILDREN IN OUR EARLY LEARNING
& EDUCATION PROGRAMMES



11,559

Library books
borrowed 2023

69,589

Library books
borrowed
2012- 2023

2,988

Home visits 2023

22,351

Home Learning
Packs Distributed
2020-2023

42 Book Dash books Distributed per
household 2020-2023

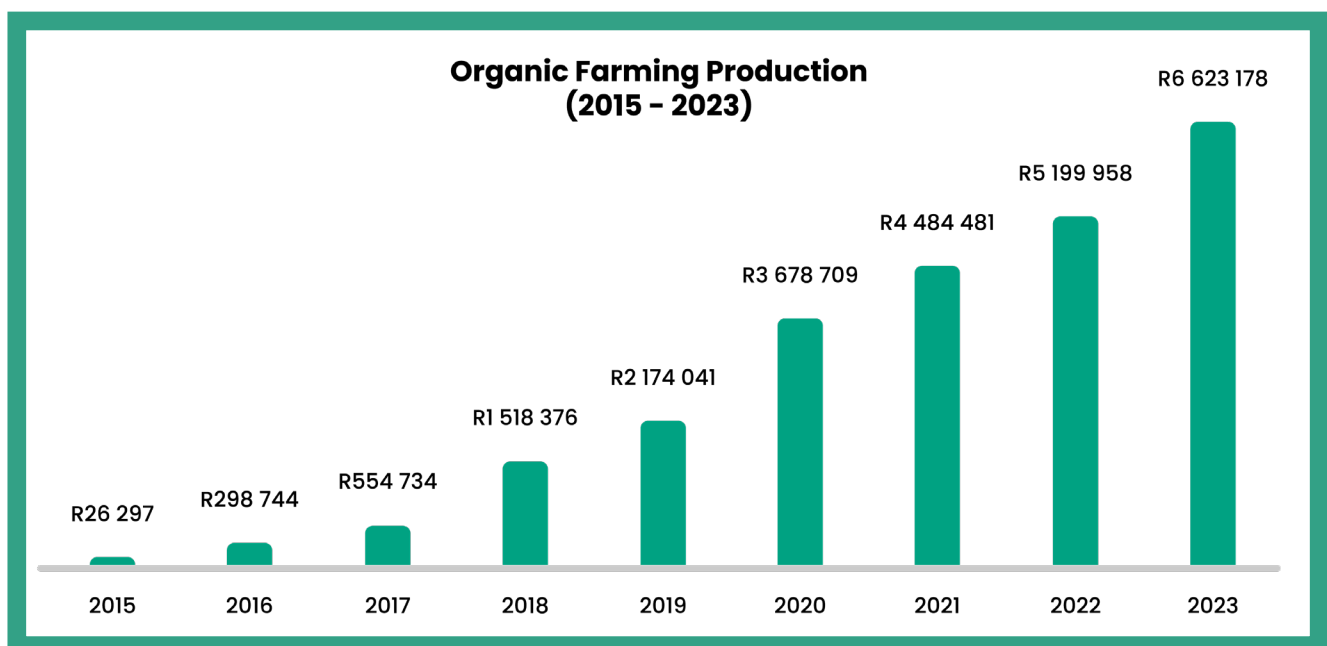
**“SUPPORTING HIGH-QUALITY PARENTING MAY
THEREFORE BE AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO
MITIGATE THE DEVELOPMENTAL RISKS FACED
BY YOUNG CHILDREN FROM DISADVANTAGED
FAMILIES.”**

Nicholson et al., Enhancing the early home learning environment through a brief group parenting intervention, 2016.



STRENGTHENING HOUSEHOLDS: COMBATTING MALNUTRITION & UNEMPLOYMENT: A LOOK BACK ACROSS 2016-2023

Our overall production has increased year on year, from **R26 297** in 2015 to **R6 623 178** in 2023.



STRENGTHENING HOUSEHOLDS: EMPOWERING HOUSEHOLDS TO FARM

Since 2016, Thanda has...

EMPOWERED **1426**
households with
farming skills to grow
food for consumption
and income.

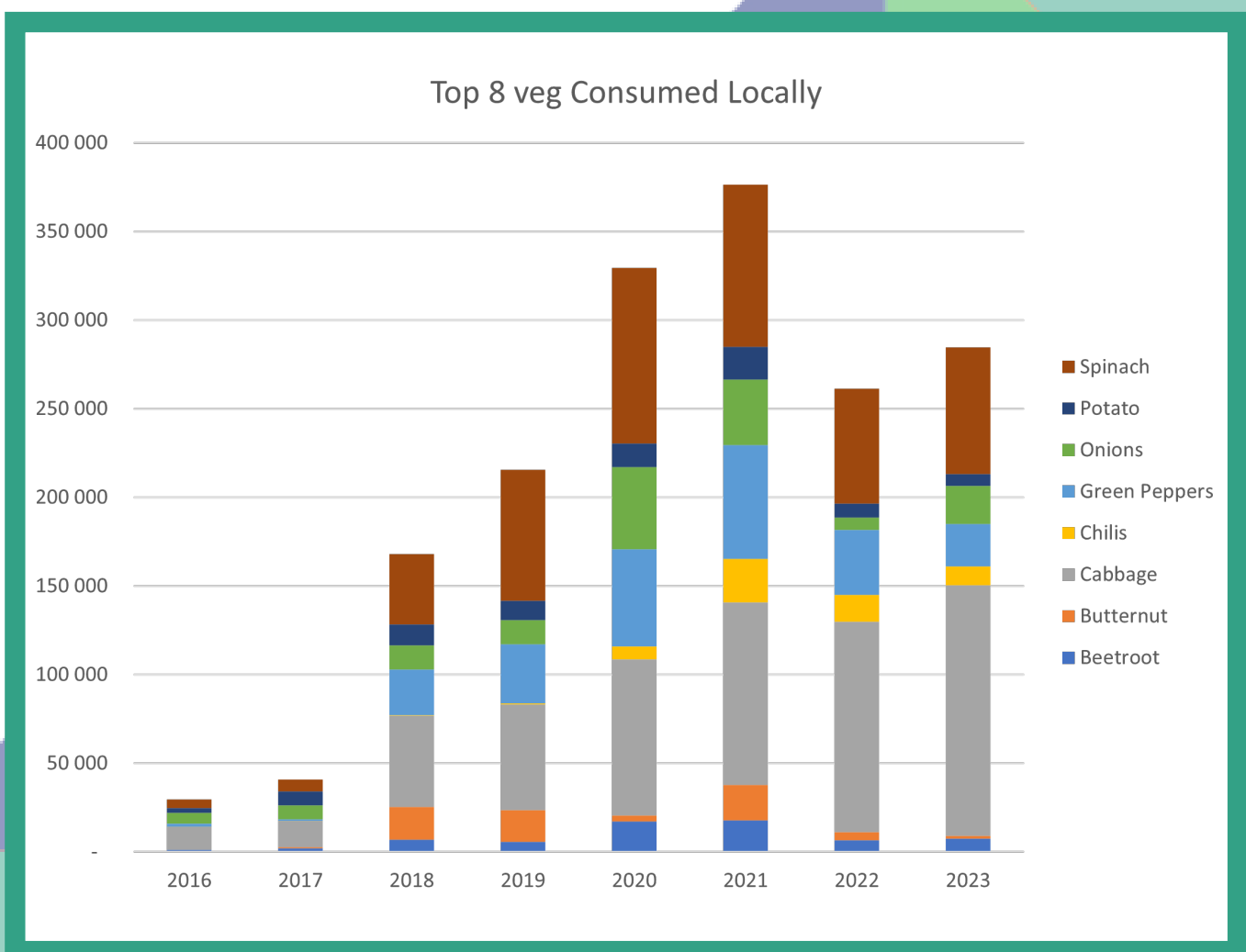
ESTABLISHED
500
household
gardens.

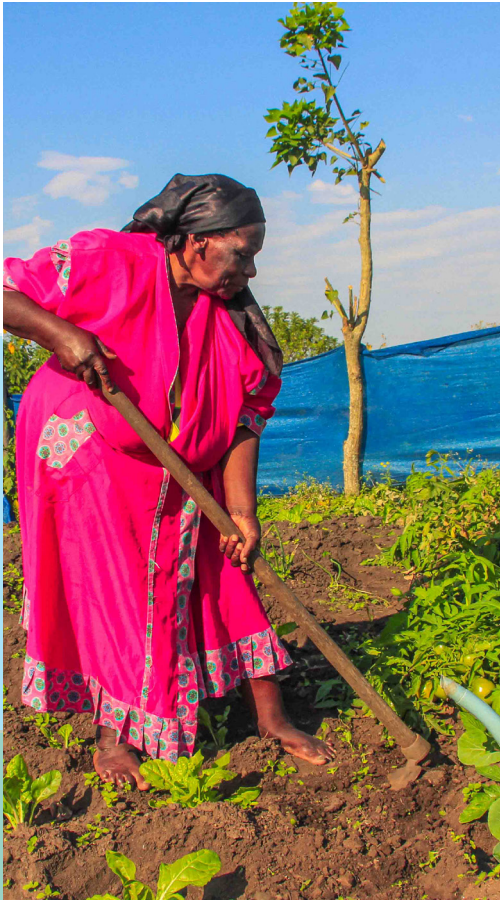
TRAINED & MENTORED
926 farmers as part of
Nisela Organic Farming
Programme.



STRENGTHENING HOUSEHOLDS: ESTABLISHING LOCAL FOOD SECURITY

From 2016 to 2023, vegetables valued at **R31 052 209** (based on retail prices) were cultivated by Thanda's farmers! With **82%** of the produce from Nisela farms and **100%** of Household Garden yields either consumed, shared, or sold within the local community, a nutritional value of **R26 321 557** was directly infused into the community over the past eight years.

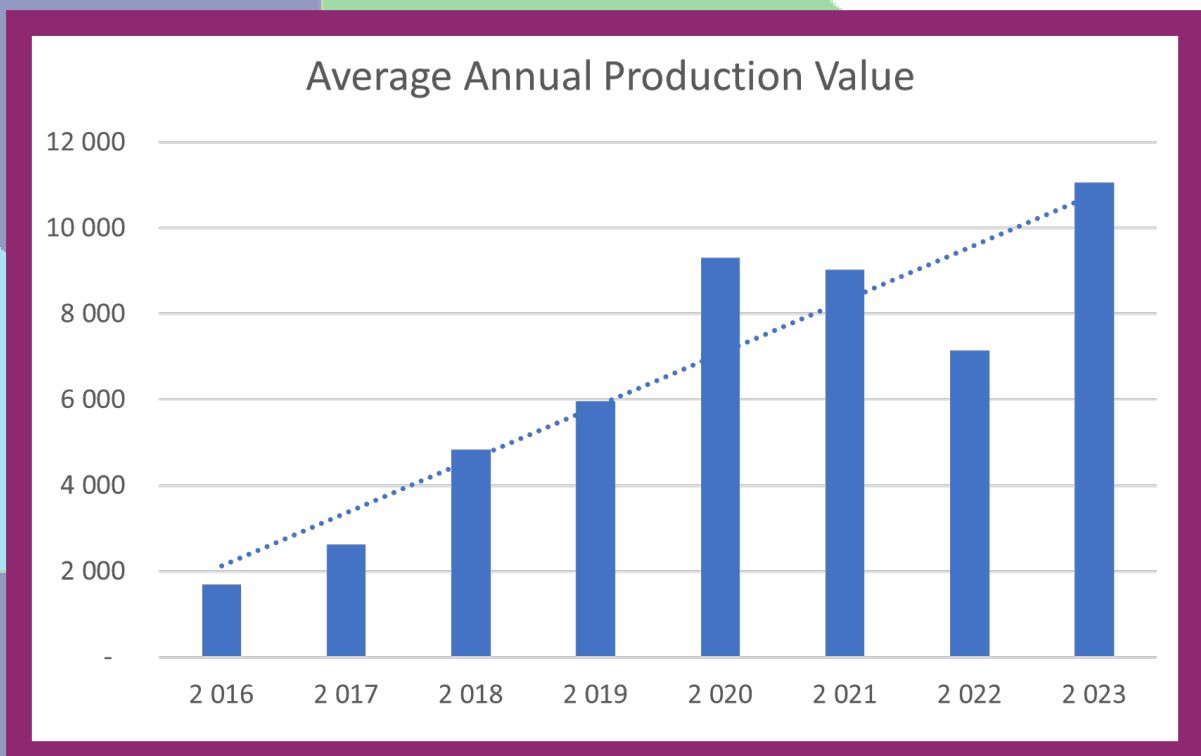




STRENGTHENING HOUSEHOLDS: GENERATING AN INCOME STREAM

With 90% of adults in the local community unemployed, Thanda's Nisela Organic Farming Programme has become a vital lifeline for Mtwalume residents.* In 2023, the average production per farmer was **six times** greater than in 2016, significantly boosting food security and household income.

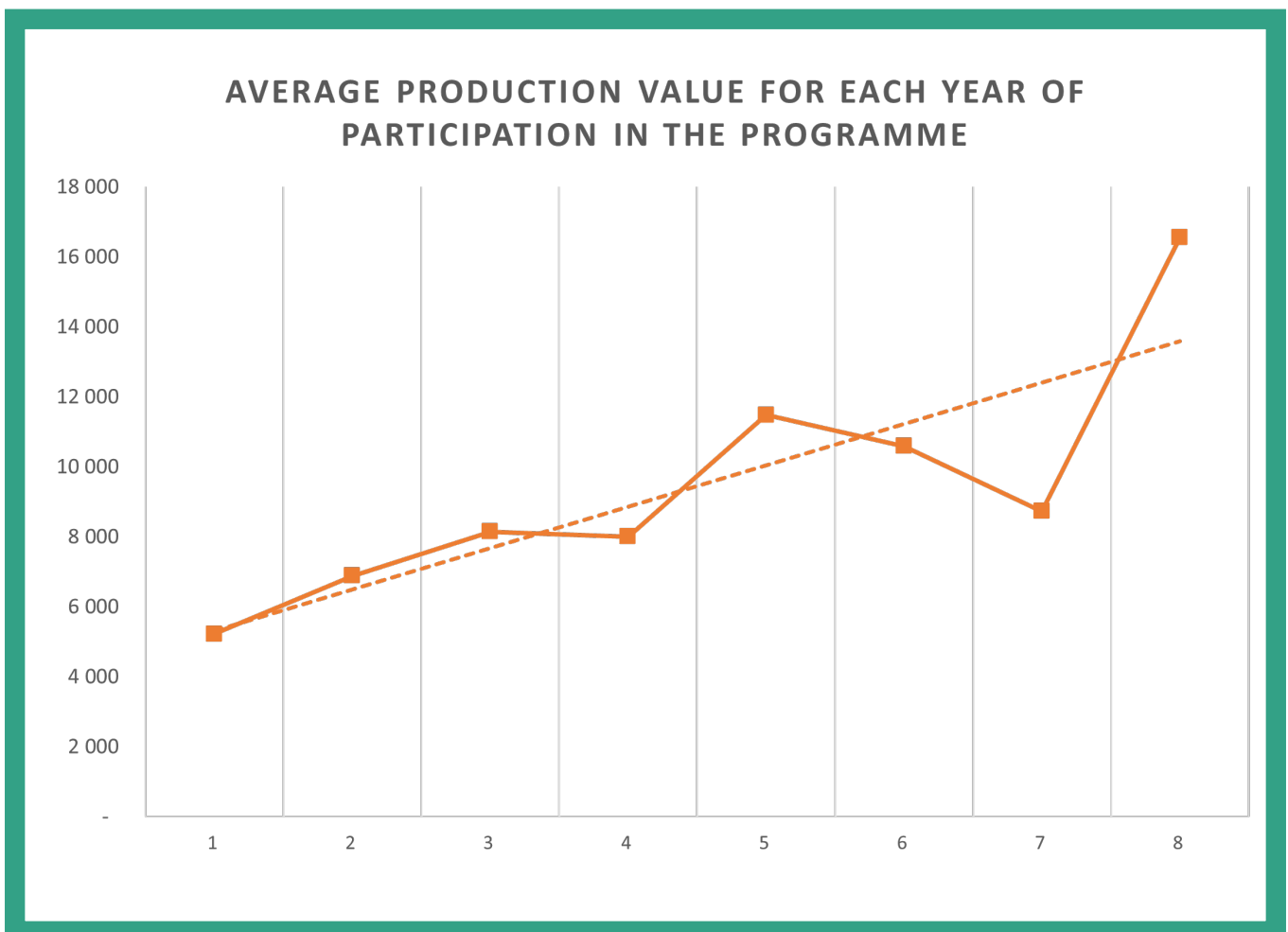
After accounting for individual input costs (such as seedlings and diesel), Thanda's Organic Farming programmes have produced **R28 617 246** worth of food at no additional cost to the community beyond labor and time. The sale of this produce generated a net profit of **R16 035 853** for farmers, effectively doubling the average household income.



*Wazimap Profile: Ugu, KwaZulu-Natal." Wazimap, <https://wazimap.co.za/profiles/municipality-KZN213-umzumbe/>. Accessed 27 Mar. 2023. Data from Census 2011.



The graph below illustrates the value of continued participation in the Nisela Organic Farming Programme, showing a strong correlation between the number of years in the programme and increased production. On average, farmers who remain in the programme can expect a **22% growth in production each year.**





EMPOWERING NEIGHBORHOODS: RESULTS OF PILOT NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKSHOPS 2023

Throughout 2023, we actively piloted our resilience model in four communities, where we assessed, consulted and adapted the pilot programme to become part of our core community services across neighbourhoods in 2024. Here is what two of the families who took part in our pilot programme in 2023 had to share about their experience:

NONHLANHLA explains that the closeness of the relationships between the women in the Baby Programme Group has taken time to establish, but that it is now a very strong bond. “The mothers who meet within this neighbourhood have become much like sisters. Thanda’s intervention has been really important in breaking down walls and even egos that existed prior to our joining the group.”

We have seen that Household Visits coupled with Community Workshops can provide hyper-local psychosocial support to groups of people. Nonhlanhla shares an example, “My husband is very sick and looking after our children





generally falls solely on me. I am a person too. I do get stressed about him and worry about the household too, but I know on Tuesdays, when I go to the group to meet the other mothers at KwaShange (at the Shange household where this group meets) I will find help or get relief from my worries. I am more comfortable sharing my personal stories with the women in Baby Programme Playgroup than other women in my community because we all understand that it is a safe space for all of us to raise our children and each other. Whereas if I shared my domestic, personal and child-related stories with someone that is not within the group, there is a chance that it will turn into community gossip.”

These group interactions have allowed individuals to recognise their shared commitment to the well-being of their children and the application of the valuable lessons acquired through Thanda’s programmes. As Nonhlanhla says, “I thought I knew everything about parenting but my eyes have been opened. I thought that all one needed to do to raise a child was to give them enough food to grow, but that is not so.”

These shared ideas and trust are the core of our effort to strengthen neighbourly bonds, shifting mindsets and fostering community change for lasting self-reliance.

MAMBAMBO MBHELE is a Household Gardener, but she has been part of the Thanda family for a much longer time. Her children attended programmes at Thanda, and her grandchildren now attend, too. She proudly shares their success:

“Oh Thanda! Thanda has been very good to me and my children. My children went to Thanda after-school classes. Do you know that one of them is now a nurse? The other is an office clerk at Mnsinisi Primary School. And my son is now overseas. They are all in these high places because of Thanda!”

She explains that the success of her children is what has made her adamant that her grandchildren should attend programmes today.

“What motivates me to keep on taking my children to Thanda is that I see a community. A community for myself and them. At Thanda, there have been guardian meetings for us, too. We are taught to play, be carefree and love. I remember we were once asked to play skipping rope games and even to create our own skipping ropes using bread plastic packs (giggles). That was very different for me. It was amazing. With strong knees or weak knees, everyone played and had fun.

We work together as a group, a group of people from different homes and backgrounds, but we can come together and create something fun together. These activities made me realise that we needed co-operation. If we did not work together as a unit, it wouldn't work. We ended up as a group of beings that think and feel the same thing. This is an important lesson to learn.”

“My child, you don't understand the difference it (Household Gardening Programme) has made. When I plant and harvest, I am able to feed and share with my family. I am also able to share with my neighbour who doesn't have food, and we all eat. As a community, we have had a few things that have brought us together, but I can say that through farming and gardening (with Thanda), I am now able to go to another 'mama' and speak to her about her garden and share ideas.”

Neighborhood advantages are all the protective factors that increase resilience for the citizens who live there. Within the context of promoting resilience among children, community connections emerged as a significant neighborhood advantage. (Beese, S et al. Flexible Resources Key to Neighborhood Resilience for Children: A Scoping Review, 2023)



PARTNER WITH US

Thanda is a registered Non-profit organisation (085-981-NPO) and Public Benefit Organisation (930031027). We currently have over 30 partners working toward building a stronger community in Mtwalume. As our work grows, however, so does our need for more partners.

Contact us at info@thanda.org if you would like to explore a possible partnership!



WWW.THANDA.ORG



FOLLOW

GIVE

CONNECT