

Jesse Laitinen, Khulisa Strategic Partnerships Manager



The start of the year often coincides with endings and beginnings. As this February newsletter shows, however, the end of one thing is only the beginning of another.

We're delighted to share with you some of Streetscapes 'fresh shoots', in the field of funding and housing, as well as in our urban gardens.

Our former client Matsidiso's story proves that when a door closes, the brave run to a window, and gaze out to the stars instead of back to dust. May we all follow her example.

Regards,

Jesse

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Whilst we hope you will enjoy our monthly newsletter to you, we also welcome your feedback on:

Facebook: [facebook.com/streetscapescp/](https://www.facebook.com/streetscapescp/)

Instagram : [streetscapes_urban_farms](https://www.instagram.com/streetscapes_urban_farms)

YouTube : [streetscapes videos](https://www.youtube.com/streetscapes_videos)

New start with Nude Food: Matsidiso's Streetscapes journey

Matsidiso's life was turned upside down when her mother passed away. 'I had a breakdown,' she says, explaining that the traumatic event, coupled with peer pressure, led her to becoming unhomed for six years. 'I was out of control and I didn't have any communication with my family.' After hearing about Streetscapes through a friend, Matsidiso made the leap in 2021, joining the team in the gardens. By January 2022, she was enrolled in a computer course, doing regular therapy and yoga through the programme.



In September 2022, she left Streetscapes to take up a job at Nude Food where she prepares the delectable vegan and vegetarian offerings for the on-site food caravan, while also helping out on front of house with the skills she picked up in the computer course.

What's more, Matsidiso was able to reconcile with her family, which is something that still makes her feel emotional. 'I didn't know I was strong until now. I never thought I would be this person,' she says.

'I am very happy where I am now. I have had a great experience and learning a lot of things at work,' she explains. And while Matsidiso never really put much stock in her future before this, today she lights up when talking about her career prospects: 'I am hoping to be a beauty therapist, and my manager at Nude Foods is helping me. They are such good people.'

Exporting the art of 'skarreling' to the UK

For a change, Streetscapes got to experience a glimpse related to the *joy of giving* instead of *receiving*. In January we hosted 32 people from Comic Relief and British Airways (BA) who came to see the impact of their funding. The funds were granted towards establishing a housing model in South Africa that can successfully house and rehabilitate substance users who have lived on the streets for a long time. This four year grant now comes to an end in May.



Transitioning from street life to communal living is not easy, and long term funding was instrumental for us to open three houses and fine tune the programme to achieve 85% success rate in clients moving - and remaining off the street.

Our visitors spent two extraordinary days visiting different housing and work sites, gardening with our clients and perhaps most importantly sharing life stories on both sides. At the end of their visit, the teary UK team described their experience as 'humbling', 'inspirational' and 'joyful' whilst our residents said they felt empowered as they were really 'seen' and 'heard'.

Some street lingo was also exchanged. The BA team is now more committed than ever to 'skarrel' in the airplanes for projects like Streetscapes. And instead of the trip ending in 'goodbyes' as we had anticipated, Comic Relief encouraged us keep looking at funding opportunities under their new funding strategy. Not an end after all, just an end of a beginning.

Thembi's seasonal gardening tip



The fact that our gardens are doing well under this hot windy weather of Cape Town, just proves how hardworking and dedicated Streetscapes gardeners are. With food prices going up, our urban farms continue providing various organic vegetables at a low price - because healthy food should be accessible to everyone.

Come into our gardens to purchase or order a variety of organic veg, herbs and fruit: spinach, spring onion, leeks, juicy tomatoes, green pepper, brinjal, baby marrows, chillies, thyme, Italian parsley, mint, granadilla and lemons. We also have Granadilla plants and various succulent plants at Kuilsriver Farm.

Garden tip for the month, keep your plants hydrated, and instead of leaving soil exposed, use mulch or other ground covers. You can still sow Beetroot, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Lettuce.

Updates in our gardens and with our people this month

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Nazeema Jacobs pays it forward!

Hi, my name is Nazeema Jacobs. I am 42 years old, originally from Grassy Park in Cape Town. I was homeless for 15 years, and in that time I was addicted to drugs. I'm in recovery now, and have been clean for almost 3 years! I work as an Assistant Administrator for Streetscapes (Khulisa Social Solutions), and I hope to begin studying for my Social Auxiliary Worker Qualification now in 27 March 2023



Why - this will help me begin a career doing what I know I can do well, to pay it forward by working with people who have made the courageous decision to change their situation in life.

When I was homeless, I lost my family because of decisions I made (I am now touch with them again, much to my relief). I was in consecutive abusive relationships, and I know the struggles that we have in trying to do things correctly.

Getting involved with Streetscapes made a huge difference for me, and I started to realise that the life I led wasn't for me, and then I started to take my life back step by step. People listened to me and I learned how to listen to others. I understood what I was facing, and what I could do to make things better. It wasn't easy - it's been really hard.

I got off the streets, went to rehab and thanks to GOD'S grace, I've been clean for almost 3 years!!

I tell myself - my past is my past, and I'm not hiding it from my future. Having this life experience of homelessness, drug abuse, Gender based violence (GBV) are the reasons that I want to study to develop myself - so that I can help people that have been, or are in this same situation that I have overcome.

Others have had faith in me - it's now my obligation to have faith in people to do the same - it's the potential they have - I can see it, I can feel it, and I know they can find it too!

I need this fund raising because at the moment I cannot afford it, as I can only pay for my registration fee, and I need R7500 by the end of February 2023 and with the stipend that I receive I simply do not have the funds to do what I believe is my life's work.

I am trusting that you will generously donate what you can to help me help others out of their desperate situations and be ALL that they can be!!

I HAVE FAITH THAT THIS WILL BE A SUCCESS!!

Thank you so much for reading my story.

If you can donate to Nazeema's studies, please follow this link:

[SOCIAL AUXILIARY WORKER :: Champion Page | BackaBuddy](#)

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