



# CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESS *in South Africa*

How INMED South Africa is improving health, income generation, food security, climate-change resilience and inclusion for our most vulnerable citizens



INMED Partnerships for Children has been working as an international non-governmental organization (NGO) for the past 30 years in more than 100 countries. In South Africa, our local team has been transforming lives and communities since 2006, through our simple, time-tested approach to improving nutrition, health and food scarcity. Our programmes focus on the most vulnerable children in disadvantaged communities to lift them out of poverty, and provide opportunities for economic development to ensure sustainability.

### HEALTH IN ACTION

INMED is tackling South Africa's public health crisis of obesity and malnutrition via a school-based programme that empowers children and their teachers to become agents of change in their families and communities. Called Health in Action, this programme is reaching more than 100,000 primary school children in 116 schools in 13 at-risk communities in Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth. Supported by Mondelez International Foundation, the programme focuses on educational messages about nutrition, physical activity and healthy lifestyles through hands-on, skills-based activities and training, including the development of school gardens that provide nutritious fresh produce for school meals.

### ADAPTIVE AGRICULTURE & AQUAPONICS

INMED's Adaptive Agriculture Programme focuses on achieving food security and sustainable economic development in disadvantaged communities. A key component of this programme is aquaponics, an innovative and highly intensive food production technique combining aquaculture (fish farming) with hydroponics (soilless crop growing) in a closed system that is at least 10 times as productive as equivalently sized plots that are farmed traditionally. Aquaponics requires no chemical fertilizers or pesticides and utilizes 85-90% less water than tradition-

al irrigation

INMED has installed several commercial-sized aquaponic systems for schools and large farming cooperatives, as well as family-sized units, which yield enough produce and fish to provide for a family's nutritional needs with surplus to sell for additional income. The pioneers who have installed and maintained these systems in South Africa have realized a multitude of life-changing benefits. One remote farm co-op using an INMED system increased its monthly income by 300%, allowing the group to expand its farming operation to include lucrative livestock. Our team in South Africa is seeking to expand its aquaponics initiative and is working with local banks and provincial governments to provide more opportunities for subsistence farmers and families to enter the aquaponics business.

### SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

At the heart of all INMED programmes are socio-economic and enterprise development principles that address high levels of unemployment, poverty, inequality and skills shortage. INMED invites all corporates interested in investing in the sustainability of successful community-driven initiatives—while gaining their social economic development and enterprise development points—to collaborate with us.

## Golden Opportunities for Youth in School and Out

Khunedi Mashishi is the epitome of what INMED strives to accomplish with its Health in Action programme (HIA). An 11-year-old fifth grade student at Paradise Bend Primary School in Diepsloot, Gauteng, Khunedi is an avid cross-country runner. She has won 32 medals since she started competitive running in 2013. In fact, Khunedi runs so fast that her school mates have nicknamed her Caster after 2016 Olympic Gold Medal runner Caster Semenya.

So it was great news when Khunedi was invited to compete in South Africa's junior national cross country championship. It seemed unlikely that she would be able to participate, however. Her widowed father, who works for a towing company, did not have the means to cover the travel expenses and other costs for the competition.

"When INMED South Africa heard about Khunedi, we stepped up to sponsor her for the event, providing her track suit, uniform, travel and accommodations," notes INMED SA Operations Manager Janet Ogilvie. "As Paradise Bend is one of INMED's Health in Action Schools, we felt the sponsorship reflected our ethos of nutrition, exercise and healthy lifestyles as a foundation for success. INMED's sponsorship not only benefits Khunedi but also the other students at Paradise Bend," she adds.

Pictured here with long-time coach Mr. Molefe, Khunedi proudly displays the two golds she won at the national race



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and has dreams of competing in the 2020 Olympics.

A recent baseline survey indicates that 4 out of 10 children in Johannesburg are obese. One way INMED South Africa is fighting this obesity epidemic is through an initiative called "Break Time Buddies" which forms part of the broader Health in Action programme.

Break Time Buddies are out-of-school, unemployed youth who are recruited by INMED via local school governing boards. In collaboration with tertiary institutions, such as Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth and Wits University in Johannesburg, they are trained to lead fun physical education activities while promoting nutrition and healthy lifestyles during daily recess at 116 schools.

"This programme has enabled me to make a difference in my community. Every time I visit schools I am welcomed by screams of kids competing for my attention," says Samkelo Dumse, a Break Time Buddy in Kwa-Zakhele schools.





## Power in Planting: Gardens of Hope

Rainbow High School and Repholositswe Secondary School serve students in two impoverished rural communities in Free State, South Africa. Both areas are plagued by violence, and students have few opportunities for extracurricular activities. INMED's Adaptive Agriculture Programme worked with the schools to create gardens to provide both nutritious food for school meals as well as an outlet to give youth something productive to do after school.

The students' response exceeded expectations. "We have 90 students in our environmental group and they kept on asking us when we will start the garden and were so interested to learn how to do different things," notes Repholositswe's environmental education teacher, Agnes Moletsane. "They were so excited about helping set this garden up and even making their own gardens like this at home."

Teachers at both schools emphasize the importance of the environmental club and the students' work in the garden as an alternative to the gang activity so pervasive in their communities. Mrs. Moletsane notes that the club helps to keep learners busy after school. In fact, she proudly reports that some club members who used to be gang members "have now assumed leadership roles."

Ishmael Serame, the leader of the environmental club at Rainbow, which started with a small, neglected garden,

*"Since we started working with INMED a lot of children have benefited, especially in changing their behaviour and mindset as well as learning new skills."*

shared his perspective on the garden's power in offering an alternative to gangs. "This year, one Grade 11 boy, who was a well-known gang member, was invited by a friend to come and help at the vegetable garden. After he saw what others were doing after school hours, he asked if he could also join the club. When asked why he would like to join, he simply said that he realized that there are more positive things to learn after school than just go home and hang around with the gang members causing problems in the community."

The success of this programme has given students and teachers a sense of pride and enthusiasm, which has led to far-reaching changes in each community. Both Mr. Serame and Mrs. Moletsane report that their students are applying what they learn by developing their own gardens at home. Mr. Serame adds that his students "have already indicated their interest in studying agriculture when they complete high school."

## Overcoming the Burden of Hunger

In a poor rural community of South Africa's Free State province, Pietrus Moshoeshoe found himself responsible for 66 extended family members (47 of them children) after his father passed away. He also inherited leadership of his family farming cooperative group. Although Pietrus was learning from his father, he did not possess the same technical knowledge or training in agriculture. The group was struggling desperately, sometimes going up to three days without eating.

Since taking part in the agriculture and business training delivered through INMED's Adaptive Agriculture Programme, however, the group has been able to cultivate their land productively, achieve greater harvests than ever, generate both food and income to nourish their family members every day and send their children to school.

From making approximately R110 - R442 per month from the sales of their meager crops before the programme, they now earn an average of R8,299 monthly year-round from the sale of the group's produce, eggs and broilers—enough to create a profound impact on their livelihoods.

As a result of the business planning and financial training delivered, Pietrus has learned to budget for family needs, maintenance of the farm and eventual expansion of his growing enterprise. He also is actively involved in courses

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through the local extension service, showing great initiative in increasing his agricultural and business knowledge and strengthening his income generation prospects.

“[INMED] really uplifted us. We were suffering a lot... we were not open minded, we did not know about record keeping, we did not know about saving,” Pietrus admits. “INMED has changed our lives a lot because we now know how to keep the records of our project and we now know how to save our money at the bank.” The co-op also has registered its business venture with the provincial government “I see a lot of success in our project and we are going to generate much more profit,” Pietrus says.

Indeed, the group has recently been nominated for an award for “most improved” small-scale farmers in the province by the Provincial Department of Agriculture, and are now sufficiently productive that they have hired a member from the community for the first time to help on the farm.





## A Brighter Future for Disabled Producers

Rosie Mateko worked as a teacher in South Africa for 14 years before suffering a severe stroke that left her disabled and forced her to resign from her educational career. It was difficult for Rosie to come to terms with what had happened to her, and she felt a deep sense of loss in addition to the pressure of having to support her four children and two granddaughters as a single, disabled mother.

Rosie began talking to other disabled people about empowering themselves, eventually leading the organization of the Monyakeng cooperative group. When INMED first met Rosie, the group was generating some income from sewing, cooking and basic gardening, but the members were still struggling to provide for their families.

Through INMED's Adaptive Agriculture Programme, the implementation of aquaponics—a combination of aquaculture and hydroponics—has opened new opportunities for success for Rosie and the Monyakeng group. Aquaponics is particularly suited to the needs of the disabled, replacing traditional cultivation methods that they are not physically able to perform.

Rosie's leadership was acknowledged when she was named Best Subsistence Producer for her district. Having entered the entrepreneurship competition several times before, she finally gained notice for her work with aquaponics. Rosie received a certificate and a cash award, which she invested in the cooperative.

***“Our group is now totally different... because we as the members now have a good commitment, cooperation, and with INMED we move forward. I see many things in the future... Our project is going to grow bigger and bigger.”***

All of the cooperative members share in the group's success. The programme, says member Ennica Mbhele, “has brought us something new that has already changed our lives. We will be able to generate profit in this project, which was something difficult to do. Our [group] is now totally different compared to the previous years, because we as the members now have a good commitment, cooperation, and with INMED we move forward.” Ultimately, Ennica says, “I see many things in the future because we will be able to create some jobs for the community. Our project is going to grow bigger.”

Rosie agrees. “Because of this project, some of the members who had lost interest because they were not getting much are now working hard to make the project a success.”

## Strengthening Livelihoods

The Thabelo Christian Association for the Disabled (a struggling farming cooperative located in a remote mountain village in Venda, Limpopo) works to feed and support an extended household of approximately 40 family members. Each of the cooperative members has physical disabilities, such as missing, deformed or wasted limbs—some as a result of polio.

The leader of the group, Wilson Mphaphuli, is married to a woman who is also disabled. The couple has three children, one of whom also has a moderate mental disability. Wilson suffers from a deformed leg as a result of polio, which makes it difficult for him to walk or stand for long periods of time. He has lived in the village for his entire life and worked for a time for a local builder. But when the economy deteriorated, Wilson was let go and has not found employment since.

“It is always difficult to find employment when you are disabled and with limited formal education,” Wilson admits. “People always opt to employ able-bodied people.”

Through INMED’s Adaptive Agriculture Programme, the Thabelo group received a commercial-scale aquaponics system—an innovative, high-yield, simplified technology. INMED also trained the group in more efficient, sustainable traditional agriculture practices. Now, the programme has transformed Wilson’s outlook and his prospects for self-sufficiency. “We now see things in a

***“INMED has given us our hope and confidence back and we now see ourselves becoming commercial farmers, and for that we will always be grateful.”***

different way and we now always have hope for a better future, which we didn’t have before,” he says, even in the age of global climate change.

When the area was hard-hit by severe storms, all of the group’s traditional crops were wiped out by flooding. Yet the aquaponic crops grown in the sturdy, raised and covered cement units were unaffected. Local residents, whose crops were also damaged by the floods, came to the group’s farm every day to buy vegetables, since the Thabelo farmers were the only ones who had fresh produce available. The group has since retained this local market, having built a reputation for quality produce.

The Thabelo group’s most notable success over the past year is a more than 50% increase in income compared to the previous year as a result of business planning to guide their investments in new inputs and expansion. The group has also been able to create jobs for the community for the first time, hiring temporary workers on a regular basis for physically demanding tasks in their traditional agriculture activities.





## Nutrition & Income for Disadvantaged Schools

Schools in disadvantaged communities are increasingly turning to aquaponics to provide more nutritious meals for students, serve as an educational resource and generate income for school operations. Carel De Wet Technical High School in Vanderbijlpark, for example, was the first recipient of an INMED commercial aquaponic system in South Africa. Sponsored by Air Products, this system has produced fresh food and income for the school since 2012.

Tenth-grade students who opt to take agriculture as a matric subject are trained by INMED staff on the system and receive certificates of expertise when they pass a final exam. It's part of INMED's mission to entice young people back into farming in this region hard hit by global climate change.

The success of Carel De Wet's aquaponic system caught the attention of a local entrepreneur, who recently took over the operation of the system as a business venture. Juicy Greens now sells organic produce from the system and pays a percentage of the earnings to the school as rent. Teachers still use the system for educational purposes, the system continues to generate much-needed income for the disadvantaged school, and Juicy Greens will contribute to job creation in the local economy. Everyone in the process wins.

Another Air Products-sponsored aquaponic system is located at Rand Vaal Primary School in Gauteng Prov-

***"It's the first time ever that we received training on meal planning and healthy lifestyles ... as we prepare meals for learners both in schools and at our homes."***

ince. Installed in 2015, the system has been extremely bountiful, and all of the produce is used for the school feeding scheme meals.

Via INMED's Health In Action Programme, hundreds of food handlers are trained to incorporate garden produce into school meals as part of INMED's multi-faceted approach to combating obesity and malnutrition in South Africa. Delivered in three languages, the training focuses on preparing nutritious meals that children will eat, healthy portion sizes, safe food handling and proper hygiene practices.

The message rang clearly for Belinda Moonsammy, a food preparer at Malabar Primary School in Port Elizabeth. "It's the first time ever that we received training on meal planning and healthy lifestyles," she notes. "We'll make sure that we impart knowledge gained as we prepare meals for learners both in schools and at our homes."

## Growing Young Entrepreneurs in Port Elizabeth

Each year, the 7th grade students in Port Elizabeth are required to start an entrepreneurship initiative as part of their school curriculum. This year, INMED South Africa encouraged Seyisi Primary School to use its Health in Action garden as its entrepreneurship project.

The school garden has been a key source of more nutritious school meals as well as an income generator within the community. The students maintain the garden as part of their academic curricula, learning lessons on life science, math, nutrition, sanitation and environmental stewardship.

This year, the 7th grade students ran the garden as a business, learning how to develop a business plan, set goals, purchase supplies and inventory, maintain their resources, market their products and generate a profit. At the end of the project, the entire school hosted a Market Day, an event open to the community to purchase their produce, herbs, prepared foods and other items made from the garden's bounty. The event was also organized to encourage community members to plant their own household gardens for food and income.

INMED provided compost, seedlings, potting bags and soil for the school garden, in addition to building a seedling nursery at the school to boost the initiative and

*“It warms our hearts to see how eagerly the children take to aquaponics and school gardens — and how their enthusiasm ripples out into the families and communities to make a sustainable impact on many lives.”*

to support other nearby schools with seedlings for their Health in Action gardens.

The 7th graders set a target to earn R5,000 from this project—with half to be re-invested in the garden and the other half to fund a farewell function for the graduating students. The project was so successful that the students exceeded their target by R3,000.

“This initiative is one of many ways INMED South Africa is spurring economic development via our Adaptive Agriculture and Health in Action Programmes,” notes Dr. Linda Pfeiffer, CEO of INMED Partnerships for Children. “It’s encouraging to see how eagerly the children take to aquaponics and school gardens—and how their enthusiasm ripples out into the families and communities.”





**INMED South Africa's Work is Made Possible by These Generous Partners**



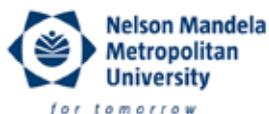
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