

# uMthombo - Street Children

(Section 21 Reg: 2005/000362/08 – Non-Profit Number: 040-513-NPO)

Offices: 41 Khuzimpi Shezi Road, Berea, Durban, 4001, KZN, South Africa Cell: 072 861 9865

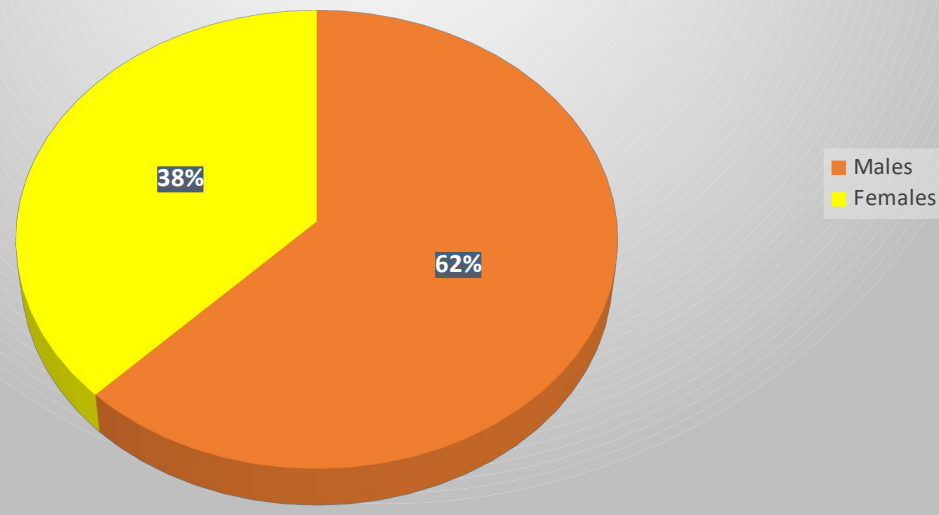
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## 2023 Monitoring & Evaluation Report

### PSYCHOSOCIAL

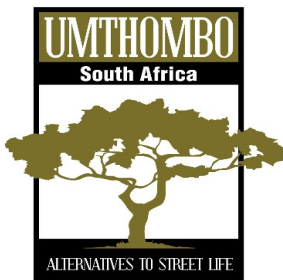
Outreach: -

Overall Number of Children & Youth In Street Situations



■ Males  
■ Females

#Number of Females	121
#Number of GDD (Gender Defined Differently)	0
#Number of Males	193



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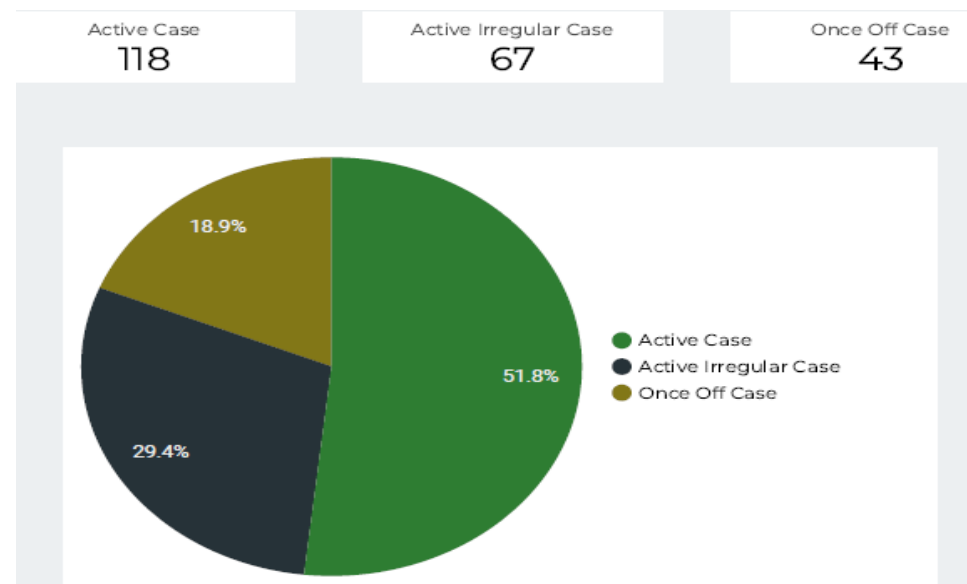
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Our data in the previous 3 years, had shown that the number of children & youth in street situations was almost on par, with a small difference, between 1 or 2 percentage, based on intake gender statistics. At the close of 2023, we are now noting a significant increase in the number of older street-connected boys, being more prevalent in our engagements. As previously mentioned in our mid-year report, a number of social ills plagues our country, with unemployment and substance misuse taking its toll, mainly amongst youth between 18 – 35 years of age. We also noted an increased exposure to substance abuse by a number of pupils in schools, who are in their teenage years. This significant increase, mainly in the male category can possibly be attributed to young men taking whatever measures to possibly sustain their livelihoods. This also means taking risks and finding themselves in illicit activities within the city's streets environment.

The pie chart below indicates the status of cases engaged in the second half of the year: -



Out of the 228 cases recorded in the second part of the year, almost 19% of the cases expressed a somewhat willingness to engage and also tried to



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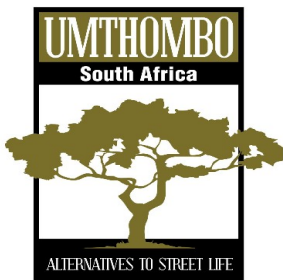
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be consistence in attending set activities that were planned.

Year on year from 2020, the age category between 18 – 30 years of age, continues to be on the rise, this being indicative of our country’s state of unemployment as well as the many gaps that exist between the education system, skills or artisanship prospects. Many young people in this age category find themselves despondent and some have easily fallen into life destroying habits due to lack of opportunities, proper guidance and support.

The table and the graph below show’s the different age categories that we have engaged with in the past 12 months.

Age category	Sex	# of individuals
0-7	Female	7
0-7	Male	7
8-17	Female	7
8-17	Male	29
18-30	Female	56
18-30	Male	84
30+	Female	23
30+	Male	38

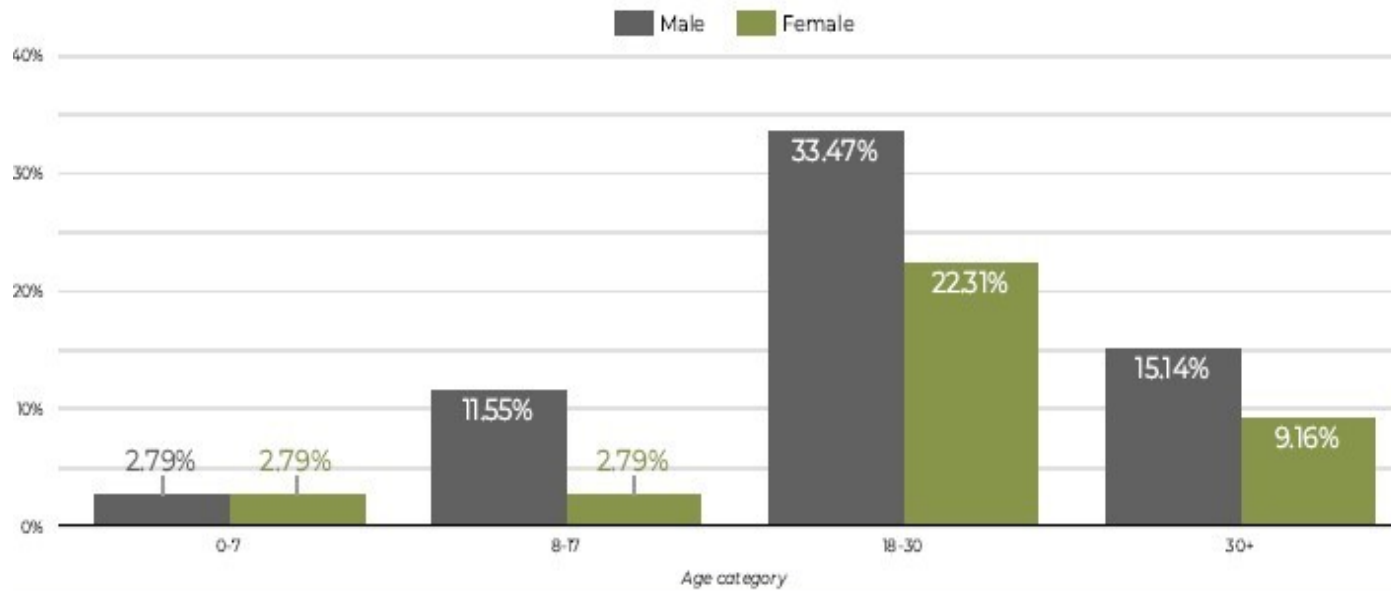


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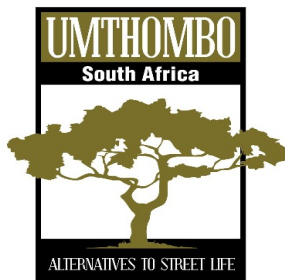
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From the beginning of 2023 the outreach team have been noting confusing information that many of the street-connected young people has about uMthombo and the services it provides. This led to many young people thinking we offer employment opportunities to street-connected youth without any substantial work to be done around being rehabilitated as well as young women being assisted through the independent living programme without any responsibilities and expectations.

There were now different opinions and perception on what we offer, which led to different attitudes when young people realise, the extent of work needed to be done and the responsibility that each and everyone involved will have to carry. Forty young people were targeted to be part of an awareness session in order for them to fully understand uMthombo's activities as well as what is required from them to be part of these activities successfully.



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22 (12 Females & 10 Males) young people managed to attend the session where they interacted with former beneficiaries who have been successfully reintegrated either through independent living, reintegration back home with families or enrolled in a learnership programme. The space provided for young people to talk among themselves, created a platform to talk freely and engage with former street-connected youth who have managed to commit themselves, followed the guidelines and took a necessary step in terms of their willingness to move forward.

For the 22 that attended the session, we noted there was a change of attitude and perception on what uMthombo's offers and the realisation that it is possible for a change to happen, since they could relate to the peers they once knew or seen on the streets. 4 young people (1 Female & 3 Males) immediately committed themselves for a detoxification process which they have started and completed.

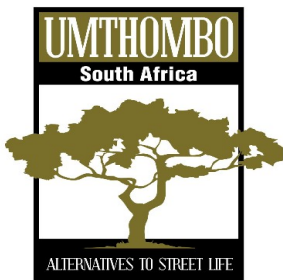
## **Adolescent Girls & Young Women (AGYW): -**

In addition of the 58 girls that were seen by June 2023, 49 new girls were part of our outreach interactions in the second part of the year bringing to the total of 107 and 14 were returning cases from the previous year.

The level of engagement and readiness amongst the AGYW varied throughout the year. 46 girl's interaction with the outreach team had proven to show much progress and their level of participation became active regular in attendance, despite their different levels of readiness to take the next step.

33 active irregular cases were seen to during this period with many showing potential to be receptive towards any form of engagement but due to various competing personal and social pressures, weren't able to find the much-needed clarity to start dealing with their distress situation. The outreach team's presence on a consistence basis, opened up safe spaces for the young girls to be able to come forward and share a bit their experiences from time to time.

The 42 once off cases seen in 2023 were provided with meals as well as given a chance to understand our work with young people on the street. They were also assured of our support and presence as and when is needed.



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## **Young Women Independent Living Project (YWIL): -**

In total, 46 young women were prepared for the Independent Living Project who expressed their willingness to be part but individually were at different stages of their lives. 4 out of 46 young women were not misusing any substances but had ended up on the streets, due to various family and personal challenges. The intervention processes of the 4 girls differed vastly from the 42, where within two months of engagement, we were able to set them up for independent living spaces and to reintegrate them back with their families. Amongst the 4, three were young mothers, each having a child.

As we progressed to the second part of the year, all of the 42 battled with the drug reduction process, coupled with attachment to street-connected boyfriends, being drug paddlers and or being exposed to various illicit money-making schemes. The state of the city has drastically deteriorated that most abandoned building and open spaces have become street-connected slum communities, often inaccessible to humanitarian service providers. These conditions have also made it a challenge in terms of our engagements with the young women, with regards to when and how much time we may wish to spend with them.

The baseline analysis of all the 37 young women who struggled to take the necessary steps in moving forward, have been due to harsh realities which they've found themselves in and can be summed up into the following factors: -

- Some are still living in abandoned buildings which have become slums with no proper infrastructure and amenities, some are sleeping on pavements and roam around the streets during the day and some live-in abandoned parks or sport fields. In all their situation they are in some way able to fend for themselves and find very basic commodities and food for sustenance.
- Out of the 37, nine are young mothers living with their children on the streets, 28 have between one to three children amongst themselves, either living with family members back at home and some are being placed in children's home by the Department of Social Development. Our data records from baseline, indicates that all young mothers have gone through prenatal clinics during their pregnancy, which has led them accessing other government services such as child birth certificate as well as assisted with application for child support grants.
- In terms of the well-being of the young women/ mothers, our data shows that at different assessment points, their level of openness and engagement varies from time to time. Depending on their ability to see what is possible for them in moving forward and working towards possible life-giving alternatives out of their current situation. They will then be able to engage with total honesty and commitment. Referring to annexures 1 and 2 attached, illustrates the varying abilities at different assessment points. Their abilities does not guarantee a speedious



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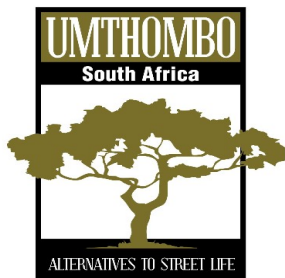
behavioural change and actions to be taken but gives us an indication as to where they are at in terms of their psycho-emotional well-being. For some it might be a realisation to take the much-needed move and for some it might be the beginning of the process that will need careful guidance and mentoring over time.

- These annexures also give an indication of the young girl's well-being, ranging from ability to understand the need for the safety of their children if they are young mothers as well as identifying their own risk behaviour while they are still street-connected. Therefore, being able to assess and understand their level of motivation and confidence in making the necessary change that they hope to achieve.
- For most, motivation and confidence might be there, as well as understanding the risk factors with which they find themselves in but the compounding nature of their life experiences, filled with attachment and detachment to street-connected boyfriends, abuse, drug addiction, exploitation and helplessness makes the process harder and challenging to resolve easily.

By the end of November 2023, five young women were able to progress through the various phases set for the Independent Living Project and are now fully reintegrated for over 5 months. Much progress has been noted with the 9 young women, with seven have been undergone the process of reapplication of their identity documents so that they are able to start applying for various employment prospects. Currently as part of our Practical Working Learning Project, 2 young women have been enrolled into the learnership on the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 2023. By the end of January 2024, they will receive their first stipend amounting to R3 500,00 per month, this will be approximately be £145. Two spaces have also been reserved for the remaining two young women, due to start by mid - January 2024.

From the 37 young women who have not made much progress, eight are at a tipping point to make that much needed decision to move forward and proceed with the prescribed drug reduction strategy required from them. These 8 cases are closely monitored but great caution is also given to the current festive season we are at, since there will be exposed to many temptations.

The 29 young women remaining, much work still needs to be done since by the beginning of December 2023, they have started to disengage partially due to the same reason mentioned above, the festive and summer holiday period. Many who are drug paddlers are being used to maximise on money to be made within the illicit drug industry. The interactions with the outreach team still shows the openness and willingness to be part but their state of mind is such as, they are anxious and conflicted.



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## YWIL Candidates Progress From 2021 – 2023: -

No	Name	Year of Engagement	Regression (Young Person is worse)	No Improvement	Some Improvement	Great Deal of Improvement & Comments
1	Simiso	2021				Independent and operating a small kitchen, selling food in the local taxi rank.
2	Mbali	2021				Reintegrated back to her family.
3	Silindile	2021				Reintegrated and living with her boyfriend back at home.
4	Ayanda M	2021				Independent and working at a local shoe factory.
5	Ayanda	2021				Reintegrated back to her family.
6	Xolisile	2021	After 3 months, she decided to return back to the streets.			
7	Yolanda	2021				Independent and currently under internship programme with uMthombo.
8	Mampenqe	2022		Still unstable and also returned back to the streets.		
9	Avumile	2022				Reintegrated and moved back to her family.
10	Sanelisiwe	2022				Reintegrated back to her family.





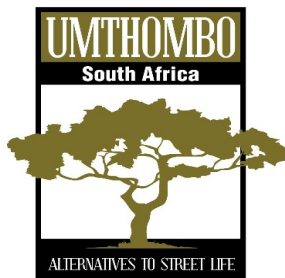
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11	Nokwazi	2022	Regressed after 2 months and returned back to the streets.			
12	Thobe	2022			Reintegrated back to her family but her family situation is volatile.	
13	Azizisiwe	2022				Reintegrated back to her family and working.
14	Aphiwe	2022			Reintegrated back to her family but still once in a while comes to the streets to visit friends.	
15	Zameka	2022				Reintegrated back to her family and working.
16	Londeka	2022				Reintegrated back to her family.
17	Phili	2023				Independent and still being supported by uMthombo and has currently started in a learnership programme in December 2023.
18	Zinhle	2023				Reintegrated back to her family.
19	Ncamsile	2023				Still supported by uMthombo



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						and awaiting internship placement.
20	Nomcebo	2023				Still supported by uMthombo and awaiting internship placement
21	Zanele	2023				Independent and still being supported by uMthombo and has currently started in a learnership programme in December 2023.
22	Sne	2023	Regressed after 3 months being reintegrated and returned back to the streets.			
23	Lungile	2023				Reintegrated back to her family.
24	Amanda	2023	Regressed after 2 months being reintegrated and returned back to the streets.			
25	Zandile	2023				Reintegrated back to her family and working.

Over the past 3 years, 53 young women were engaged with intensely, in preparation for their independence mostly with their babies. Twenty-five moved away into safe spaces to restart their lives and taking necessary steps in becoming independent. To date 16 young women are independent at home or in their own spaces. Four other young women are still supported by uMthombo but recently have been enrolled in a learnership programme.

**Case Study: -**



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The video links below are from some of the girls that have been assisted by uMthombo and currently in the YWIL Project. The 3 young women are Philisiwe (30), Ncamisile (25) and Nomcebo (30).

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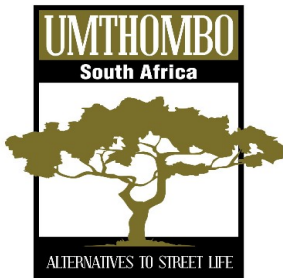
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## DEVELOPMENT WORK

### **Community Network: -**

In the second part of the year, we added one community network structure from the eThekweni Municipality Ward Committee War Room, which was Ward 44 in Inanda Township. Various social ills plagued by the community were highlighted in this war room and the professional multi-disciplinary structures that were present, were able to deal with the issues raised and also register those cases for further interventions within their respective department or institutions. For uMthombo, we were able to identify pressing issues of substance misuse within this community and also to deal with these matters jointly with the local Department of Social Development (DSD). By the close of the year, we are still awaiting DSD to provide a list of identified young people who will need help.

Overall, in the year 2023, we have been involved in 6 community network structures where we dealt with cases that has a direct link to uMthombo's work, sharing information, experiences and come up with possible solutions. These networks also provided an opportunity to explore Practical Work Learning internships, where youth in street situations or those who are At-Risk in communities can find any form of employment opportunities.



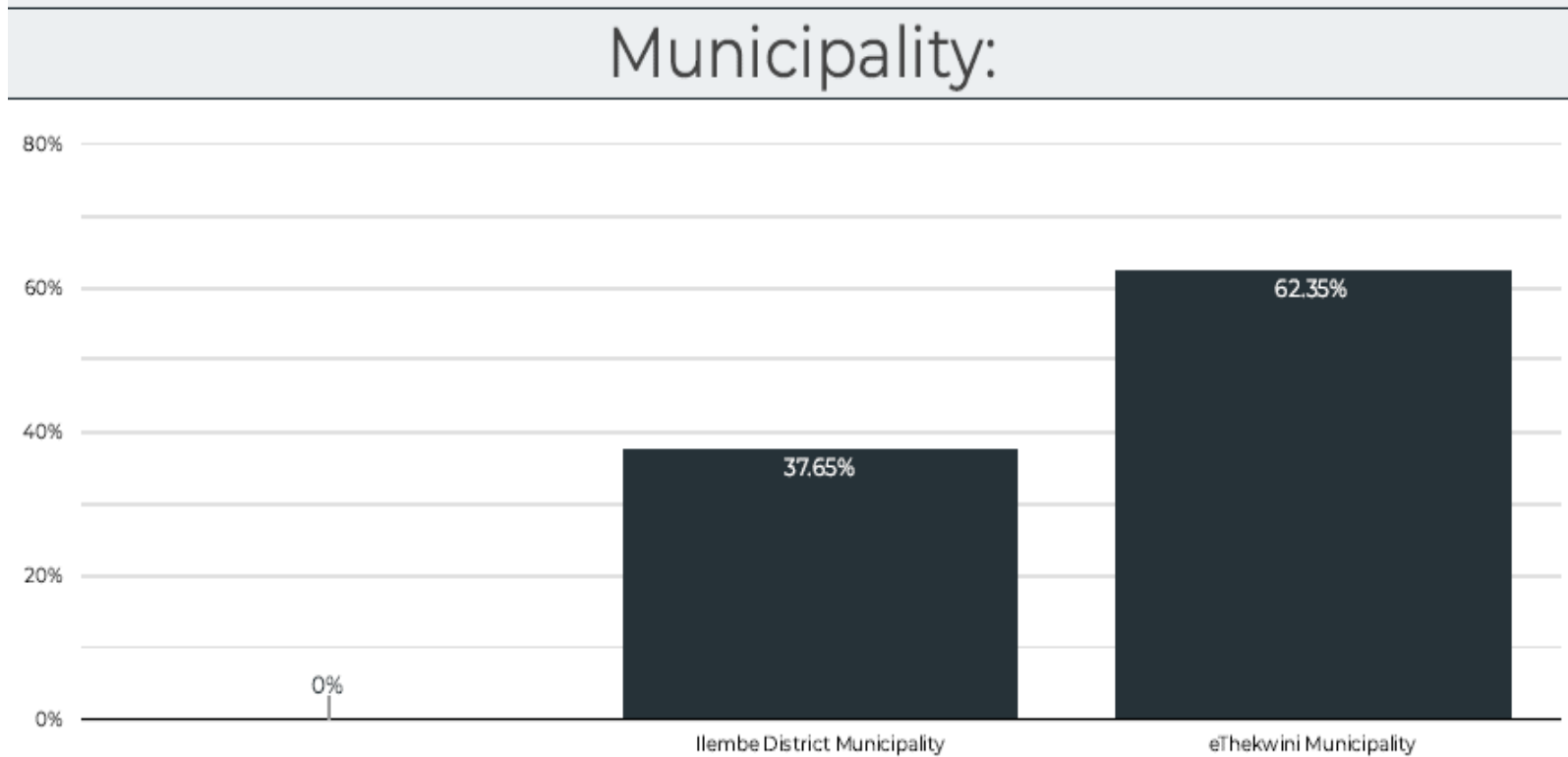
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The graph below illustrates, two nearby municipalities, where most of our community engagement activities are centred around. These two municipalities over the years, have seen a drastic increase in numbers of children & youth in street situations.



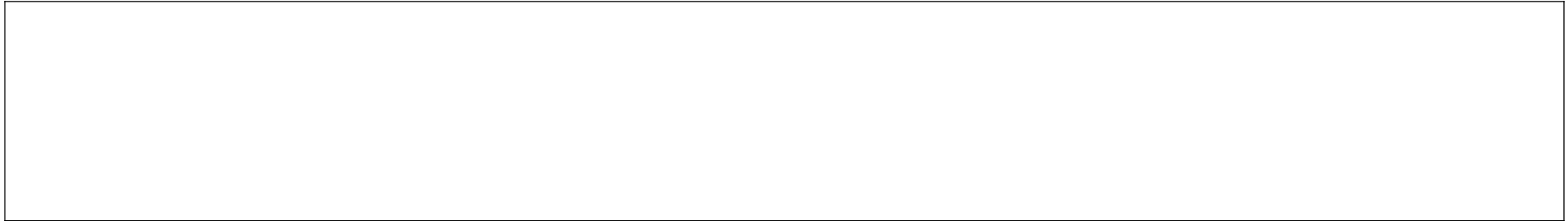


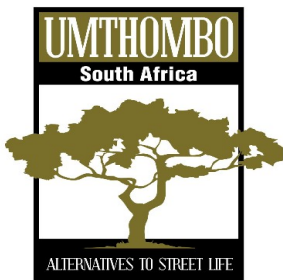
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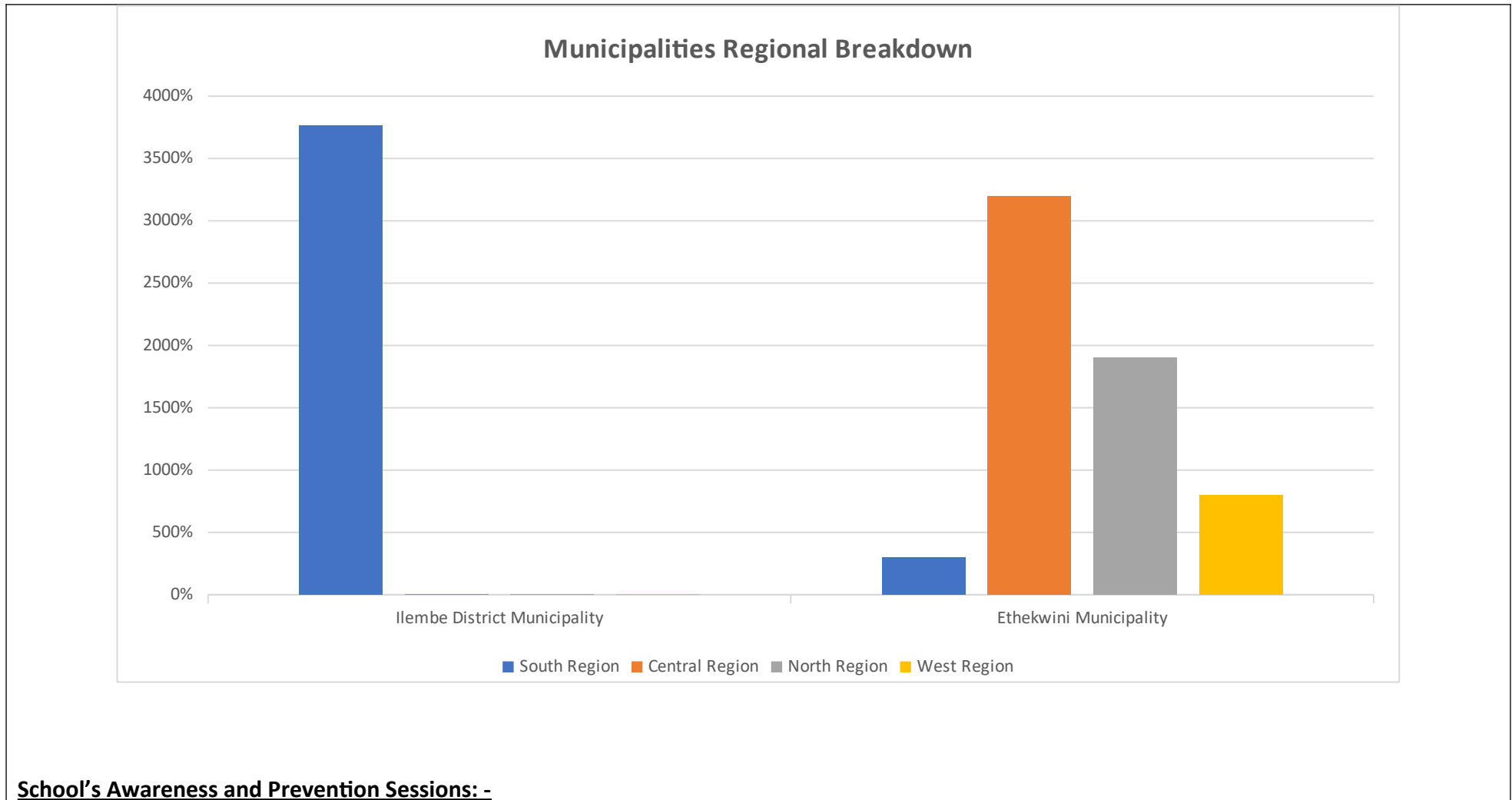


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After the ground work was laid in terms of awareness raising activities in the first 6 months of the year, the At-Risk learner were then identified to be part of the on-going psychosocial sessions, which were conducted up until learners were preparing for their final examination by end of October 2023.

The group of 90 learners continued being peer ambassadors within the school premises, assisting the Care & Support Department in monitoring existing and emerging challenges faced by learners.

Thirty-four At-Risk learners were part of the on-going group and individual psychosocial sessions, conducted by uMthombo Social Workers. Psychosocial group work sessions were divided into two thematic areas where learners were placed, based on their identified common challenges.

The first group of 20 learners dealt with Resilience Building as a theme covering 8 sessions which included: - *Establishing Secure & Judgement Free Space, Relaxation and Mindfulness, Journaling Emotions, Art Therapy, Role Play and Goal Settings*. All 20 learners had voluntarily sought help from the Care & Support Department since they had started to explore with illicit drugs and were aware of the dangers, they might find themselves in. During these sessions Five Way Panel Test were conducted in order to monitor if in any case they might have been tempted to explore again. By the end of scheduled sessions only 5 managed to be completely clean, the rest of the group were still struggling with marijuana. The level of exposure to marijuana in African townships is so high, making it impossible for some of the learners to completely break free from the habit of smoking it. The greatest challenge of this exposure to marijuana is that, it's not solely used on its natural form but most drug dealers and paddlers have laced it with various highly addictive drug substances.

The second group theme was Substance Abuse Amongst School Children, which comprised of 14 learners who were already being caught misusing substances. The learners had been subjected to a school disciplinary protocol and they were on the verge of being expelled. Failing to comply with the requirement of seeking psychosocial help through the planned group sessions, would be expelled completely from attending school. Weekly sessions were conducted covering these following sessions: - *Understanding Addiction, Self Esteem and Self Worth, Psycho Education on Addiction, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Group Therapy on Dealing with Personal Struggles and Communication Skills*. Through out these sessions on a weekly basis, learners were also required to undergo the Five Panel Drug Test, in which we were able to ascertain the type of substances they have been using as well as, if they have started to stop taking those form of drugs over a period of time.



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Out of the 14 learners, 10 tested completely negative from any form of substances and the remaining 4, tested positive on marijuana. For the 4, much progress was noted since they were cleared from other forms of drugs. Ongoing support and referral was recommended to the school for all those who were still struggling with marijuana and for those who were on the verge of expulsion, their cases were temporarily suspended until the resumption of the new school calendar year if they still maintain the same status.

## **Post 16 Programme: -**

Fifty young people were identified to be part of the Post 16 Programme, of which 26 (*25 Males & 1 Female*) were from At-Risk communities and 24 were street-connected young males. All 50 underwent the Pre-Assessment phase, where they were assisted with drug reduction plan and 22 were able to complete this phase and proceeded to the natural and medical drug detoxification phase. 16 completed the second phase which led to the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase taking shape, where the young people had to undergo the phased 7 weeks Life Skills Programme.

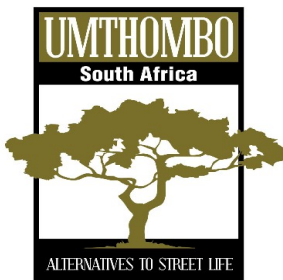
Three young men are currently being enrolled in a learnership programme and have started to earn an income. 1 young man has been assisted to start a small business, selling electronics and another young man was assisted to be reinstated by his former employer after an agreement was reached that he undergoes the rehabilitative process with uMthombo.

51 beneficiaries who were directly linked to uMthombo's interventions are now part of the learnership programme, 47 receiving a monthly stipend for the past two and a half years and 4 have recently started in mid-December 2023. In addition to this 28 (*12 Females & 16 Males*) At-Risk young people were also enrolled to the learnership through our community engagement activities.

## **At-Risk Community Camps: -**

A reunion camp was held with 13 boys who had been part of the community awareness and prevention campaigns in schools in mid-2016. This group were the first identified young people in schools to be misusing substances and various interventions were applied in order to help them. By 2017 most were able to have overcome their addiction but repeated their grade 7 in which only in 2018 they proceeded to high school level. High school also became a challenge, many repeating grades but with the help of our partner organisation (Katsi Youth In Action), they were given much





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(Section 21 Reg: 2005/000362/08 – Non-Profit Number: 040-513-NPO)

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needed support. They have managed to remain at school and all of the thirteen, by 2023 were now between grade 11 & 12.

Since they were seeing themselves in another vulnerable situation, they requested Katsi to reconnect them with uMthombo to further enhance their life skills and empower them with necessary guidance to navigate newer challenges. A 3-day camp was conducted engaging them in various activities ranging from, individual counselling, group sessions as well as sports and fun games.

All of the young people had shared their personal journey's, their current struggles and hopes for the future in which they were given attention to by the team of uMthombo's Social Workers. The main challenge that many faced was still the easy availability of drugs, of which they found themselves surrounded by people who are misusing substances and are in constant fear of being influenced into old habits.

The camp also included bringing on board other stakeholders to assist the young people with career guidance, dealing with matters around health and sexual reproductive health as well as goal setting.

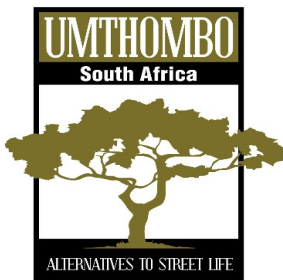
## **Learnership or Internship: -**

By the end of 2023 with the resumption of the City Based Learnership, we have a total of 166 young people being enrolled in the learnership programme. Twenty-five positions are still to be approved to recruit more young people and within these positions, uMthombo's direct beneficiaries stand a chance to be appointed.

In August 2023, the City Based Learnerships had to come to an abrupt stop due to financial constraints faced by the eThekweni Municipality. This meant that 84 young people had to temporarily cease being part of the learnership. Fortunately, this also changed by the 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2023, where most resumed back and newer applicants had to be recruited.

The learnership that remained without any interruptions due to finances, was the South Based Industrial Precinct which is solely funded by private businesses operating within that area. 106 interns in this precinct were not affected and continued to work.

## **Social Relief Projects: -**



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In a small scale we continued with our social relief assistance to 15 families who received monthly packs till the end of 2023.

## NUTRITION

**Total Meals Served: 5 142**

**Outreach Meals Served: 3 028**

- 75 Females seen – **1022** two meals servings per person
- 46 Females (YWIL) – **772** two meals serving per person
- 168 Males seen – **1234** two meal servings per person

**Pre-Assessments & Camps -**

- 25 Males – serving **1610** meals
- 7 Female – serving **504** meals

**YWIL Monthly Food Packs -**

- 6 young women continued to receive monthly food packs from the 3<sup>rd</sup> cohort.
- Each pack cost around 1 078 ZAR.

**Early Childhood Development Centres**

- 5 centres continue to receive monthly breakfast cereals, serving 359 children – **3270**.