
Summary

We would like to build a Hub or centre for already identified waste-pickers of the Alexandra community.

At this Hub we will be providing very necessary Harm Reduction services that ultimately will be for the greater good of the community.

In the sections titled Job Creation and HIV/TB we explain how the land we are asking for will serve as both a drop-off point as well as the Care Centre we wish to render services from.

We will also be addressing the global issue of Climate Change.

Rationale

The current climate of South Africa's high unemployment rates is one that has adversely affected all sectors even causing immense pressure on the non-profit sector to become self-sustaining and not rely on donor support to render services. The non-profit sectors also need to assist however they can in terms of creating employment opportunities.

South Africa despite major socio-economic hindrances has emerged as one of the world's leading countries when it comes to recycling. A study published in June 2018 by Plastics SA, the body representing the entire value chain of the local plastic industry, South Africa has an input recycling rate of 43.7% when it comes to plastics, well above that of Europe's recycling rate, which sits at 31.1%.

However, when it comes to our landfill capacity, South Africa is reaching crisis point.

With only 7.5 % of South African's recycling the result is 90% of waste produced ending up in landfills.

This begs the question, if only a small proportion of South African's recycle how then do we as a country seem to be doing so well statistically on a global level?

The answer is an informal and stigmatized labour force. Our shunned waste pickers or reclaimers. They are responsible for the majority of South Africa's recycling.

The following information comes from the South African Plastics Recycling Organisation (SAPRO) site;

- According to Stats Sa 34.1% of South Africans do not have access to regular waste removal services.
- 70% of all recyclable's materials originate from landfill and other post-consumer sources (dustbins etc)



Vuka Skhokho
The Jermaine Lungile Schmidt Foundation
175-302 NPO

Mobile: 061 025 0240
Email: hellal@vukaskhokho.co.za

- In 2018 over 519 370 tons of plastics waste were collected for recycling inside and outside South Africa – 6.7 % more than the previous year.
- It is estimated that the plastics recycling industry alone gives direct employment to more than 7 800 people and created a further 58 5000 income generating jobs.
- R2.3 billion rand was injected into the informal sector through the purchasing of recyclable plastic waste.
- More than 300 bona fide recyclers have been identified operating in South Africa and 20% of the recyclers convert 70% of the tonnages.

The value of the work done by our reclaimers is essentially the very foundation of our entire recycling industry. And this is multi-billion rand industry.

Our Green Solution project does not seek to reinvent the wheel but to put together mechanisms and structures that will make this “wheel” efficient, legitimate and address a multitude of problems it is currently on scratching on the surface of.

This project will address the following socio-economic issues:

- The Legitimation and protection of an existing work force
- The Nyaope abuse crises (Nyaope being a heroin cocktail drug that is both injected and smoked here)
- TB and HIV/Aids crises
- South Africa`s landfill crises
- Job Creation

The aforementioned points are more intertwined than one would think. In fact, in the South African context these problems are strongly tied together and fixing one properly means addressing them all. Daunting as it seems it`s surprisingly feasible.

Perhaps the salient point about the Green Solution is that after its initial inception it will become a self-sustaining program that will not rely on donor help at all but will continue to create employment opportunities and proper entrepreneurial opportunities- which in turn will of course create more jobs.

The Green Solution is an initiative that proposes to turn identified waste pickers into a proper legitimate work-force under the Vuka Skhokho umbrella. These waste-pickers are all Nyaope addicts and have been under the “care” of various smaller NGO`s who have not had the capacity to provide all the necessary for their beneficiaries.

Job Creation

Under the Green Solution the community of Alexandra will get a new a Drop-Off Point, Buy Back Centre, food garden and soup kitchen. They will be run as non-profit outfits whose sole objectives are to service the community at large.



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In effect, all money generated from the sales of waste produce is going to go directly into the Green Solution program. Salaries, wages and the secondary care projects will all be sustained by the businesses.

Everyone trained and employed at the centre's, garden and kitchen will be recovering addicts, who were waste pickers and have returned having completed a detoxification and rehabilitation from an in-patient rehabilitation centre and at least six months at a half-way house.

Produce from the garden will be supplied to kitchen for soup for the reclaimers who come sell at our centre.

Legitimisation and protection of an existing work-force

The Green Solution will register the reclaimers that have been under the care of the aforementioned NGO's, get them training formal recycling training, give them uniforms and equipment and probably also importantly educate the Alexandra community about the value of the work they do and have the community integrate and support them instead of shun them. They will be at the forefront of cleaning the location negatively renowned for its filth.

The Drug and Substance abuse problem

This problem is intrinsically interwoven with unemployment. Youth often abuse substances because they are bored, despondent and unable to find unemployment. Those that manage to come "clean" are never able to stay clean because they come back and have nothing productive and gainful to do. With the Green Solution legitimising and creating recognition the work reclaimers do many of them will be able to come back from rehab and continue to do the work understanding its purpose and using revenue to set themselves up financially to start their own endeavours and not just as a means to support their habit.

Others still will come back and be trained to work themselves up in the business and encouraged to start the Green Solution and similar initiatives all around the country.

It is easy to get our youth off the Nyaope it has been hard to keep them off. Green Solution is the answer.

Jobs alone however cannot guarantee complete success and Green Solution will have Hub on its premises. One for Harm Reduction purposes and also as a continuation for secondary care.

Here there will social workers, counsellors and support group meetings.



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Email: hellal@vukaskhokho.co.za

TB and HIV/AIDS

The Hub will also allow for those who need to be tested for TB or HIV/AIDS to be tested and receive the necessary support and counselling. The social workers, counsellors and support meetings will orientate around substance abuse and HIV/Aids.

Those requiring medication will be able to take transcripts to the clinics and be able to get their medication.

A full-time nurse will take care of treatments that do not require a doctor and a Dr and Dentist will visit weekly.

Lastly, there will be a laundromat where they can wash their clothes and uniforms and clothes. There will be showering facilities where they can wash as they wait for their clothes. The objective is restore their dignity.

South Africa`s Landfill Crises

The more we educate and get entire communities involved in such clean-up initiative the more individuals will take it upon themselves to contribute in what little way they can. Be it by making use of the Drop-Off point or by making conditions more hospitable and easier for waste pickers to work. The less waste will land up in landfills.

The long term impact of such an initiative will be the birth of many Green Solutions programs being run all over South Africa all contributing massively a decline in the amount of waste produce that ends up in landfills and thus a decrease in the number of landfills in our country.