

HILLCREST AIDS



CENTRE TRUST

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PROJECT REPORT
FOR THE
UBUNTU GROUND CAFÉ
PREPARED FOR
CONTAINER WORLD (PTY) LTD



Inspiring change one cappuccino at a time...

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Founded over 30 years ago, the **Hillcrest AIDS Centre Trust (HACT)** is a registered Non-Profit organisation dedicated to saving and transforming lives. In March 2019, HACT established **HACT Business Pty Ltd T/a “HACT Biz”**, a registered company which is 100% owned by HACT the NPO. The aim of HACT Biz is twofold:

- 1. To improve HACT’s (the NPO’s) long-term sustainability by increasing our organisation’s self-generated income through our HACT Biz social enterprises***
- 2. To stimulate job creation and decrease youth unemployment by providing skills training and meaningful work experience placements to out-of-school unemployed young people***

As a proud **B-BBEE Level 1** contributor, HACT Biz provides South African businesses with the opportunity to partner with a fully invested B-BBEE company which is making a meaningful contribution to the development and upliftment of local, disadvantaged communities. As per the Amended Code Series 100 of the Amended Codes of Good Practice issued under Section (9) 1 of B-BBEE Act No 53 of 2003 as Amended by Act No 46 of 2013, HACT Biz is currently:

- ✓ ***99% Black owned***
- ✓ ***70% Black Women owned***
- ✓ ***98% Black Designated Group owned***

Thanks to the generous support of Container World (Pty) Ltd and the Old Mutual Foundation, HACT was able to start set-up HACT Biz’s first new social enterprise initiative in late 2019. This project report therefore details our Café’s key highlights, achievements as well as lessons learnt during our first year of operation.



PROJECT AIM

The Ubuntu Ground Café is a coffee shop with a difference and has already proved itself as a force for positive change within our local community during its first year of operation. The aim of this unique social enterprise is twofold:

- 1. To provide unemployed youth with positive work experience placements, practical skills development and training opportunities and intensive mentorship through a 12-month training programme in order to equip them with the skills and confidence needed to secure meaningful employment.***
- 2. To improve the long-term sustainability of HACT's 24-bed Othandweni Respite Unit, which provides free respite and palliative care to over 200 children and adults per year who are suffering from advanced stages of AIDS or terminal cancer.***

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Thanks to the support of Container World (Pty) Ltd and the Old Mutual Foundation, our team were able to realise our dream of opening Hillcrest's first social enterprise coffee shop. Situated in central Hillcrest, the HACT Centre is already a well-known and established attraction on the 1000 Hills Tourism route as well as the world famous, Comrades Marathon of which HACT is one of six official charity partners. Our Ubuntu Ground Café, which officially opened for business on **Friday, the 24th January 2020**, was a natural add-on to our existing offerings at the Centre.



Our Ubuntu Ground Café was specifically designed to cater for the needs of our target markets namely young families and pensioners living in the Upper Highway area as well as international tourists and visitors. The Café features an outdoor, undercover seating area looking on to our beautiful Plant Nursery as well as a safe and secure children's play area. In order to maximise foot traffic we aligned our opening hours (Mon- Fri, 8am – 4pm and Saturdays, 8am -2pm) with those of HACT's existing Plant Nursery, Woza Moya craft shop, Haberdashery, Book Shop and Charity Shops and developed a simple menu consisting of light meals such as toasted sandwiches, wraps, burgers, cakes, milkshakes and a delicious assortment of cappuccinos and other coffees. Our beautifully converted container includes a modern, fully-fitted kitchen, serving hatch and counter, scullery and storage area as well as a separate bathroom and baby changing station for our customers.





Our Café's kitchen has been outfitted with high quality, industry-level equipment including our cooker, fridges and freezers, milkshake maker and of course our state of the art La Marzocco espresso / coffee machine.



Thanks to targeted marketing on social media as well as media coverage in several local publications, we are pleased to report that our Ubuntu Ground Café was immediately well received and supported by our local community.



Catering Services

Throughout 2020, our Café successfully catered for several events including;

- *HACT's Comrades Marathon Campaign Launch Event (Jan 2020)*
- *Sharon Potter Art Exhibition at the Woza Moya Gallery (Jan 2020)*
- *3-Day USAID-funded Care Worker Training Workshop (Feb 2020)*
- *HACT's 2020 Comrades Marathon Training Talk (March 2020)*
- *ABSA's YES Scheme Youth Induction Training (March 2020)*
- *Careerlinx Financial Literacy Training Workshops (Oct -Dec 2020)*
- *Goals 4 Life Football Training Programme (Oct – Dec 2020)*
- *Gold Youth Peer Education Programme (July – Dec 2020)*
- *Medical Research Council Training Workshop (Oct 2020)*
- *HACT's Annual Volunteers' Appreciation Party (Nov 2020)*



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

In December 2019, through a partnership with Catalyx Social Development Agency and ABSA, we secured a monthly stipend of R3500 for each of our five trainees for a period of 12 months (Dec 2019 – Nov 2020). This stipend provided our apprentices with income security for the duration of their placement at Ubuntu Ground Café. In total, our Ubuntu Ground Café trainees completed **3000** hours of practical training and in-service, work experience in 2020. This comprehensive skills development and training included;

1. 5-Day Ready to Work Training Workshop

Training Provider: ABSA/YES

Topics Covered:

- **Work Skills** (Intro to the world of work, Creating a CV, Identifying, Interviewing skills)
- **People Skills** (Effective people skills, Communication skills and emotional intelligence)
- **Money Skills** (Spending and saving money, Creating your own budget, Understanding and using credit to your advantage)
- **Entrepreneurial Skills** (Considering self-employment, Key things business owners should know, Setting-up a business)

2. 5-Day Barista Introductory Course

Training Provider: Craig Charity, Lineage Coffee

Topics Covered:

- **The Basics of Extraction Roasting Theory** (Understanding different coffee bean profiles and the roasting process)
- **Equipment Introduction** (In-depth session on all the equipment a barista uses including the espresso machine and bean grinder)
- **Pouring the Perfect Espresso** (A step-by-step, “start to finish” guide to consistently preparing the perfect espresso. Pull a shot just like the pros)
- **Basic Milk Preparation & Latte art**



3. 5-Day Theoretical Intro to Catering & Hospitality Workshop

Training Provider: Cwengikile Mleya, Ubuntu Ground Café Manager

Topics Covered:

- **The Fundamentals of Good Customer service**
- **Table Set Up:** Cutlery, crockery and glassware
- **Serve and Clear:** Serving guests with professionalism
- **Clean as you go:** The importance of cleanliness
- **Cashing-up & Closing Duties:** It isn't over 'til it's over
- **Food Hygiene:** Safe ways of handling and serving food
- **Stock Taking, Orders & Receiving:** business basics



4. 1-Month Artisan Baking Training Course (2 trainees)

Training Provider: Devon Schwen Oosthuizen, Eden Bakery Owner

Topics Covered:

- **Flour Types:** The Theory behind bread & flour types
- **Setting the Scene:** Planning, preparation, hygiene and safety
- **Mixing & Kneading:** The bread making process
- **Fermentation:** The science behind making bread
- **Bread shaping:** The bread baker's formula
- **Baking techniques:** Using different oven types
- **Baking for profit** Basic cost calculations



5. 5 –Day Basic GAAP Point of Sale Training Course

Training Provider: Sales Representative, GAAP

Topics Covered:

- **GAAP 101:** An intro to the GAAP Back Office module
- **Editing:** How to edit menu items, stock items & recipes
- **Receiving & invoicing:** Goods received notes
- **Stock Control & Reports:** How to count & enter stock



6. Half-Day Basic Hygiene in the Workplace Training Workshop

Training Provider: Local Sales Representative, Fresh ID

Topics Covered:

- **Basic hygiene:** The importance of a clean work environment
- **Product Safety:** Use of chemicals & work station colour coding



7. 5-Day Life Skills Training Programme

Training Provider: Sam Mtshali, HACT Peer Education Coordinator

Topics Covered:

- My Self-esteem & Values
- Goal Setting & having a vision for your future
- Young People's Rights & Responsibilities
- Sex & sexuality
- Gender, relationships & rights
- HIV/AIDS, STI's, family planning & sexual reproductive health



CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNT

Over the past year, our Ubuntu Ground Café team have experienced numerous challenges the biggest obviously being related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the national lockdown. Cafés are of course social spaces which means they unfortunately have been amongst the hardest hit by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

On the 27th March 2020, our Ubuntu Ground Café was forced to close its doors due to the implementation of the national lockdown, a mere two months after opening and just as we were establishing a steady and regular customer base. HACT as an organisation, immediately set-up a COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund and through the support of our many local and international donors was able to secure funding to distribute emergency food relief hampers, PPE as well as COVID-19 education material to thousands of vulnerable families living in the surrounding Valley of 1000 Hills communities.

With our Ubuntu Ground Café and several other projects forced to close, we temporarily adapted and re-assigned many of our staff's roles and duties during lockdown levels 4 and 5 with our Café Manager, Cwengikile Myeni (pictured right) and her team heading up our community-based emergency food hamper coordination and distribution activities.



Furthermore, we secured funding for our Ubuntu Ground Café trainees to bake over 700 loaves of fresh bread that were distributed as part of our emergency food hampers and which served as yet another newly acquired skill on our trainees' CVs.

“Learning to bake bread was a lot of fun and helped to keep us busy during the lockdown. It felt good to do something to help feed families who were struggling...”

Stah Mynandu, Ubuntu Ground Café Trainee



In May 2020, our Ubuntu Ground Café reopened under Level 3 for take-away meals only and was back to normal operations as of June 6th. With a marked reduction in foot traffic for the HACT Centre as a whole during the lockdown period, we strived to use this as an opportunity to intensify and expand our trainees' skills development and training over the remainder of the year.

They say that in enduring the hardest times, we often learn the biggest lessons, and our team has certainly learnt many lessons over the past year including the importance of flexibility, creativity, perseverance and “never say die” attitude! We have no doubt that keeping our Café's doors open and striking the right balance between skills development, profitability and sustainability will continue to challenge us over the forthcoming year in 2021. The ripple effect of the ongoing adapted Level 3 lockdown combined with the hesitancy of the general public to go out and socialize ‘as normal’ continues to have a knock on effect on our Ubuntu Ground Café.

In December 2020 and January 2021 we experienced low sales meaning the momentous break-even point, which was achieved in November 2020, was sadly not achieved over the recent festive holidays when South Africa once again went into Level 3 lockdown. Our Centre as a whole normally enjoys a marked influx of local and international visitor traffic during these holidays and year-end periods, but sadly that was not experienced in 2020, which in turn impacted our sales at the Café.

Despite this set back, we are passionate about seeing this project succeed and have faith we will weather this storm with the help of our committed partners who share our vision of offering our younger generation a brighter future. In February 2021, our Café's catering services have once again resumed and we are very pleased to report that foot traffic appears to be picking up once again.

PROJECT IMPACT

Despite the numerous challenges experienced in our Ubuntu Ground Café's first year of operation as detailed above, we are pleased to report that we still succeeded in meeting our key project aims.

We successfully empowered and equipped our young trainees with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to secure meaningful employment with **four** of our **five** trainees having secured

fulltime employment at the time of submitting this report. (Two trainees have been employed here within our Café's permanent staff team and two have secured fulltime positions within the local catering and hospitality industry. Our fifth trainee is still looking for employment.)

Secondly, we are pleased to report that at the end of 2020, our Ubuntu Ground Café did generate a small surplus. Our Ubuntu Ground Café team is continuing to closely monitor its operating systems, costs, and pricing with the goal of consistently achieving and maintaining a break-even point. Once this is achieved, our profit can and will be allocated towards the running costs of our 24-bed Respite Unit in 2021. This achievement would be particularly good news in light of the recent announcement regarding the cancellation of the 2021 Comrades Marathon. (As an official Comrades charity, the Marathon has enabled our team to raise just under R3 million in funding for our Respite Unit over the past 3 years.)

LOOKING AHEAD

Looking ahead to 2021 and beyond, we are excited to continue growing our Ubuntu Ground Café enterprise. As at February 2021, we are in the process of welcoming our second intake of young trainees through a new partnership with **Khwezi Training & Consulting** and have also secured the support of the **Upper Highway Media Group** who have offered their digital marketing expertise to our team on a pro-bono basis over the forthcoming year.

One of our key aims in 2021 is to secure more corporate investors (through either their CSI and or B-BBEE spend) who are keen to partner with us and support our mission to tackle local youth unemployment. We are excited to now also be able to supply our owned Ubuntu Ground branded bags of ground coffee as well as catering services to local companies wanting to earn points towards "supplier development". We are also currently exploring the option of setting-up our graduate trainees with their own mobile **Ubuntu Ground Coffee tuk tuks** in order to take maximum advantage of the current mobile coffee market boom. We envision this as the next step in our Café's journey and an important step forward in terms of offering meaningful and viable employment and or entrepreneurial opportunities to our young trainees.

TRAINEE IMPACT STORY – NOKUKHANYA SHANGE

23 year-old Nokukhanya "Khanyo" Shange (pictured right) was selected as one of HACT's five Ubuntu Ground Café trainees in 2020. A bright, friendly and outgoing young woman, Khanyo immediately impressed our team with her positive attitude, desire to learn and determination to succeed.

In 2017, Khanyo enrolled at Elangeni TVET College for her National Vocational Certificate after she failed matric in 2016. She successfully obtained her level 2 & 3 certification, but was sadly not able to return and complete her final exams when her grandmother passed away, as it was her gogo's pension which was paying for her college fees. Khanyo describes the 12 months which followed as the most difficult and



disheartening period of her life; ***“Sitting at home for 12 months, being rejected again and again for jobs because I had no experience, almost broke my spirit. But I was determined not to give up and kept hoping that somehow I would find something...”***

Growing-up in a tight knit family with her mother, younger brother and three uncles in the semi-rural community of Shongweni, Khanyo says she developed a passion for cooking and food from a young age and it was this passion which compelled her to apply when she heard about the Ubuntu Ground Café training programme. ***“I have always loved cooking and in my mind, my ideal job involved working with food. When I heard about the Ubuntu Ground Café, I knew straight away it was for me.”***

However, a few weeks into her training and Khanyo’s passion for food was soon surpassed by her new found skills as a barista. ***“I confess, I never used to like coffee”*** laughs Khanyo, ***“but now, I love everything about it. Learning where the coffee beans come from, how to use the espresso machine and how to do latte art was all new to me and I’m very proud that I can make a very good the cappuccino.”***

As with all of HACT’s Ubuntu Ground Café trainees, Khanyo was trained by none other than Craig Charity, founder and owner of Lineage Coffee, Ubuntu Ground Café Business Mentor and All Africa Barista Champion. Speaking of Khanyo’s barista skills, Craig says; ***“Khanyo just gets it. She’s the perfect mix of skill and personality and it was a privilege training her. The barista industry is currently one of many dominated by men, but I have no doubt that young women such as Khanyo are going to be changing that in the not too distant future.”***

Khanyo says one of the things she’s most proud of over the past year is being able to help support her family. ***“I am in the process of building onto my mother’s house and have bought a fridge using the money I have made working at Ubuntu Ground over the past year. I am also currently studying for my learner’s licence and have paid for my test.”***

Life has certainly changed for the better for Khanyo and her family and she now holds her head up high. ***“My mom is so proud of me and I’m glad I am now a good role model for my younger brother who is doing matric this year. I love coming to work every day and being part of the Ubuntu Ground team.”***

**THANK YOU CONTAINER WORLD
FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**