

# Streetscapes News

*From Jesse...*



Dear Readers,

We are excited to share some fantastic news! Streetscapes, in collaboration with the Cape Town CCID, has launched an innovative peer fieldworker programme to tackle homelessness in our city.

This initiative has helped the CCID triple its reach among the homeless population in the CBD—an impressive feat given the area's significant social challenges.

Our programme employs Streetscapes clients who have first-hand experience with homelessness, working tirelessly day and night. The magic lies in their unique perspective—they truly understand what it's like to live on the streets.

This initiative not only creates jobs but also opens doors to education. One of our former clients is now studying counselling at UCT, showcasing the transformative power of the programme. With daily support and counselling at its core, we plan to expand our team to 20 dedicated fieldworkers.

Dive into our July newsletter to discover more about our impactful efforts!

**Jesse**

Director

Izitalako NPC / Streetscapes

## *Discover Streetscapes' peer fieldworker programme*

In Cape Town's CBD, a new approach to homelessness is changing lives by focusing on people, not problems. The Cape Town Central City Improvement District (CCID) and Streetscapes have launched a peer-to-peer programme where formerly unhomed Streetscapes clients work as fieldworkers, providing support to those still struggling.

"We're able to do a lot more and to help a lot more people," says Tara Gerardy-Bissolati, CCID Social Development manager. "We've more than tripled our reach since starting the programme about a year ago."



The programme operates day and night shifts, with peer fieldworkers offering a range of services. "During the day, we link clients to services. At night, it's more about behaviour change and immediate support," Tara explains.

What sets this initiative apart is the lived experience of the fieldworkers. "They know what it's like to be homeless. They've slept next to some of these people that they're helping," Tara says. This shared experience allows for quicker rapport-building and more effective interventions.

One success story involves a former homeowner who became homeless after losing everything during COVID-19. She now works as a peer fieldworker and has started a counselling course at UCT.

CCID provides support through daily check-in and check-out groups, while Streetscapes offers additional individual counselling. Tara aims to expand the to 20 fieldworkers across shifts in the coming months.

"If I can see the positive change that these guys are doing for themselves and how they impact other people, hopefully we can change the narrative a bit," Tara says.



## *Bonelwa's Peer Experience*

Bonelwa, a 34-year-old mother of three, has transformed her life through Streetscapes. Once experiencing the challenges of life on the streets, she now works as a peer outreach worker, helping others facing similar difficulties.

"I know how it's like to be there outside when it's raining," Bonelwa says. "I know how to sleep without having food in your stomach."

Bonelwa first encountered Streetscapes in 2018 at a shelter in Napier. At the time, she was dealing with untreated medical issues. Through the organization, she accessed proper medical care and began to stabilize her life.

Now, six months into her role as a peer outreach worker, Bonelwa provides practical assistance to those experiencing homelessness. Her team offers access to showers, helps with family reunification, and assists with medical appointments.

"We provide them with hope," Bonelwa explains. "We tell them our stories. We ask them if they're willing to get help because we can't force them."

This is no small feat, as Bonelwa explains. "Sometimes when we take them to the shelters, it's not easy because some have been there before, and they've been chased away because of different stories or situations. So we have to convince the managers there or the supervisors to give them a second chance in life.

We build relationships with them using our own stories and what we ourselves have been through.

Since joining Streetscapes, Bonelwa has reunited with her children and can now support them financially. She's considering further education while also obtaining additional qualifications such as security guard training.

Bonelwa's experience demonstrates the potential of peer-led programs in addressing homelessness in Cape Town. "I'm grateful for the opportunity they give us," she says. "I'm grateful for the social workers, for the counsellors, my supervisors. I'm happy to be here."



## *Farm Dogs Become Family at Streetscapes Kuilsriver*



Three adopted dogs have become integral members of the Streetscapes Kuilsriver farm community. Rosie, the matriarch, along with Fleckies and Rex (Rosie's son), provide companionship and enhance security for the residents who live and work on the farm.

At Streetscapes, we recognize the importance of creating a nurturing environment that fosters a sense of family and responsibility. Regular donations from Mayan at Pen Kin have played a crucial role in maintaining the health and happiness of these four-legged community members.

The support includes not only food but also essential care products such as flea treatments, de-worming medication, and leashes for community dog walks.

"We are very grateful for the support," says Andrew Tulloch, Streetscapes COO. "These dogs have become valuable family members to our community, contributing significantly to the positive atmosphere on the farm."

**STREETSCAPES**  
GROWING BETTER LIVES



## *If you found this newsletter interesting...*

Dear reader,

*If you found our newsletter interesting and entertaining, please consider passing it on to people you know who would appreciate gaining a greater insight into the plight of the homeless, and the positive change that Streetscapes, as well as other organisations, are making to transform the unhomed into valued, productive members of society.*

**Together, we definitely make a difference!**

You can visit our website to be included in our mailing list at [streetscapes.org.za](https://streetscapes.org.za), or you can email us at: [info@streetscapes.org.za](mailto:info@streetscapes.org.za), and we'll do the rest!

Yours,

The Streetscapes Newsletter Team