The Group Deputy Chairperson's Pledge

Good day, friends. As Chairperson of Afrika Tikkun Services Board, it is my honour to address you today and share our commitment to building a more inclusive organization for all.

For over 30 years, Afrika Tikkun has served vulnerable children and youth in South Africa. Through education, health care, food security and social services, we have made a difference in thousands of young lives. However, we recognize there is more we can do.

From this year onwards, Afrika Tikkun will take decisive action to become a leader in disability inclusion. We will begin by reviewing our policies, programs and facilities to identify and remove barriers to participation. Our staff will receive more training on disability awareness and serving clients of all abilities. We pledge to recruit and hire more persons with disabilities into various roles within our organisation.

Most importantly, we will collaborate with the disability community to amplify voices that have gone unheard. Together, we will develop initiatives that empower, support, and fully include people with disabilities in the life of our organization.

The journey towards inclusion is a marathon, not a sprint. There will be challenges along the way. But I am confident that by working together, with open hearts and minds, we can build a culture of belonging for all.

At Afrika Tikkun, we believe that diversity is our greatest strength. When we open doors to participation, we open doors to human potential.

In 2024 and beyond, we re-dedicate ourselves to this vision. Please join us as we take bold steps towards a future where no one is left behind. I thank you all for your partnership and look forward to all we will accomplish on this journey. Together, we can build a more just and equitable society for all our brothers and sisters.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marc Lubner

EVENTS

Talent and Unity at our Annual Talent Day Event

We celebrated our annual Talent Day on July 27, 2024, at the DP Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg. The event brought together beneficiaries from all four of our Gauteng centres: Arekopaneng, Phuthaditjaba, Uthando, and Wings of Life. Now in its 16th year, Talent Day has evolved from an inter-centre competition to a multifaceted celebration of youth talent, inclusivity, donor relationships, and fundraising. It aligns with our "From Cradle to Career" mission, emphasizing wellness, partnerships, and excellence in youth development.

Thomas Taole, Program Lead for Health and Fitness explained the event's significance:

> **Talent Day is about team building, boosting morale, engaging donors, and promoting inclusive physical and mental wellbeing. We're also celebrating our 30th anniversary this year.**

The event featured activities for various age groups. Younger participants enjoyed the Bamabanani Races, focusing on motor skill development. Older attendees competed in singing, sports, and running events. Visual art displays and a musical performance by the Field Band Foundation showcased creative talents. Recent years have seen the inclusion of alumni participation, strengthening our "From Cradle-to-Career" vision. This approach ensures that all core program participants and staff benefit from the event's team-building aspects.

Generous contributions from sponsors like HSBC, Masana, PWC, Spoor & Fischer, Pedro's, and the Lions Cricket team provided the venue, t-shirts, prizes, transportation, and catering. Centres competed for top honours in various categories. Arekopaneng Centre emerged as the overall winner, followed by Wings of Life, Uthando, and Phutaditjhaba. Rankings were determined by cumulative performance across individual and group activities.

Uthando Centre's Acting General Manager, Precious Machira, expressed pride in their improved performance:

> **After securing only one trophy last year, we're thrilled to have claimed five trophies this time around.**

While celebrating achievement, we ensure Talent Day remains inclusive and motivating for all participants. Outstanding performers may receive additional opportunities through the SOBC Ambassadors program, including the chance to represent our organisation internationally.

Talent Day not only showcases the diverse talents of beneficiaries but also strengthens bonds with corporate partners, ensuring continued support for vital programs. As we look to the future, Talent Day will remain a cornerstone event, evolving to meet changing needs while staying true to its core mission of empowering young people to reach their full potential.

THE AFRIKA TIKKUN DISABILITY INCLUSION NEWSLETTER

Afrika Tikkun • Nurturing Lives Cradle to Career • Issue Number: 0001 • August 2024

Help Us Name This Newsletter!

We're excited to bring you the latest insights, updates, and stories from the world of Afrika Tikkun. But there's just one thing missing—a name for our newsletter! We want to hear from you! Send us your most creative, catchy, or clever name suggestions.

The winning name will be featured on the masthead every month, and the winner will receive a special prize. Submit your ideas via email at disabilitynews@afrikatikkun.org.za before 20 September 2024. Let's make this newsletter truly yours!

30 Afrika Tikkun

FIND US ONLINE
www.afrikatikkun.org

Share Your Story!

Have Afrika Tikkun's programs made a difference in your life as a person with a disability or do you know of any? We want to hear your story! Whether you're a current participant or past beneficiary, please share how our inclusive initiatives have impacted you or someone you know. Your testimonial can inspire others and help us showcase the real-world effects of our work. Submit your story today and let your voice be heard!

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

NPO In Our Afrika Tikkun Ecosystem Empowers Families Affected By Disability

In Alexandra Township, Johannesburg, Amakhosikazi Amahle NPO is making a significant impact on the lives of mothers and children with disabilities. Co-founded by Sylvia Songca, Mthembukazi Vimbi, and Stanford Mathekga, this community-based organization arose from their personal experiences as parents of children with disabilities. Songca explains,

> **Our journey opened our eyes to the immense challenges faced by families like ours. We felt compelled to create an organization that could provide the understanding, resources, and assistance that we wished we had.**

Amakhosikazi Amahle, meaning "Beautiful Women" in isiZulu, primarily supports children with global delay, epilepsy, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, stroke, and blindness - the most common disabilities in Alexandra Township. Currently assisting about 15 children, the organization focuses on counselling services for mothers and caregivers to help them cope emotionally.

Recognizing broader needs, Amakhosikazi Amahle plans to expand its services to include food parcels, sanitary wear, and clothing. This will address the practical, day-to-day challenges faced by families with disabled children.

To increase its impact, Amakhosikazi Amahle has formed a partnership with us as a well-known non-profit dedicated to youth development and community empowerment. This collaboration emerged from Amakhosikazi Amahle's participation in our workshops for mothers of children with disabilities. While we did not directly contribute to founding Amakhosikazi Amahle, their shared commitment has led to a mutually supportive relationship.

As this partnership evolves, Amakhosikazi Amahle sees significant potential for growth. The organization is exploring new resources, sponsorships, and fundraising activities to expand its services and reach more families in need.

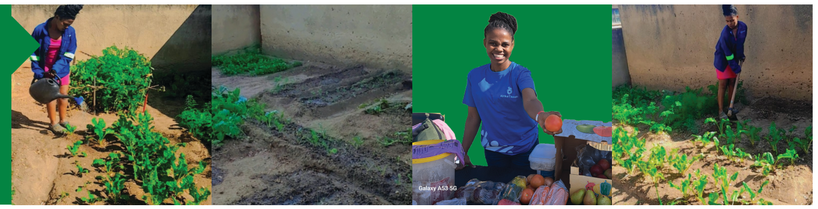
Amakhosikazi Amahle's work exemplifies a grassroots approach to addressing the complex needs of families with disabilities in underserved communities. By combining personal experience with a deep understanding of local challenges, the organization is uniquely positioned to provide targeted, effective support.

If you are interested in learning more about the activities of Amakhosikazi Amahle, please contact:

Mthembukazi Vimbi
E: mthembukazi1975@gmail.com
T: 010 035 5474
M: 071 653 2248
M: 061 020 1077

COMMUNITY IMPACT

How Lucky Nurtured a Professional Career and a Garden



Lucky Magomarele's journey is one of determination and success. After finishing her marketing degree, Lucky, who has a disability, faced unemployment. She decided to create her own opportunities by starting a company called Factual Point Holdings.

While looking for business opportunities online, Lucky discovered us (Afrika Tikkun). She took their psychometric test and passed, leading to a one-month work readiness program in late 2023. After completing the program, she volunteered at our centre in Alexandra Township to gain experience.

In January 2024, Lucky's hard work paid off. She was invited to interview for a management training program sponsored by ABSA. For three months, she trained at Randburg office, developing skills in data analysis and management.

Lucky's training with us prepared her well for the corporate world. She learned about improving processes, working on complex data projects, and presenting to leadership teams. These experiences boosted her skills and confidence. After much effort, Lucky landed a job as a Junior Data Analyst at ABSA Group Limited. Her role involves analysing processes, working on data projects, and presenting findings to help make business decisions. While building her corporate career, Lucky didn't forget her entrepreneurial dreams. She started a small farming business under her company, Factual Point. She began growing vegetables on a small plot of land. Lucky faced challenges in her farming venture, including people dumping trash on her land. Undeterred, she moved her garden to her backyard and continues to save money to buy a larger plot.

We not only helped Lucky's professional growth but also supported her entrepreneurial spirit. They helped her secure a scholarship for aspiring entrepreneurs. Lucky credits our programs for her success. The work readiness program helped her find her career path.

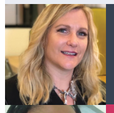
She also benefited from networking opportunities and leadership experiences. Lucky, who has cerebral palsy, appreciates our commitment to including people with disabilities. Lucky advises young people in Alexandra to get involved with us. She encourages them to be clear about their goals, take initiative, and make the most of available resources. She also recommends volunteering and mentoring as ways to give back and grow.

Recently, Lucky showcased her farming skills at our Talent Day event. She sold her vegetables and connected with other entrepreneurs, demonstrating how far she's come.

Lucky's story shows how she went from job seeker to corporate professional to entrepreneur, all with our support. Her journey embodies the success story we aim to create, proving that with determination and the right opportunities, one can overcome challenges and achieve their dreams.

ORGANOGRAM 2024

Disability Team ATF & ATS



Lana Roy
Programme Lead

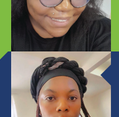
Noluthando Moyana
Project Lead ATF

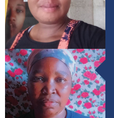
Nthabiseng Moloi
Project Lead ATS

Latchean Mahlanga
Social Worker ATS

Simon Manda
Editor

Diepsloot	Umfuleni	Orange Farm	Uthando	Alexandra
Esther Mfolo Social Auxiliary Worker	Lungelwa Xana Social Auxiliary Worker	Bridget Mathe Social Auxiliary Worker	Ayanda Mahlangu Social Auxiliary Worker	Mabel Sekgantsho Social Auxiliary Worker
Ntandoyenkosi Ncube Case Administrator	Xoliswa Vondo Case Administrator	Mpotse Mofokeng Case Administrator	Faith Semenya Case Administrator	Snowy Sidaki Case Administrator
Utillia Zittha Case Administrator	Mandisa Menziwa Case Administrator	Kamohelo Rantsane Case Administrator	Lebogang Mamabolo Case Administrator	Stella Maswanganyi Case Administrator
		Maria Mashimbye Case Administrator		





THOUGHT PIECE

How Afrika Tikkun Services see the importance of disability Inclusion in South African Workplaces

South Africa faces a significant hurdle in its pursuit of equality and inclusivity: the underutilization of persons with disabilities in the workplace. The statistics are stark - around 90% of people with disabilities are unemployed, with rural areas approaching 100%. This represents not just a social issue, but a substantial economic loss.

Despite legislation like the Employment Equity Act mandating 2% representation of employees with disabilities in large organizations, most businesses fall short. Recent data shows disability representation at only about 1% across all levels, with even lower percentages in management positions. Barriers to participation persist, including prejudices, inadequate accommodations, and limited access to education and skills development.

However, this challenge presents a significant opportunity. Companies embracing disability inclusion aren't just doing the right thing ethically; they're positioning themselves for success. Accenture's research shows that organizations following best practices in disability inclusion outperform their peers, growing more than twice as fast, with higher sales and earnings.

Best Practices for Disability Inclusion:

1. Leadership Commitment: Disability inclusion must be championed from the top.
2. Holistic Accessibility: Extend beyond physical accommodations to include digital accessibility and flexible work arrangements.
3. Strategic Partnerships: Collaborate with disability organizations and educational institutions to expand the talent pool.
4. Employee Resource Groups: Foster connections among employees with disabilities.
5. Universal Design: Adopt principles that benefit all employees, such as live captioning for all content.
6. Comprehensive Benefits: Offer inclusive health and life insurance policies.
7. Flexible Employment Options: Allow for customizable work hours and remote work opportunities.

Case Study: Afrika Tikkun

Our organisation exemplifies effective disability inclusion through its holistic "From Cradle to Career" approach.

Our initiatives include:

1. Inclusive early childhood education
2. Personalized skills development for young people with disabilities
3. Partnerships with employers to create job opportunities for people with disabilty
4. Advocacy for disability rights
5. Holistic support including healthcare and family assistance
6. Use of technology to enhance program accessibility
7. Continuous evaluation and improvement of their strategies

Overcoming Stigma and Misconceptions

A major barrier to disability inclusion is the persistence of outdated assumptions about the capabilities of people with disabilities. To address this, businesses should invest in comprehensive disability awareness training for all employees, especially those in management roles. This training should offer practical guidance on creating inclusive environments and recognizing the unique skills that people with disabilities bring to the workplace.

The Power of Representation

The lack of visible role models with disabilities in leadership positions perpetuates exclusion. Companies where executives openly discuss their own disabilities tend to foster more inclusive workplaces. Encouraging individuals with disabilities to attain leadership positions can have a profound impact on both the organization and society.

The Road Ahead

1. Achieving meaningful disability inclusion requires a multi-stakeholder approach:
2. Government must enforce legislation and incentivize inclusive practices.
3. Businesses should view disability inclusion as a core strategy, not just compliance.
4. Educational institutions need to better support students with disabilities and partner with businesses.
5. Disability organizations should continue advocacy and collaboration with businesses.
6. Media should highlight the achievements of people with disabilities to challenge stereotypes.

While the path to genuine disability inclusion in South African workplaces isn't easy, the potential benefits are immense. By embracing this challenge, we can create a more equitable, innovative, and prosperous South Africa for all.

As management professional Zaheer Ally noted, "The lack of opportunities for persons with disabilities often compels them to accept roles that do not align with their career aspirations or trajectories." It's time to rewrite this narrative and build workplaces where all abilities are recognized and valued.

The future of South African business is inclusive. The question is not whether we can afford to embrace disability inclusion, but whether we can afford not to. The time for action is now.

They see me, not my disability.

Kamohelo Rantsane, 27
Disability Inclusion Case Administrator

Bambanani Programme

Ignite Programme

Level Up Programme

Head Start Programme

Alumni Network