

# **Impact of ACAT's Programme on Children and Youth – the next generation**



**January to December 2023**



## Impact: Burying hunger!



“ The prevalence of childhood stunting in South Africa is alarmingly high, with around 27% of children under five years of age affected, meaning that these children will likely not reach their full growth and development potential. ”

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The ACAT alternative to malnutrition is teaching families and children how to grow their own food and eat nutritiously ... one family, one trench, and one garden at a time!



*Getting children involved in the joy of gardening and producing food to eat and to sell*





## Impact: 611 teenagers empowered through 15 Courses!

During 2023, ACAT conducted a series of 15 Youth Basic Life Skills courses in the communities in which we operate. The impact has been astounding! Lessons included a healthy mindset, family relationships, health and sexuality, career guidance and choices, how to establish a vegetable garden, basic business skills and the power of saving. The gospel was presented, and time was given for teenagers to talk and ask many questions. We are pleased with the feedback that they "felt heard, seen, helped and loved!"





## Impact of youth training

ACAT works with families – reaching children through its programmes. Here are some of the gardens and businesses that were established by teenagers as a result of the training their families have received through ACAT, and through their life skills courses. The power of saving money (into whatever container they have) has become very popular too!







**Selusiwe Dladla** is now 16 years old, she lives in the Mondlo area, and her family has been in the ACAT programme since 2018. She lives with her sister and grandparents. Selusiwe is now in Grade 9, and her favourite subjects are Technology and IsiZulu. She dreams about becoming a doctor. She recently attended the Youth Basic Life Skills and said that the career guidance was so very helpful to her. Her granny says that she is very helpful around the house and never needs to be reminded to do household chores, which include helping her in the vegetable garden.

Selusiwe's grandmother says:

"I have seen the benefit of the ACAT training for myself, and now for my granddaughter who came back from training with great confidence, and more willing to assist around the family. She also received seeds. I was so thankful because I assisted her to plant them, and we enjoyed eating the extra crops. Ever since I joined ACAT, I have planted seasonally, and my family has benefitted a lot because it saves money because I don't have to buy vegetables."

2313



**Busiswa Cele** is 12 years old, and in Grade 6, and lives in the Mzombe area with her 3 brothers, a sister and many cousins. They live with their grandmother.

Her favourite subjects at school are Maths and English. Busiswa's family has been involved in ACAT for at least 6 years. Her grandmother says of her:

"ACAT's activities have really benefited my entire family, especially with vegetable gardening. We produce our own fresh vegetables which we eat.

"I used to spend lot of money on buying vegetables, but not any more. Since I joined ACAT I have learned that children learn by doing. I have really seen the importance of involving my children when gardening. They show interest as they see fresh produce growing, and enjoy eating healthily.

"At the moment none of the children have their own plots, as they are always busy helping me with planting, watering, and collecting compost. They love to pick the vegetables and eat the fruit







**Londeka Selepe** (in blue) and her younger brother are well looked after by their granny Nokwazi in the Nquthu area. Nokwazi says they are the beneficiaries of her activities since she joined ACAT. Londeka, as young as she is, is always willing to help Nokwazi as a messenger, and in the garden by fetching water to water the plants. She also helps in the kitchen by washing the dishes. Londeka is doing very well at school, and is now in Grade 6. Her favourite subjects are Maths and Natural Science, and her favourite sport is netball and running. She loves to go to church with her granny where she and her little brother attend Sunday school class. Her granny says:

"I have seen the benefit of producing your own fresh vegetables – it helps me to be able to feed my family. If I had the means to fence my entire homestead, I would have planted vegetables all around my it! But for now, I plant just what I can –using thorn bushes and some scrap metal – so that it protects my garden from cows and goats".

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**Aphelele Vilakazi** is 14, in Grade 8, and lives in the Ntumeni area. He is a very happy boy, and enjoys helping around the home and especially looking after goats, cattle and vegetable gardening. He has shown great interest and a love for looking after fruit trees by watering and putting compost around them. Sometimes he helps his father fetch their cattle. He works closely with his mother and his brother. His mother says:

"Since I joined ACAT I have achieved a lot to improve my homestead. All the activities I now do, were taught to me by the ACAT Extension Co-ordinators in our area. My activities with the cattle, the orchard, fowls, goats and gardening have really become a bonding factor with me and my family. My children have copied what we as parents do, and enjoy working around me and their father. Truly my family is able to minimise costs by what we have achieved, and through the benefits of being a Savings and Loans Group member.

"Aphelele is bright and very keen to participate at school. Our activeness in ACAT sustainable programmes has had great influence in Aphelele's future dream of becoming a farmer. As young as he is, he very certain about it.

"When he attended the Youth Basic Life Skills course, he was very active during the deep trench gardening training, and could show his peers how it's done! "





2562



**Andisiwe Mvelase** is 15 and is in Grade 9. He lives in the Ntumeni area, and his favourite school subjects are Maths, Social Science and English. His dream is to become a doctor, because he wants to help people live better health-wise. His favourite sport is soccer. He enjoys helping his mother whenever she asks for help, and helps his aunt in her business, selling and delivering her health products. He enjoys gardening, working alongside his mother, and helping by weeding, watering and harvesting when their crop is ready. This season they had a great onion crop, which is enough for their family to eat. His mother says:

"We have participated in the ACAT programme for about 9 years. Andisiwa is more certain about his future career of becoming a doctor since he attended the ACAT Youth Basic Life Skills course where he had the opportunity to work through Career Guidance. He uses the YBLS manual, and reads his Bible. I am so happy that my son is helpful around the house, and is always willing to assist whenever I need help, from gardening to cleaning the yard. I am so thankful to ACAT for giving my son the opportunity to attend YBLS course. Andisiwe is a very committed responsible young man. I think he will go far."



**Avela Ngcobo** is 13 and in Grade 7. He lives with his grandmother who is a retired school teacher. He helps by gardening, fetching goats, feeding chickens and going to school! Avelo loves his school work, and spends his time on weekends doing his homework. His favourite subjects are English, Natural Science and Social Science. He would love to become a policeman when he finishes school. His granny says:

"I'm so proud of my grandson – he is so helpful to all family members. He is always very keen to help. And so much more so since he attended the YBLS course at ACAT. After that course, he became even more motivated to help me by gardening, watering, planting and feeding chickens. Sometimes he harvests our vegetables and clears up in the garden so that it is ready for the next planting."

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**Wandile Chiya**, 15, is a very quiet boy with a great attitude. He always helps his family, yet he still has time to do well in his school work. He is in Grade 9 now, and his favourite subjects are Maths, Technology and Natural Science. He wants to become a Surveyor. His mother says:

"My son shows a lot of respect to me and everyone in the family. He is always keen to help around the house especially to me as his mother. He enjoys working in the garden by watering, weeding and sometimes harvesting vegetables when they are ready. He also helps by fetching goats."

Wandile says:

"I especially enjoyed the career guidance during Youth Basic Life Skills course. I am now much more confident on what I would love to do when I finish school."

# ACAT's theory of change in action

A real life example of how these two men attended one Youth Basic Life Skills course, which influenced and enabled them to choosing to pursue agri-business as their careers ...

These twins **Siphelele and Siphesihle Duma** attended Youth Basic Life Skills (YBLS) at ACAT in 2015, while they were enrolled in Grade 8. They live in Impendle. The knowledge they acquired at this course served as the foundation for their current ventures.

The twins' involvement in many courses since then has taken the locals, including those who are close to them, by complete surprise.

These young men decided to pursue a career in agriculture, and so they took a few short courses on the production of broilers and pigs.

Their first attempt at running a farming business was to breed hunting dogs because they identified a need, and believed that this would help people in general, and hunters in particular.

The money they made from selling their dogs was re-invested into a piggery and broiler business. The proceeds from the sale of their 200 broilers and 12 piglets, were put towards the purchase of blocks and building supplies to build themselves a four-bedroom house.

The Twins' philosophy is to foster the development of 'genuine youngsters who are driven to design the world they envision.'

Their goal is to prevent other young people from going through what they went through by teaching:

- their peers their mistakes, and
- how to embrace the discomfort of hard work,
- and that in order to build an idea (like a pig house and a chicken run), they will require assistance and working funds which they worked on through saving and loans.

