



ACAT

Photo Report 2025



Purposeful action rather than activity

ACAT continued to emphasize its faith-based foundation, focusing on trust in God, obedience, and service to the poor and needy communities. The organization prioritized purposeful action rather than activity, ensuring programmes delivered meaningful outcomes. Collaboration remained central, recognizing that lasting change requires partnerships with churches, NGOs, and community leaders.



Programme impact (Integrated Livelihoods Programme)

The ILP remained ACAT's flagship programme, operating across 18 rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal. Communities were supported through a "Train-the-trainer" model, using Area Implementing Committees (AICs) and Community Volunteers. Key programme highlights included:

- 176 New Groups of Five formed.
- 477 Home Food Security workshops conducted.
- 581 Business workshops conducted.
- 705 New Household Food Gardens were established.
- 603 New Income-Generating Activities started by programme participants.

Youth development

Youth empowerment remained a key priority for ACAT securing sustainability among all age groups especially the youth. A total of 785 young people participated in Youth Basic Life Skills (YBLS) training. Partnership initiatives, such as the National Youth Service programme with Seriti, provided practical agricultural and life-skills training for youth.

Community financial empowerment

Savings and Loans Groups (SLGs) continued to grow, with 111 active groups and 1,134 members. Members saved over R940,000 in 2025, bringing cumulative savings to more than R9.3 million.

Partnerships and collaborations

ACAT strengthened its collaborative ecosystem by partnering with 23 grassroots organizations, primarily local churches. These partners supported training, youth programmes, and leadership development.

Training centre and capacity building

The ACAT Training Centre in Lidgetton hosted 26 weeks of training attended by more than 860 participants. Courses included AIC workshops, Community Volunteer training, Collaboration series courses, and specialized training programmes.

Governance and organizational strength

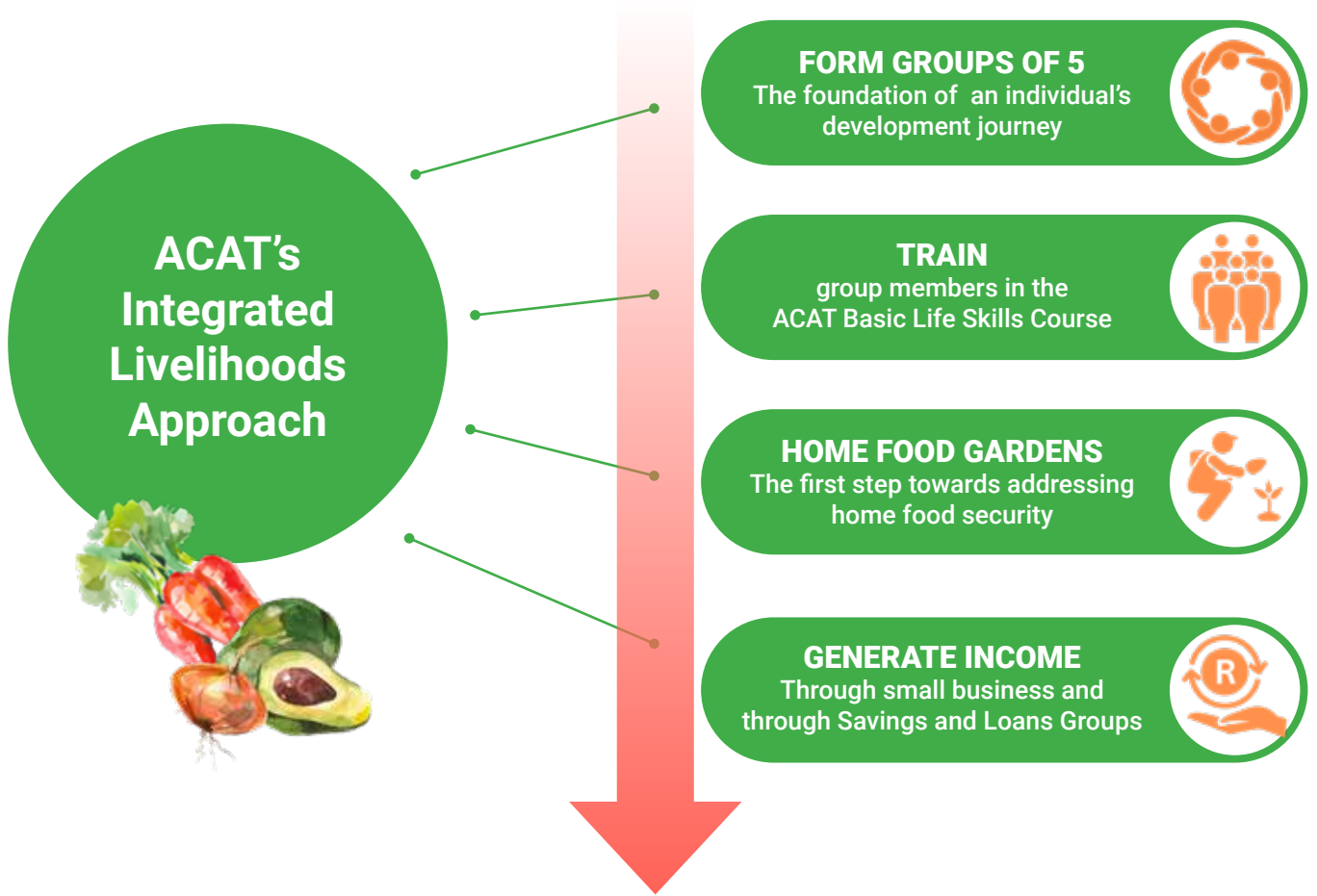
Strong governance structures continued through the Board of Governors and the Finance and Audit Sub-Committee. ACAT maintained rigorous financial management, statutory audits, and donor reporting to ensure transparency and accountability.

Looking ahead

Communities are increasingly taking ownership of their development, strengthening the sustainability of ACAT's work. Looking forward, ACAT aims to deepen partnerships, strengthen community leadership structures, expand collaboration and continue building resilience among rural families in KwaZulu-Natal.

– Merwyn Thyse (Chairman)

ACAT's approach



Impact

January to December 2025

880

New group members being trained through the Basic Life Skills Course
86% are women
14% are men

74

New Community Volunteers trained through the Community Volunteers Course

603

New group members started income generating activities

705

New group members have started vegetable gardens

785

Youth trained in Basic Life Skills – including reproductive health, career guidance, vegetable gardening and basic business skills



Eunice says she enjoyed attending the BLS training as it opened her eyes about a few things. She also enjoyed learning about planting, and as soon as she finished the course, she started her own garden where she planted spinach, beetroot and cabbage. For now she produces food for her homestead, but she feels that soon she will grow enough produce to start selling.



Phindile says:

“I enjoyed the BLS training as it helped me understand my relationship with God. I also enjoyed learning about a balanced plate (nutrition) because I want to be healthy. This training helped me because now I plant my own vegetables which also saves me a lot of money. My onions, in particular, are looking good and I am very excited about them”.



Siyabonga Kunene has become a true ‘lighthouse’. After attending the BLS training, he started with just a small garden planting a variety of vegetables. He saved a lot of money as his family was no longer buying vegetables. But when he saw that there was a lot of surplus, he started selling the rest to the neighbours. This year he has enlarged his garden as he now wants to sell most of his produce.

Sithembiso Mbambo attended the Basic Life Skills in 2024 because he was looking for something to give him hope.

“I had always loved planting vegetables but it felt like it was not working out. After training I started my garden again, and this time I was more equipped with the necessary skills. I also planted potatoes, spinach and cabbage and now things are looking good for me.”



Mr Mhlongo attended the BLS classes in 2024 and was interested in the gardening aspect of the classes. This is because he had been trying to plant in the past, but had very little success. After attending the course, he planted his garden and is amazed at how beautiful things now look. He has planted spinach, cabbage and beetroot. It makes him happy to be able to put something on the table and says “this has restored some dignity” in him.



Lorraine Ndlovu has always had a strong interest in starting her own small business. When she got the opportunity to attend the Basic Life Skills training, she was eager and grateful to be part of it. During the programme, she particularly enjoyed the business skills component. The training strengthened her confidence and equipped her with practical knowledge on how to start and manage a small enterprise. Lorraine has

since taken initiative by setting up a small table along the roadside, where she sells snacks to people passing by. In addition, she uses her sewing skills to make clothing according to customer orders, creating an additional stream of income.



Lorraine’s journey reflects growing entrepreneurial confidence, and the willingness to apply the skills gained from the training.



Nonkululeko Makhwaza attended the Basic Life Skills (BLS) programme after her Community Volunteer clearly explained its purpose and benefits. She was enthusiastic about participating, and found the training deeply meaningful. She especially enjoyed learning about spiritual growth, business principles, and agriculture. Inspired by the planting component, she established a beautiful garden where she grows spinach, beetroot, cabbage, onions, and other vegetables. Her long-term goal is to produce enough to begin selling to the community.

In addition to gardening, Nonkululeko runs a small fast-food business where she sells items such as vetkoek, fried fish, and Russian sausages. She also keeps indigenous chickens, which she intends to develop into an additional income-generating enterprise.

Her participation in the BLS programme has strengthened both her entrepreneurial vision and her commitment to building sustainable sources of income.



Phetheni Macu is a motivated young woman with a strong interest in self-improvement and business growth. She attended the Basic Life Skills (BLS) training and responded particularly well to the holistic nature of the programme. The spiritual component of the training played a significant role in her growth, helping her develop confidence, discipline, and a clearer sense of purpose. Phetheni has always had an interest in selling and trading, but prior to the BLS training, her understanding of business was informal and largely based on trial and error. Through the programme, she gained a basic but solid understanding of key business principles, including planning, costing, and customer engagement.

These foundational skills helped her begin to think more intentionally about income-generating activities rather than operating only on impulse. The gardening component of the training provided Phetheni with a practical entry point into sustainable livelihood development. By learning basic food production skills, she now has a starting platform from which she can both support household needs and explore small-scale selling opportunities. This combination of spiritual grounding, business awareness, and practical gardening skills has given her direction and the confidence to take her first steps toward economic independence. She says:

“I was feeling like my life was going nowhere because I really had nothing to do. One day I was invited to the Basic Life Skills (BLS) training. I really felt that the training restored my hope. Now I have work to do planting my own vegetables. I haven’t started harvesting yet, but I am looking forward to it because I know I will save a lot of money. And this makes me smile.”

Before attending training **Nomusa Kunene** faced ongoing financial strain. The little income she earned had to stretch across multiple household needs, leaving little room for savings or investment in long-term improvement. As a result, food purchases consumed a significant portion of her budget, making her household vulnerable to rising prices and seasonal shortages. Through her participation in the programme, Nomusa gained practical skills in household planning, food production, and basic income generation. One of the key outcomes of this training was the establishment of a home vegetable garden. By producing a variety of vegetables for her own consumption, she was able to significantly reduce her household food expenses while improving the nutritional quality of meals for her family. As her garden became more productive, she began producing more vegetables than her household required. Rather than letting this surplus go to waste, she started selling it to members of the surrounding community. This initiative has provided her with a modest but consistent source of additional income, helping her meet daily needs more confidently and easing financial pressure. Beyond the financial benefits, the programme has strengthened Nomusa’s sense of agency and self-reliance. She now applies the skills she learned to plan ahead, manage resources more effectively, and explore further opportunities for growth. Her story demonstrates how skills development, when combined with practical application, can improve household resilience and create sustainable livelihood opportunities.





Ntando Kunene attended the Youth Basic Life Skills Programme in 2025. He expressed great appreciation for the programme and found it highly beneficial for his personal growth and development.

Following his participation, Ntando discovered a strong interest in gardening and decided to explore it further. He began planting spinach, beetroot, onions, and cabbage. Although his garden reflects that he is still gaining experience, his enthusiasm and commitment are evident. Ntando is especially proud that his family can now enjoy fresh vegetables grown at home. This achievement has motivated him to continue improving his skills and expanding his garden.



Sinothando Ndlovu is another young person who benefited from the Youth Basic Life skills (YBLS) course that was conducted in her area. The training had a significant impact on her personal development. As a result, she is now more focused and intentional about the career path she wants to pursue. During the programme, she particularly enjoyed the agricultural component. Inspired by what she learned, she started her own garden where she planted potatoes, cabbage, spinach, and beetroot. Although she is still gaining experience, she is proud of her progress and the fact that her family can now enjoy fresh produce from her garden.

Sinothando is looking forward to planting her next crop cycle and plans to begin selling her vegetables to people in the surrounding community. This marks an important step toward building self-reliance and developing entrepreneurial skills.



Olwethu Kunene attended the Youth Basic Life Skills training, where she experienced significant personal growth and learning. Through the programme, she gained clarity about her strengths and interests, which helped her identify the career path she would like to pursue in the future. This sense of direction has given her confidence and motivation during a critical stage of her development. While exploring the practical components of the training, Olwethu discovered a strong interest in planting and food production. After discussing this interest with her parents, they supported her by providing potato seeds, which she planted at home. With guidance from the skills she had gained, she successfully managed the crop and achieved a good harvest.

The experience of seeing her family consume food that she had produced herself was deeply affirming for Olwethu. It reinforced the value of her effort and showed her that productive skills can make a real contribution at household level. This success has motivated her to continue learning, and she is eager to try planting other types of vegetables with the aim of both household use and selling surplus produce.

Olwethu's journey illustrates how youth-focused life skills training can foster self-awareness, practical competence, and a sense of responsibility, while laying the foundation for future livelihood and career development.



Xolisile Sithole, is the Zone Facilitator for the Ethekekwini area. She was part of the training team during the BLS training in the Ohlange Zone in 2025. She says that community members are eager to be part of the development programme. Despite the lack of a formal training venue, groups meet outside and are willing to use any available means to protect themselves from the hot sun during the training sessions.



The ACAT community development programme also includes training young people during the winter school holidays, so that they can gain practical knowledge at an early stage of their education. This helps ensure that, as they progress to higher levels of learning, they already understand what they are capable of doing, based on their skills and abilities.

Learners begin by studying theory in the classroom, using textbooks. After completing the theoretical work, they move outside to the garden to learn through practical application. During these sessions, they learn hands-on skills such as mulching seeds (*above*).



Lungile Dladla is a G5 member in the Inova Zone, in the Ethekekwini area. She joined the ACAT programme in April 2025 and expressed her sincere appreciation to Community Volunteer (CV) Xolisile Sithole, who introduced her to the ACAT programme. She also thanked her for encouraging her to use any available materials to protect her crops from livestock, as she keeps goats and chickens.

As a result, she used old corrugated iron sheets to fence and protect her crops. Although she has planted on a small scale so far, she is motivated to start saving money in order to fully fence her garden. Since she began planting, she has already seen the benefits, as her household will soon no longer need to buy cabbage and spinach. This will result in significant savings, as vegetables are the main food consumed by her family.



Because the eThekweni area has expanded rapidly with informal settlements and townships, the way houses are built has left residents with **very limited land for growing vegetables**. However, community members are eager to learn about vegetable gardening because they have seen the benefits enjoyed by those who have access to land, particularly the importance of growing their own food to save money that would otherwise be spent on buying vegetables. In response, AIC decided to support and encourage them by suggesting that spaces previously used for planting flowers be converted into vegetable gardens. A workshop was conducted to demonstrate how vegetables can be grown in small spaces, such as along house walls and near boundary fences, especially since many homes are fenced with concrete blocks (left).



Members of the groups from the Ohlange Zone who were trained in the BLS programme in 2025, were handed their savings and loan resources by the CEO, Ntombiyenkosi Goba.

These included a savings box and record books to be used for managing their savings activities. They also received training on how to use these tools correctly to ensure the smooth and effective continuation of their savings programme.



◀ **Nomusa Mavundla** lives at her home in the Ohlange zone and joined the ACAT programme in 2025. She says that joining the programme has greatly motivated her through the many skills taught, including crop production, business skills, and savings and loan practices.

She explains that she is currently organizing herself to start saving so that she can revive her cooked food vending business.

Although she does not have enough land for planting because her yard is cemented, she collects soil from another place and spreads it over the cemented area to grow her crops. She is pleased that her vegetables are growing well and that she is now able to access fresh vegetables from home instead of buying them.



She expresses her sincere appreciation for the ACAT programme.



Thobile Biyela, from the Ohlange zone, joined the ACAT programme in 2025. Due to limited space for gardening, she removed the flowers she had planted along the wall of her house and near the fence, and replaced them with spinach. She says this has helped her greatly, as she no longer has to travel long distances to buy vegetables and can now harvest them directly from her own yard. As an elderly person who takes medication for chronic conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes, she explains that vegetables are very important for her health. She expressed her



sincere gratitude to her neighbour who connected her to the ACAT programme, and also thanked the programme for welcoming and supporting participants even when they do not have sufficient land for farming.



After completing the BLS training, group members came together to identify one-day workshops they could attend to gain skills that would help them develop and grow their businesses. On this occasion, the workshop focused on the preparation of making cough syrup (*above*).

Sbahle Bhengu (from the Mqhawe Zone) was among the children who participated in the YBLS training in July 2025. After learning about vegetable production during the training, she became highly motivated to start her own garden at home. As part of the training, all participants were provided with seeds of different types of vegetables. Sbahle planted spinach seeds, which is the crop she is currently growing. She explained that her family assists her with watering the garden, as she is still attending school. She also shared that when her friends visit her, she encourages them to start their own home gardens. Some of her friends have expressed interest in participating in the 2026 training programme.



The **Sikhakhane children** – Snehlanhla, Andile, Thandeka, and Amahle – who live in the Mqhawe Zone, were all participants in the YBLS training held in July 2025. They shared that being part of the training greatly motivated them to put into practice what they had learned. Using the seeds they received during the training, they raised seedlings and later transplanted them, as shown in the picture.

Their family expressed great happiness, as there is no longer a need to buy vegetables from local shops because they now harvest fresh vegetables from their home garden.





Two enterprising women from Highflats are busy crafting shoes, turning their skills and creativity into a thriving small business. With dedication and careful attention to detail, they hand-make each pair, ensuring quality and uniqueness for their customers. This venture not only allows them to generate income but also empowers them to stand on their own feet, quite literally, by building a sustainable livelihood. Their passion for craftsmanship, combined with hard work and perseverance, serves as an inspiration to others in the community, showing that with skill, determination, and entrepreneurial spirit, one can transform talent into opportunity and success.



A dedicated **group of five** members from Highflats work together embracing the spirit of traditional co-operation known as *"Lilima"*, where community members come together to support and assist one another. This collective approach ensures that everyone has the opportunity to put their knowledge into practice, particularly after completing the Basic Life Skills (BLS) training. By working side by side, the members share resources of labour and guidance, making it easier for each participant to prepare their land, plant their crops, and apply the new techniques they have learned. This practice not only strengthens bonds within the community but also promotes productivity, accountability, and mutual growth, showing that when people work together with a common goal, success becomes a shared achievement, and everyone benefits from the collective effort.



This **sector group** from Highflats gathered together actively preparing cough mixture as part of their income-generating initiative. These hardworking women have turned their skills into a meaningful business by producing and selling the mixture within their local community. Their work plays an important role, especially during times of financial stress.



A group member named **Thoko** is known by her neighbours for her bright smile and her eagerness to learn new things. For many years she had wished to improve the small patch of land behind her home, but she never quite knew where to start. That changed the day she attended the Home Food Security workshop hosted by the AIC in the area. From the moment the facilitators began speaking, something in Thoko awakened. She listened attentively as they explained soil preparation, spacing, mulching, crop rotation, and the value of planting a variety of vegetables for both nutrition and income. Every demonstration made her eyes widen with excitement. By the end of the day, she was so inspired that even her group members joked that she might start planting before she reached home!



A young lady by the name of **Prisca Dlamini** beams with joy as she stands among her healthy, thriving vegetables – a true reflection of the skills she gained after completing a ten-day Basic Life Skills (BLS) training course at Highflats in June 2025. She shares that coming across ACAT was a dream come true, as she had always wished to learn how to plant, but had never been given the opportunity before. With strong support from her family who helped her with fencing – and quality seedlings purchased from the AIC – her garden has become a source of pride and hope. What fascinated her most was learning about beyond subsistence farming. This opened her eyes to possibility of making farming her business. Today, she is not only producing food but also generating income, with her profits carefully saved in the SLG, marking a powerful step toward self-reliance and a brighter future.



▲ **Nomvuyo Tenza**, an AIC trainer, passionately facilitates a Basic Life Skills (BLS) training session at Highflats, equipping community members with practical knowledge, confidence, and skills to improve their daily lives and strengthen their households through sustainable practices.

The room is filled with energy as participants engage, learn, and begin their journey of personal and community transformation.

Lindiwe (*below*) recently completed her high school education, hoping to continue her studies at a tertiary institution. But when financial challenges stood in her way, she found herself at home, unsure of her next step. Everything changed the day she attended the YBLS (Youth Basic Life Skills) training hosted by the AIC. She joined simply because her peers encouraged her, not knowing that the workshop would spark a turning point in her life.

During the sessions, the trainers spoke about self-belief, practical decision-making, identifying opportunities, and using available resources to build something meaningful. Lindiwe says she had never imagined that someone her age could start small and still build a sustainable future. The lessons on agriculture as a business, budgeting, planning, and personal growth lit a fire inside her. After the course she walked home with **a renewed sense of hope**. She realized that although

she could not study further right now, her future was not closed – it simply needed a different route, Lindiwe turned her attention to the small piece of land behind her family home. She cleared it, dug the beds the way she had been taught, mixed compost, and prepared her soil with meticulous care. With guidance from her notes, she planted spinach, carrots, beetroot, cabbages, and a few tomatoes. Every morning, before sunrise, she could be seen watering her seedlings, checking for pests.



Zama Miya from the Impendle area proudly showcases her produce. After attending a business workshop conducted in her community, she learned how to make liquid fabric softener (*stay soft*) and successfully turned the skill into an income-generating activity. She targets the local market, selling the product in 1-litre containers, making it affordable and accessible to community members. In addition to producing *sta-soft*, Zama has planted over a thousand cabbages, applying the improved farming technologies and techniques she gained from attending additional agricultural workshops. She is deeply impressed with the growth of her initiatives and takes pride in the fact that she is now generating income through both agribusiness and value-added products, demonstrating the power of continuous learning and innovation.



In August 2025 a **Basic Life Skills (BLS)** training course was held in Impendle, where community members gathered to build practical life and business skills.

Notably almost 80% of the participants are youth, a strong and encouraging indication of young people's eagerness to learn, grow, and shape their futures. The high level of youth participation and visible excitement reflects the value of the opportunity and the growing interest among young people in skills development, self-reliance, and entrepreneurship.



Sandiswa Zuma stands in her vegetable garden – a reflection of growth. Her farming journey began through ACAT's Basic Life Skills (BLS) programme, where she was introduced to practical and sustainable farming techniques.

Determined not to stop there, Sandiswa went on to attend several follow-up workshops, where the training was conducted in greater depth, strengthening her skills and confidence. Today, her crops tell a powerful story of how ongoing capacity building and hands-on support can transform knowledge into visible results at household level.

Nonhlanhla Zaca from Gomane zone in Impendle is pictured standing proudly in her healthy summer crops. After applying the principles, she learned during the Home Food Security (HFS) workshops that were offered by the training team, her crops are thriving and well established. She reports that the use of organic farming practices has produced visible results, leading to improved crop growth and overall garden productivity.



Portia Nxele is proud of her thriving vegetable garden, a space she transformed after completing her BLS training at Impendle. The area which was previously a flower garden, has now been converted into a productive vegetable plot following the farming skills she acquired. Before joining ACAT, Portia had never imagined growing her own fresh vegetables, but she now enjoys harvesting and consuming home-grown produce straight from her yard. Her garden is a testimony to the practical impact of the BLS training on local food security and self-sufficiency. In addition to her garden, Portia runs a small business selling various products, a venture she started after learning valuable business ideas through the ILP programme. Her story reflects the combined impact of agricultural and entrepreneurial training on improving food security and income generation in her community.



Lindani Sibusiso Malunga and Thembelani Nikwe, (above), along with Ntandoyenkosi Jama, Thokozile Gida, and Thulisile Mthembu, joined the development programme in 2025 with a shared vision. Based in the Hlomendlini zone, these passionate individuals united to form a co-operative, driven by their love for agriculture and commitment to nurturing the land. They pooled R350 each from their social grants to purchase potato and vegetable seeds for planting. What motivated them most to participate in the BLS training is their strong belief in self-employment rather than seeking jobs from employers. They have already begun engaging with the Department of Agriculture to request assistance with a tractor, as the land they have is too large to cultivate by hand.



Lindani Sibusiso Malunga joined the ACAT programme 2025 in the Hlomendlini zone. He says:

“My life has not been easy. I have struggled for a long time. However, after receiving training from ACAT, my eyes were opened. Since then I started my own spaza shop and I hope that within the next five years it will grow into a supermarket, generating at least R20,000 in profit. I also started a pig-farming project and currently own three pigs. I have become so motivated by my business, and I am excited about the positive changes the ACAT programme has already brought and will bring to my life.”



Ayanda Khawula joined the programme in 2025 and comes from the Hlomendlini zone. He says:

“I was motivated by the ACAT training I received especially the importance of growing vegetables at home. I gained an understanding of the value of producing fresh and healthy vegetables. I am very happy because my family is now benefiting from the garden, which provides us with nutritious food and helps improve our well-being.”

A business workshop was hosted for the G5 members within the Hlomendlini Zone. The purpose of the workshop was to share empowering information, highlighting that many of the products we usually buy from shops can actually be produced at home. During the session, participants received practical training on how to prepare pumpkin jam and pumpkin juice. The training was completely hands-on, giving everyone the opportunity to learn by doing. It was inspiring to see the women working together around the boiling pot, stirring the mixture and guiding one another through each step of the process. They were very grateful for the availability of equipment such as measuring scales and sugar containers, which made the practical session smooth and effective. While the mixture cooked on the stove, other participants carefully recorded the ingredients and procedures so they could confidently repeat the process in their own homes. The atmosphere throughout the workshop was filled with excitement and enthusiasm. Many participants expressed their joy, knowing that from now on, they no longer need to rely on shops for products like juice and jam. Instead, they now have the skills to produce these items independently—benefiting their households and opening up new income-generating opportunities.



Lusanda Sikobi joined the ACAT programme in April 2025 in the Shibe zone Izingolweni area. After completing the training he received in May, he planted a substantial quantity of spinach. By July, he had secured a market in the town of Harding and has since been consistently supplying his produce there. His aspiration is to generate a profit of approximately R20,000.





Phindile attended the Basic Life Skills Training in 2025. She says:

“I gained a lot of knowledge in my walk with God. I now understand what it means to be a child of God. The training also helped me understand more about planting and soil fertility. I have planted cabbages, spinach and beetroot in my small vegetable garden, and because I do not have much space, I planted potatoes in bags. I have also planted maize and pumpkins. I sell the surplus to the neighbours, and now I keep the records of what I plant and sell”



Pastor Sifiso Zondo joined the Collab Series in 2025 because he could see that he needed to find a way to make a living. He says the bible teachings that he received, have affected his personal growth, as well as benefitting the church. He used to only plant the maize, but now he plants cabbages, spinach, beetroot, and carrots. He also keeps indigenous chickens and has a steady market for them. He is grateful for all that he has learned since he joined the collab series.



Vusi Mahlobo is one of the ‘Lighthouses’ in the area. He is one of the older members, but he keeps shining. He plants large amounts of tomatoes, spinach, cabbages and sells these to the schools for their feeding programme. He has also started leasing his neighbour’s land and is utilising it fully. He has embraced the value of being an organic farmer. He is also a pig farmer and uses the manure to fertilise his soil.

Kholeka Mazibuko

joined the programme in 2024. She said she was hopeless and felt as if her ‘life had no direction before joining the programme’. But as she sat in the BLS training she realised that there is so much she could do. Since then she has planted maize, cabbages, spinach, beetroot etc. while she has not yet started selling, it is her next goal. Being able to do something worthwhile on her own has been such a great achievement for her.



Zamambo Mkhize attended the Basic Life Skills training in 2024. At that time she did not have anything that she could actually point out as a personal achievement. The family was struggling because money had to be stretched even for veggies.

After the training she started a small garden where she plants a variety of vegetables and this has been so helpful as she is now able to save some money and use it for other things. This makes her feel good about herself. She now even has some indigenous chickens.



Zinhle Kubheka joined the programme in 2024 and she says it was eye opening for her. She was struggling financially. During the basic Life Skills Training she learnt about planting and business. This gave her hope and she started her own garden and from it she started selling vegetables to the neighbors. She has now added small snacks that she sells to the community. She is thankful to ACAT for bringing back her confidence making her see that all things are possible. She also makes sure that she has enough wood for fire as electricity is interrupted many times.



Zandile Nkumane joined ACAT in May 2025, and since then has demonstrated a strong passion and commitment to farming. After receiving training, she applied the skills and techniques exactly as taught, achieving visible and encouraging results. Her dedication extends beyond her own garden – Zandile now volunteers within her community, sharing knowledge on developing a healthy lifestyle and promoting overall wellbeing among fellow community members. Her journey reflects how skills development can inspire young people to become agents of positive change in their communities.



Njabulo Maphanga from Mondlo is a proud graduate of the Youth Basic Life Skills (YBLS) Programme 2025. After receiving vegetable seeds from ACAT, he was faced with the challenge of not having a fenced garden at home. Instead of giving up, Njabulo showed remarkable creativity and determination by transforming an old, unused fridge into a functional planting space. Through this simple but innovative solution, he is now growing vegetables successfully, helping to ensure that he and his siblings have access to fresh, healthy food at home. This story highlights how **resourcefulness and skills gained through YBLS can turn challenges into opportunities.**



Violet Mabadi, a group member from Phumeceleni zone, is a committed and innovative community member. She maintains a clean, well-organised homestead and continuously applies creative approaches to improve her household environment. Her vegetable garden is well managed and demonstrates her adherence to good agricultural practices. In addition, Violet actively supports neighbouring households by sharing the knowledge and techniques she uses, contributing to improved homestead management and food production within the community.



Velile Zulu is a passionate and focused woman from Phumeceleni Zone who actively implemented the skills she gained during the BLS training. After completing the training, she started a sleeping mat business, applying the business principles she learned. She creatively uses locally available grass collected from the nearby river as raw material to produce durable mats. Through this initiative, Velile is **generating income while making use of natural resources in a sustainable way.**



Sihle Mbatha displays her small vegetable garden, proudly tending crops she planted herself after attending the **Youth Basic Life Skills (YBLS) training in October 2025.** During the training, she showed great enthusiasm for planting and was eager to learn, asking many thoughtful questions that reflected her growing interest in agriculture. Her passion did not end with the workshop – she went home inspired and immediately put her knowledge into practice. Her parents proudly support her journey, and she confidently shares her dream of studying **agriculture at university** once she completes her high school education.



Mondlo AIC gathered new group members for a workshop focused on making a non-toxic cough mixture using ingredients sourced from a nearby supermarket. The practical session encouraged participation and skills sharing, and inspired several members to identify this initiative as an opportunity to start small income-generating businesses by producing and selling the cough mixture within their communities. Children were also present during the workshop, learning through observation and early exposure to entrepreneurship.



Nomcebo Magubane from Mvuzini Zone joined the ILP Programme in 2024. After attending the Local BLS training, she was strongly inspired by the child protection sessions. This motivation led her to establish a day-care centre to support children in her community. Although she does not yet have a formal building, Nomcebo selflessly uses one of the rooms in her homestead as a safe, caring, and nurturing space for children, demonstrating her commitment to child wellbeing and community care.



Nompumelelo Nkabinde is a committed community volunteer in the Collab Programme. Following the training she received from ACAT, she successfully established her own vegetable garden, applying the skills she gained. She actively works alongside fellow church members, promoting teamwork in food production and encouraging community participation in initiatives that strengthen household food security and overall community development.

Sthembiso Ndlovu, a 57-year-old G5 member from Vukuzenzele Group, Emathuneni zone, joined the ACAT programme in 2025. When we met Mr Ndlovu, his yard was bare, except for some fruit trees. After being introduced to the programme, he started attending group sessions and completed the area BLS training. He described the training as an “eye-opener”. One of the highlights was receiving a Bible, which he reads daily, finding comfort and guidance in its scriptures. Mr Ndlovu says:

“I felt like a blind man who can now see. Now I grow my own vegetables, and sell them to the community. We eat healthy food. Despite the occasional water shortages, I’m applying water-saving techniques learned from the BLS training. I still struggle with bookkeeping, but I’m working on it. My next project is to raise broiler chickens for sale and consumption. I am excited about my progress and I wish I’d joined the programme years earlier. I want to join a SLG groups now.”



Nelisiwe Miya, a 47-year-old member of Intokozo Group, Emathuneni zone, joined the programme in 2025. She says:

“I am just speechless! I never imagined growing my own vegetables. Before joining G5, I struggled with my mind poverty, and I was unaware that my yard could provide food. I’d often beg neighbours for food and wait for my children’s grant money. Poverty had even stopped me from attending church. But thanks to ACAT for brightening up my mind. I now understand that laziness can be detrimental. Now I attend church with my own Bible! I sell vegetables to neighbours, and I buy food for my children without relying on grants. I plan to join an SLG group, and I am trying to improve my reading skills through ABET classes.”

Vukani Nqayi, a 55-year-old member of Ukufudumala Group, joined the programme in 2025. He wanted to join in 2024, but the groups were full. Despite not receiving formal training, he is applying what he learned and seeing results. Previously, he planted incorrectly and felt frustrated, even wondering if he was bewitched. Learning organic farming changed everything. Mr Nqayi is happy to see his siblings also adopting the practices and starting their own gardens. He’s now selling veggies and thriving. Spiritually, he’s been touched by the word of God and is reading his Bible and praying daily. His life’s transformed – and he says there’s no more hunger.





This BLS training is conducted by newly graduated Community Volunteer **Asanda Mkhwanazi**, showing that she was well trained at ACAT.



Most of the time when there is AIC meetings which happen every last week of the month. AIC members teach each other different skills in order to train the G5 members. AIC is a structure built with CVs and ZFs and that is why they teach each other during AIC meetings, then they take the lesson back to the community. G5s start their own businesses after being taught these skills from the AIC team.



The **YBLS training** is making a real difference! We are not just focusing on adults – kids are getting equipped with skills and talents that last a lifetime. They learn about potential careers, which helps them choose school subjects wisely. Plus, they get biblical training, learn to start gardens and businesses, and develop essential life skills. It is awesome to see them forming their own youth Bible study groups, bridging backgrounds and beliefs. By the end, they are like one big happy family – united and supportive. Parents are thrilled to see the positive changes in their kids.

The **sector group** brings together G5 members with shared skills and a common vision. Different groups (like Uthando or Isipho) might be in the same sector, but it's about leveraging unique strengths. Members group themselves by skills like poultry, gardening, sewing, or baking. This photo shows the **gardening sector group**. With limited land in the location, they approached a nearby school and asked to use their yard. They even helped tidy up the space, and applied organic farming techniques learned at BLS. Now they sell veggies to teachers, the community, and are feeding their families.



Sandile Cele has a small business buying and selling maize. He buys a 20 kg bag of maize for R150. When all the maize is sold, it generates R400 in sales. The profit per bag is R150, while R100 goes towards expenses such as transport, and packaging used for the selling of the maize. He does the same with beans. He buys a bag for R600, which generates R1,700 in sales. From this he uses R300 to cover his expenses, and makes R800 profit. His monthly profit depends on the volume sold.

Pastor Lindiwe Sengane from Squngeni (Dingimbiza zone) completed the BLS training in 2024. In March 2024, she also attended a pastors' course. She began by establishing a home garden and did not stop there; she continued to expand her production in order to sell her produce. A year later, as of September 2025, she was selling vegetables that she grows herself. She buys and sells eggs to the community at a higher price. She expresses her gratitude for being connected with ACAT, which greatly motivated her to recognise the importance of farming and to start her own business.



Vuyisile Duma from the Bombo zone joined the ACAT programme in 2023. She initially became part of the crop production sector group in the same year she joined the programme. Since then, she has expanded her activities by venturing into broiler farming, where she raises and sells meat chickens. This progress greatly motivated her to enroll in the BLS training, as she no longer relies only on employment opportunities. She is now able to generate her own income and also provide food for her household through selling chickens.



Sandile Cele joined ACAT in 2023. He buys maize for planting and beans, then resells them in small packets. He wishes to plant his own crops in the future and then sell the seed that he has produced himself. He started selling in August 2025.



Khanyisani Mthembu joined the ACAT programme in 2025. He says he was highly motivated and realised the strong need to establish his own vegetable garden. Although their area is affected by free-roaming livestock, he managed to use the resources he had available to protect his crops. As a result, his household is now able to access fresh, nutritious vegetables without having to spend money buying them.



The YBLS participants from the Dingimbiza zone, who completed their training in July 2025, continue with their studies. They are supported by Pastor Sengane and a Sunday School teacher who was trained using the ACAT Sunday School materials. They conduct these learning sessions regularly, meeting once a month, and they have continued to do so consistently up to now.

Sindisiwe Ngubo joined the ACAT programme in 2022. After completing the BLS training, she went on to participate in baking workshops, where she acquired valuable baking skills. These skills enabled her to start her own cake-selling business. She sells her cakes by going door to door in her community and also at the soccer field when matches are taking place. Although the business has not yet grown to a large scale, it is gradually improving. Whenever she goes out to sell, she usually sells all her cakes, which shows good demand. Her income is still limited because she travels on foot and cannot carry large quantities at once. However, despite these challenges, she manages to earn approximately R600 per week from her business.



The planting sector group from the Nyonyana zone was established in August 2025. Its members completed the ACAT BLS training in 2024. They were motivated to grow their own seedlings, plant them, consume the produce, and also sell the surplus to generate income.



Nokwanda Bohlela, who completed the YBLS programme from the Dingimbiza zone and was trained in July 2025, used the seeds provided by ACAT and planted them. She was assisted by her grandmother in working in the home garden.



Lindiwe Mhlongo from the Nyonyana zone joined the ACAT programme in 2025. She explained that she previously experienced challenges with planting winter vegetables because her garden was not fenced and the weather conditions were not favourable. However, now that the summer season has begun, she is able to plant crops such as maize and amadumbe. She says that farming is better during summer because livestock owners take greater care to prevent their animals from entering community fields. This helps protect the crops and greatly improves the chances of obtaining a good harvest.



Nokwanda Khuzwayo, is a new G5 member of the Zamani group from Ntuli ward, she joined the ACAT programme in 2025. Previously reliant on her parents' pension grant, Nokwanda has transformed her life through the programme. Her thriving garden now provides a steady supply of fresh produce, eliminating the need to buy vegetables from town. Nokwanda expresses her gratitude to the ACAT programme for introducing her to sustainable practices, like mulching, compost making, and deep trench planting. Not only does she enjoy nutritious food, but she is also generating income by selling surplus produce to neighbours yet to join the programme.



Philani Luthuli, a grade 11 student, got the opportunity to attend ACAT's YBLS training in 2025. Empowered with seeds to plant at home, Philani diligently cultivated his garden, impressing his grandmother with his work. She is so grateful for his support, as age has slowed her down. His grandfather, inspired by Philani's dedication, even buys him additional seedlings. His dream is to become a successful farmer, supplying fresh produce to markets and securing a bright future.

Thembisile Msomi from the Zizamele Group, who joined the ACAT programme in 2025, shares her inspiring story. Previously, life in their dry area was challenging, forcing them to rely on shop-bought produce. But now (thanks to ACAT's introduction of deep trenching, and raising soil fertility) Thembisile and her community now enjoy homegrown vegetables, and they no longer buy expensive vegies from town.



Thandeka Ngcobo joined ACAT 2025, the name of her group is Zizamele. She says the arrival of the ACAT programme has helped her a lot at home. They now eat healthy food and sell the surplus.



Fanele Nzuza from the Zamani group, joined ACAT in 2025, is thrilled to learn innovative drought-resistant planting techniques. Excited to put her new skills to use, Fanele plans to expand her garden and start selling her produce.

Nosihle Ntangi, a 2025 YBLS trainee, is making her parents proud with her gardening skills. She harvests spinach for home use and sells the surplus, sparking a passion for farming as a future career.



Nompilo Langa, standing near her firewood, shares her entrepreneurial spirit. Inspired by her business lesson at the recent BLS training, she started a firewood bundling business with no initial capital. She collects firewood, bundles it, and sells it for R700 per bundle, targeting local markets. Her business is thriving. She says:

“Thanks to ACAT who opened my mind”



Samkelisiwe Ntuli from Sukumawenze group, who joined ACAT in 2025, is beaming with gratitude. This stay-at-home wife has transformed her life, embracing farming and entrepreneurship. She now plants, harvests, and sells crops, and has even ventured into selling drinks. Samkelisiwe is proud to see her savings grow, thanks to ACAT’s support.





Zanele Mdlalose is a new G5 member who joined ACAT programme in 2025. She says:

I am so grateful for the BLS training that changed my life. I've revived my struggling tuck shop by implementing new skills, like basic bookkeeping. I used to overspend and not save, but I learned from the training on Mary's business. Now, my business is thriving, and I've got my finances on track.



Zikhokhile Ntshangase joined ACAT in 2023. Her group is called Sibambisene. She says the ACAT programme opened her mind, and she learned to plant, sell, and provide food for her family at home. Her family is now enjoying a much better life. As a pensioner, she has learned to save money to gradually to extend her house. The picture shows the house she is building with money from her savings. She thanks God for ACAT and says:

"If ACAT had not come to my area and opened my eyes, I would not have been able to build this house".



Thabile Mdlalose from Sakhikhaya group joined ACAT in 2025, says her life has turned around. From relying on a child grant, she's now thriving with her own garden, inspired by BLS training. She plants, sells, and supports her family with her earnings. Proud and grateful, Thabile's on a path to financial freedom.

Lindiwe Msomi joined ACAT in 2024, and her group is called Siphosethu. Before joining ACAT, she used to farm and harvest, giving her produce away for free instead of selling it. After attending BLS, she says it opened her mind. She now plants, sells, and earns money. After her husband passed away, she started making mats, charging R100 each. She made 50 mats, earning R5,000. She is grateful to be part of the Savings and Loans group.





Khangezile Luthuli from Mathibelane zone is not a new member in the programme, but this year for the first time she attended BLS. She has been an active member of an SLG for 10 years since she joined. Attending the BLS course has helped her a lot, as she has been able to reorganize her business. She runs a tuck shop and sells produce grown in her garden, such as the tomatoes seen in the picture.



Nompumelelo Zulu from Mathibelane joined the programme in 2024 and was passionate about helping others with what she had learned. She took a course to become a community volunteer in 2025. Before starting that course, she had already helped her neighbours, many of whom were not members of G5s. She is a Sunday school teacher in her church, and being part of the program has helped her become more open-minded about business. She started a vegetable garden to sell produce, and she also makes mango atcher, which she sells.



Bongiwe Makhanya from Mathibelane zone joined the ACAT programme in 2025. She says,

“The programme has greatly strengthened my relationship with God. I have also learned many things that have had a great impact on my life. As a newcomer to the area, I do not have much land. The deep trench method helped me because my land is small, but I always have a good harvest. After completing the BLS course, I attended a business workshop, which is when I decided to start my business. I make Sta Soft and sell it for R30 per 2 litres”



Cabangile Gumede joined the ACAT programme in 2025. After the BLS course, she started planting her own garden using the methods she had learned. She found a practical approach that helped her get started quickly, as starting a business is not easy. The garden enables her to sell the produce she grows. She also plants in pots and tires to protect her vegetables from moles.

Bonisiwe Dlamini attended the YBLS course and really enjoyed learning. She says she has never had a garden in her life. The seedlings and seeds she received from the YBLS course helped her a lot, because after she planted them, her family was able to eat fresh vegetables at home.



Aphiwe Mpungose, attended YBLS course in 2025. She came back so motivated that she started a vegetable garden at home to feed her family .



Slindokuhle Mchunu is overjoyed with the ACAT programme. She attended the YBLS training this year 2025. She came back with seedling and seeds. Now she has a vegetable garden which will provide for her family. She's put her learning into action – she's growing her own veggies, providing for her family.



Nobuhle Mchunu joined the programme in 2024. Her business was already running, but she lacked sufficient knowledge. Joining the programme helped her identify where she had made mistakes. One key lesson she shares with others is the importance of networking, as it provides valuable information and opportunities. Not everything requires money—some things can actually help you make money. As seen above, she uses a wooden fence to protect her plants from being eaten by livestock.

Nosipho Dlamini participated in YBLS in 2025. She is motivated and encouraged in many areas of her life. She has a vegetable garden at home, and her family is enjoying the fresh produce.



Kwenziwe Mhlongo attended YBLS in 2025. She is applying what she learned – she has got a thriving veggie garden at home, which helps to feed her family.



Nokubonga Mpungose had an opportunity to attend the YBLS in 2025 and is thrilled with the ACAT programme. She has grown a vegetable garden at home, providing healthy food for her family.



Simthande Zulu attended the YBLS course and now shows off her first crop after learning how to plant vegetables. Although he is young, he shows great interest in farming.



Nonhlahla Ndlela joined ACAT's programme in 2025 after she attended the ACAT's BLS training course. She says she appreciated the course because it motivated her to implement all that she had learnt by establishing a home garden. She is growing and selling vegetables and is earning income. The family is benefiting from the garden she started.



Simangele Mpungose joined ACAT in 2025. She used to buy vegetables from shops, but now grows her own, enjoying a better life with fresh produce.



The programme helped her escape poverty – as she is able to feed her family from her produce.

Khulekani Ngubane joined the programme in 2025, He was influenced to join the programme by seeing his neighbour's productive garden. Now he grows own crops and vegetables and makes a good living out of these. Here is what he said,



"I was keen to join the programme after seeing my neighbour's thriving garden. For a long time I tried to do gardening but without proper training and farming skills. My aim is to develop my own agribusiness by growing crops and vegetables - starting with producing enough for home consumption. By growing my own vegetables, I have saved money which I use for buying other family needs such as groceries".

Ncamisile Mkhize joined ACAT's programme in 2025 with the aim of acquiring the knowledge and skills in agricultural practices as well as business methods. She is learning quite a lot from the Field Team and has established a small garden to feed her family. When comparing her life now to before joining the programme, she says ,

"My life is far better now because I am now able to save money and my family eat fresh vegetables from our garden".



Zwelihle Zulu joined ACAT's programme in 2025 and is loving it - he is experiencing his first crop and is very excited to eat vegetables fresh from his own hard work. He always thanks ACAT for coming into his area 'to wake them up.'

"I lived a life of hating work, but after joining ACAT this year, and reading the bible I have found out that work is a blessing and can put you on a high way to victory". This garden gives the family fresh vegetables.





Sabelo Zungu joined ACAT's programme in 2025. Attending ACAT training has made him to develop more love for assisting other people in his area. It motivated him to start a construction business, building houses (above) by so doing he is supporting his community while providing for his family



Mastuse Mtshali had the opportunity to participate in YBLS in 2025 and is thrilled with the ACAT programme. Now she grows her own vegetables and provides for her family.



Zibuyisile Ximba joined ACAT's programme in 2025 and is loving it – it helped her turn her life around. She is growing variety of vegetables for her family's consumption and selling the surplus. She wants to expand her garden in order to plant more with the aim of supplying the community at large.



Lindokuhle Shange attended YBLS in 2025 and is applying the new skills he obtained during the training.



Jabulile Gumede joined ACAT's programme in 2025. Although she is a new member, she already has seen some benefits of being a part of this programme. She now plants a variety of vegetables at home and sells to the community. She appreciates the assistance she received from the training.

ACAT's Extension Co-ordinator **Wanda Zikalala**, alongside community volunteer **Kemiso Molefe** from Nquthu, took youth empowerment into their own hands by demonstrating how home food security (HFS) can also be done by **using containers**, because there was no land available for use near the training venue. The session, held at Nquthu Hall during the Youth Basic Life Skills (YBLS) training in September, provided participants with hands-on experience in growing vegetables in limited spaces, and showed that the lack of land doesn't have to be a barrier to food production. Through this innovative approach, the youth learned practical techniques such as soil preparation, planting, watering, and crop maintenance, equipping them with valuable skills that they can apply at home or in small-scale urban gardens. The session not only sparked excitement and curiosity, but also emphasized the importance of starting early, teaching young people how to cultivate their own food, build sustainable habits, and take the first steps toward self-reliance and food security.



A Young YBLS graduate from Nquthu cares for her parents' chickens – a task she has always helped with. However, after attending the YBLS training, her mindset has completely changed. Inspired by the lessons, she has taken initiative by asking her mother to buy her some broiler chicks so she can raise them herself and start her own business. Motivated by what she learned during the training, she is grateful for the opportunity to be part of the programme.





June 2025 BLS training attendees at Nquthu stand outside the training venue, fully engaged and enthusiastic. Community members are taking these trainings seriously, noting that they learn valuable skills and knowledge from the sessions. Beyond the lessons, the opportunity to meet and interact with others in the community has been equally transformative, helping them gain new perspectives and change the way they approach challenges in their daily lives.



Mzamo Khumalo is a G5 member who joined the programme in April 2025. Upon joining, he shared that his dream is to become a commercial farmer, and he remains hopeful and prayerful that this vision will one day come true.

Shortly after completing the Basic Life Skills course, he wasted no time and began producing vegetables, taking his first practical steps toward achieving his long-term goal.





Noluthando Mbatha is a passionate young female farmer who is fully committed to her work and personal growth in the agricultural space. She joined the Programme in April 2025 and ever since then she has been quick to apply what she learns from the dedicated Area Implementing Committee. The vegetables in her garden are already looking amazing – clear evidence of her hard work, consistency, and love for farming. She has transformed her garden into a thriving, productive space. Noluthando’s commitment not only reflects her personal passion but also serves as a powerful inspiration to other young people who hope to make a meaningful and lasting impact in the agricultural sector.



An **excited group member** who purchased seed potatoes from the Nquthu AIC proudly shows off his healthy, thriving crop. He says:

“For the first time, my potatoes are growing exceptionally well. I think it’s because of the quality products provided by the AIC. Other farmers have already been asking about my source, and I tell everyone that for reliable, high-quality inputs, AIC is the way to go!”

Idah Xaba is a community member who has been positively impacted by the programme. Interestingly, she is not yet a registered group member, but she actively participates in all activities just like the others. She has never missed a single training session, demonstrating remarkable dedication and passion.

Recognizing her enthusiasm, the AIC decided to support and motivate her by donating seedlings. The garden visible behind her in the picture is the result of her hard work and commitment, using the skills she has learned through the programme. Idah plans to officially join the programme in 2026, and her progress so far shows great promise for her continued growth.



This is **Bekumbuso Mbatha and his wife**, an inspiring couple whose teamwork stands out. They work together diligently to ensure their household has a consistent supply of fresh vegetables from their garden.

As graduates of the 2025 Basic Life Skills course, they have applied what they learned with dedication, and it is evident that their co-operation and commitment will take them far. Although neither of them is formally employed, they remain a joyful and motivated family, using their skills and partnership to build a sustainable and productive home garden. Their unity and determination serve as a positive example within the community.



CEO Thandi Buthelezi leads by example, demonstrating that good results do not come by chance but through dedication and hard work. In these photos she actively nurses her potato and onion crops, applying the same principles of care, commitment, and consistency that she encourages others to practice. Her 'hands-on' approach is a powerful reminder that better yields are achieved through patience, discipline, and a willingness to put in the work, inspiring farmers to remain focused and committed to producing quality results.





Asiwakhe Ngcobo, a young and ambitious boy from Taylors, is a proud product of the Youth Basic Life Skills (YBLS) training attended in June 2025. Equipped with practical knowledge and inputs gained during the training,

Asiwakhe established a well-maintained vegetable garden at home. His dedication and good management practices are evident in the healthy growth of his crops.

Having planted more seedlings than he required, he was able to sell the surplus to community members, generating his own income at a young age. His journey demonstrates how YBLS training empowers youth with skills, confidence, and an entrepreneurial mind-set.



Sibusiso Zuma proudly stands in his flourishing potato field, a clear reflection of the quality of seed potatoes he sourced from the AIC business. He expressed great satisfaction with the strong, healthy growth of his crop, noting that the quality of the seed has made a visible difference in his production.

His potato plants have attracted the attention of many community members, who frequently ask where he obtained the seed due to the impressive performance of the crop.

Sibusiso's experience highlights the importance of access to quality agricultural inputs in improving yields, building farmer confidence, and encouraging others within the community to invest in reliable seed sources.



Amahle Dladla stands in her flourishing vegetable garden, a project she started immediately after completing the Basic Life Skills (BLS) training in August 2025.

Inspired by the practical planting demonstration conducted at her own homestead, Amahle gained the confidence and skills to put her learning into action without delay.

The hands-on approach motivated her to establish the garden using the techniques she was taught, turning knowledge into practice and laying a strong foundation for improved household food security and income generation.



Hlengiwe Sithole is a motivated and enterprising woman who has successfully established her own tuckshop after attending a local business workshop facilitated by the ACAT community training team in May 2025. Through this initiative, she provides convenient access to basic groceries and household essentials for her community. Her tuckshop has become a reliable source of income for her household while also serving the needs of nearby residents. Hlengiwe's journey highlights the positive impact of community-based training in nurturing entrepreneurship, empowering women, and strengthening local economies through small but sustainable businesses.



Mr Ndlovu attended Basic Life Skills training in 2022. Concerned about rising food costs, he learned practical ways to reduce expenses through household food production. He established a small garden that now supplies his family with fresh, healthy vegetables. He expresses gratitude to the ACAT team for the training and guidance.



Nokuthula Khanyile attended Basic Life Skills training in 2022 during a period of personal stagnation. After implementing the lessons, her garden produced strong yields, enabling her to sell produce locally and improve her household finances. She provides her family with fresh vegetables and shares spiritual lessons from the programme in Sunday School. Her husband supports her work after witnessing its impact.



Mrs Dumisile Dlamini, one of our senior members, attended Basic Life Skills training in 2005! Since then she has applied the programme's principles. She keeps indigenous chickens and cultivates a variety of vegetables, reducing household food costs. Surplus produce is sold within the community, generating supplemental income. She also plants yellow maize to feed her livestock.



Khosi Ndaba from KwaBhekabezayo Zone attended Basic Life Skills training in 2025. Motivated by successful gardens of other members and challenged by food costs, she established her own garden. She now enjoys fresh vegetables, saves money for other household needs, and plans to expand production for sales.



Tholakele Ndlovu of Shayamoya Zone attended Basic Life Skills training in 2022. She valued the clear teaching of Scripture and actively applied what she learned.

She reads the Bible regularly and grows a mix of vegetables for household consumption and local sales, improving family nutrition and income.



Sithembile Zungu, an Area Implementing Committee member, demonstrates strong community leadership. She says the spiritual focus at the ACAT Centre has contributed to her personal growth and church involvement. She cultivates vegetables for sale, serves as a BLS trainer, and used SLG savings to purchase sheep. She actively advances collaborative activities in the area.





Zanele Mazibuko, an Area Implementing Committee member, models programme benefits. She grows and sells cabbage, spinach, potatoes, and beans, and participates in a Savings and Loans Group. Using her dividends, she purchased an air fryer and reports clear benefits from programme participation.

Emabhanoyini has long shown interest in establishing groups in their area, but faced access challenges due to their distance from the nearest CEO. To address this expansion, two community volunteers attended the CV courses at the centre during 2025 and joined the Collab to implement locally. Their gardens are now productive, providing fresh vegetables and surplus for sale. These pioneers are now preparing to train others in the community.



The Area Implementing Committee and collaboration partners meet regularly to strategize, implement solutions, and request targeted support from the ACAT Executive Committee. Local solutions are encouraged alongside ACAT guidance, enabling coordinated and context-appropriate development.



The **Vulindlela AIC** team is doing an excellent job of changing people's lives. Through Basic Life Skills (BLS) training, Youth Basic Life Skills (YBLS) training, and various workshops, they equip community members with the knowledge and skills needed to improve their lives. Here, they are seen celebrating together after the BLS practical session with some of the trainees.



Noluthando enjoyed attending the Youth Basic Life Skills training. What stood out most for her was learning more about God and gaining practical knowledge about agriculture. She had thought about starting a garden but never actually took the step to do so. After the training, she decided to give it a try and planted carrots, spinach, and cabbages. The results were much better than she had expected, which greatly encouraged her. She is now motivated and looking forward to planting even more in the future.



Thabisile Zakwe has always had a passion for planting vegetables, so when the opportunity to attend the Basic Life Skills Training came, she gladly took it. During the training, she was particularly impressed by the way the Bible was taught, and she also enjoyed the practical sessions on planting. Inspired by what she learned, she went on to start her own small garden. From her garden, she has been able to harvest vegetables and sell a small portion to her neighbours, which has been a great encouragement to her.



Thandazile Shabalala attended the Basic Life Skills Training in 2025. She was impressed by the respectful manner of the ACAT team and greatly enjoyed the training. Afterwards, she decided to put into practice what she had learned and planted cabbage and spinach. Seeing the crops grow successfully has given her confidence in her ability to farm, and she is now considering expanding her gardening in the future with the goal of selling some of her produce.

MaZuma attended the Basic Life Skills training in 2024 and particularly enjoyed the planting and business components of the course. Following the training, she started planting vegetables in her garden, including amadumbe and corn. She is already generating some income by selling products that they manufacture together as AIC, and she also sells produce from her garden. This has encouraged her to continue developing her skills. This year, she has begun attending the Community Volunteer (CV) course, as she has realized that she would like to support and uplift her community in the same way she was supported.



Sweetwaters Praise Centre (SPC) is a collaborative partner with ACAT. The church has previously hosted a Youth Basic Life Skills (YBLS) training as well as a Home Food Security Workshop, which was attended by 152 community members. These initiatives have strengthened the church's capacity and readiness to begin facilitating Basic Life Skills (BLS) trainings within the community. In addition, SPC currently has three Savings and Loans Groups (SLGs) that are fully functional, demonstrating active community participation and engagement.



The Columbus Christian Ministries (CCM) Collab joined the Collaborative Series at the end of 2024 and spent much of 2025 attending various trainings at the ACAT Centre.

As part of their learning journey, they also attended a Youth Basic Life Skills (YBLS) training held in Vulindlela. In January this year, CCM successfully hosted their first Basic Life Skills (BLS) workshop, which was attended by 20 participants from the community. In addition to the workshop, they also received practical training on constructing a movable A-frame structure for broilers, equipping them with useful skills for small-scale poultry production.

