

UTHANDO PROJECT INCORPORATED

Annual Report 2018 - 2019

Mission Statement

To create handmade dolls for our partner organisations in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, who work with disadvantaged and vulnerable children to strengthen relationships through play.

To provide opportunities for community, shared creativity and purpose for doll makers in Australia and around the



Development of Uthando Project

KwaZulu Natal (KZN) covers an area of around 93 000 sq kms, extending inland, north and south of Durban on the east coast of South Africa. It has a population of more than 10 million, many of whom live in the rural and remote areas including The Valley of A Thousand Hills and reaching to the Drakensberg Mountains. The population in KZN is one of the most severely devastated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Since 2004, doll makers in Perth have responded to the initial call from Dr Julie Stone, who, on sabbatical in South Africa, realised the value of providing dolls for the most vulnerable children in KwaZulu Natal.

Dolls provide a means of enhancing communication between carers and children through play and a resource to encourage the development of social and emotional health. They help children develop their language skills, their imagination and empathy and compassion for others.

Through Dr Stone and her contacts in KZN, initial partnerships were developed with NGOs who worked with children and their carers and who became the distributors and users of the dolls in their work in local communities. *dlalanathi* and TREE were early partners. Lifeline, Family Literacy Project and Sizabantwana make up the five partners we have today.

Uthando Project was registered as a charity in 2012 and was granted Deductible Gift Recipient Status in 2016. Founding Chairman and Director, Georgia Efford, OAM, recently retired from the Board but her legacy is an extensive network of doll makers and other volunteers which reaches most States in Australia and as far as USA, UK and Europe. The Uthando concept has been followed by others who have made dolls for their own disadvantaged groups in other parts of Africa.

For many years the headquarters of Uthando Project was in Georgia's home but in 2016 we were fortunate to be given, by City of Kalamunda, the use of a room in the Anderson Street Community Centre, Forrestfield. The room is used for the storage of all resources as well as workshops on Mondays and Fridays.

In addition to the groups working at Forrestfield there are at least seven other groups across the Perth metropolitan area and large groups in Bunbury, Albany and Tasmania as well as smaller groups in Victoria and Queensland.

dlalanathi - originally the Rob Smetherham Bereavement Services for Children, works in some of the most impoverished communities in KZN, helping to develop communications between carers and their children facing loss and teaching the value of play.

TREE - (Training and Resources in Early Education) works to provide high quality child care and early years education, training workers in these fields and providing resources in a sustainable way.

Sizabantwana - supporting teachers in classrooms in their work with vulnerable children.

Lifeline, Pietermaritzburg - provides support and counselling to child victims of physical and sexual abuse.

Family Literacy Project - developing literacy skills of adults and children in rural and remote communities around Underberg.



Dollmaking

Mental health is an issue that deservedly, is being given more and more attention and Uthando Project offers a perfect vehicle for improving social and emotional well-being. We are keen to see the growth of our system of group doll making to enhance the social contacts for our doll makers. The groups provide the perfect opportunity to Act, Belong, Commit, whilst challenging the brain cells in using the existing skills and learning new ones.

Our network of doll makers continues to grow. Enquiries via the website are ongoing and kits and information have been sent to new recruits in Darwin, Queensland and Sydney. WA numbers continue to increase and the number of groups is also growing.

We now have well-established groups in Leederville, Hamilton Hill, Sorrento, Kwinana, Mundaring and at Multicultural Futures (formerly Fremantle Multicultural Centre) in Fremantle. Two or three fledgling groups in other centres are being developed and we hope they will continue to grow.

Outside the Perth Metropolitan area, active groups are very much self-sustaining in Albany and Bunbury. Tasmanian groups continue to be very productive and smaller groups operate in Victoria and Queensland



Other Items

In addition to dolls in a variety of shapes and sizes and often in family groupings, numerous other items are produced each year, either for shipment or for sale at fundraising events.

The most popular toys sent to KZN have been African animals, hand puppets, sensory balls and small, knitted balls.

Additional items accompanying the dolls are small rugs, small handmade items e.g. finger puppets, to place in doll bags, bags for carrying the dolls, blankets for dolls and wraps for children to carry dolls on their backs. Most dolls are sent with extra clothing.

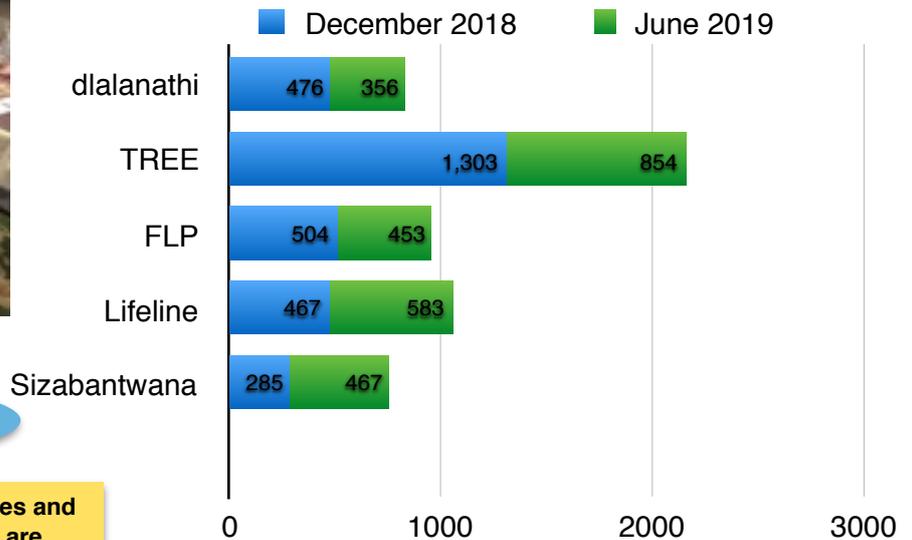
A very big thank you to all volunteers who regularly deliver dozens of bags and items of dolls clothes to headquarters.



Dolls

As the numbers of doll makers grow, so does the number of dolls and toys produced each year for shipment to our partners in KZN. This reporting year dolls were shipped in December 2018 and in June 2019.

Total number of dolls shipped was 5447.



Special Social Events

Throughout the year there are opportunities for Uthando volunteers to spend time together. These are some of the major events where friendship and fun are the focus.

RETREAT

In September 2018 Uthando funded and hosted Jill Frow from Family Literacy and Mabongi Mtsali a community volunteer in Pietermaritzburg. Mabongi is currently working with a group of girls in Sunshine Home, teaching sewing skills and encouraging them in all aspects of their lives.

Over the course of the two week visit Jill and Mabongi visited doll making groups and spoke at various community centres, providing real evidence of the value of Uthando dolls.

A highlight of their stay was a weekend retreat in Serpentine, attended by over 30 doll makers. The many stories of life for children in KZN and how Uthando dolls are bringing joy and love was moving and inspirational.

Jill went on to visit Tasmanian doll makers, hosted by Irene Swan.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our end of year celebration was held at the home of Lynne Tognolini. It was an opportunity to share food and friendship and exchange small handmade gifts. It was also the occasion at which Georgia was formally thanked for her tireless service over the 14 years she so successfully steered the Uthando Project.

ALBANY

In February a group of 14 doll makers from Perth and Bunbury travelled to Albany for what is becoming an annual visit to the Albany group. It is an opportunity to share ideas and friendship.

ARTISTS WALK - BUNBURY

In March many doll makers from Perth showed their support for the Bunbury group who regularly have a stall in the Artists' Walk as a major fundraiser for the group.



Community Workshops

Workshops in the community help to promote Uthando as well as providing additional dolls.

The Sorrento Group has organised school holiday workshops through City of Wanneroo in libraries in Alkimos, Clarkson and Wanneroo.

A series of special workshops was run at Boronia Pre Release Centre for Women. A small group of women attended and produced 30 beautiful dolls. hopefully the workshops will be repeated next year.



Special Workshops

Special workshops have been held to either produce a stock of small dolls to sell as fundraisers or to teach a new type of doll - improving the skills of doll makers and promoting friendship across UP.

This year these doll making workshops have been:

Making 'Gogo' (Grandmother) dolls at the retreat.

Thanks to Pauline Groom and Irene Swan

Making sculpted dolls. Thanks to Pauline Groom.

Mass production of the Onesie dolls for selling or sending to KZN

Making small dolls for selling. Thanks to Anne Bell and Lynne Tognolini.

Mass production of 120 simple dolls to send to Ugandan Refugee camp via connection with Irene in Tasmania. Thanks to Robin Hamilton

Both *dalanathi* and Family Literacy Project have found the Uthando sewing kits to be of value for their work in communities.

Two special sewing days have been held this reporting year at Henderson Environment Centre, organised by the Sorrento group but open to all.

The centre has been a hive of activity with

- sewing kits
 - activity rugs
- being made to send to KZN and
- animal kits
 - 'Chicken Scratch' gingham embroidery kits
- being assembled for sale at craft fairs.

Thanks to all the cutters, winders, folders, stitchers and chefs!!

Uthando in Schools

From the very early days of the project schools have been encouraged to participate in doll making. Children in Australia are able to make a doll to send to a child in KZN. Teachers are encourage to create cross curricular programmes. This year we have introduced a registration process for schools.

Schools participating -: Comet Bay and Helena Colleges; Roleystone Community College; Thornlie Christian College; Carine, North Lake and Cyril Jackson Senior Campuses; Our Lady of the Cape Catholic PS; Nagel Catholic College, Geraldton; Ogilvy HS, Tasmania; Queensland Academies Creative Industries Campus; St James Anglican College Alkimos; Kennedy Baptist College
Staff at St Kieran's Catholic PS took part in a whole day workshop.
Additionally a group of trainee teachers at University of Notre Dame participated in a series of workshops.



Promoting Uthando

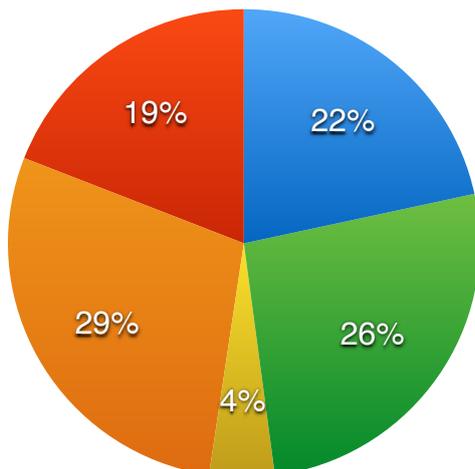
Following a review of website development the Board's decision was to focus on updating the existing site. Enquiries coming through the website are increasing and there are ongoing sales of our book through the associated shop. Our Facebook page is regularly updated and a calendar of events is easily viewed.

Uthando received free advertising space in Little Aussie Directories.

Promotional events involving volunteers have been
Have a Go days at Burswood and Melville
City of Swan Volunteer Expo
ZigZag Festival, Kalamunda
Corymbia Festival, Forrestfield
Kalamunda Show
Presentation at Rotary Club of South Perth
Presentations at Probus clubs including Melville

Income

- Sale of kits
- Fees for services
- Donations DGR
- Sales Other
- Groups



Fundraising

How funds were raised this year:

- Individual direct donations
- Sales of kits through community workshops, website
- Sales of dolls, books, toys and kits at craft fairs
- Doll making group members purchasing doll skins/ fabric
- Workshop enrolments
- Doll making groups' own ways of raising funds to help with freight costs and insurance

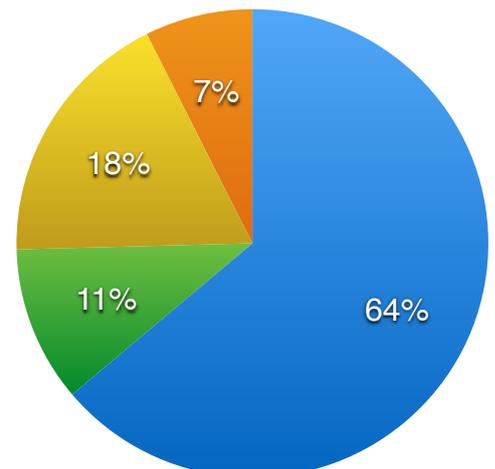
How the money is used.

- Shipping Costs
- Purchase of brown fabric for doll skins
- Administration costs including Website, Public Liability Insurance,

Charts show how income is raised and how spent.

Expenditure

- Freight costs
- Cost of materials
- Admin costs
- Insurance



Board members

Uthando Project is managed by an eight-member Board, comprised this reporting year as follows:

Lynne Jones - Chairperson
Lynne Tognolini - Vice Chairperson
Mignon Stapelberg - Secretary
Pat O'Donnell - Treasurer
Georgia Efford - retired
Robin Hamilton
Karin Maltby
Sara-Jane Roberts - new appointment
Susan Crombe - new appointment

The Board meets on a regular basis and shares the tasks for administration and organisation of the project's various activities and volunteers.

There have been meetings to which volunteers have been invited and given opportunity for input in planning.



Volunteers

Our volunteers are far too numerous to mention individually and often are anonymous - leaving parcels of dolls or accessories on doorsteps! Rest assured that every single volunteer is precious and valued.

However, special thanks must go to

- Di Cunningham who produces our doll kits.
- Judith Allen for her work in ensuring all the dolls are packed and shipped to KZN
- Sharen Smith for the organisation of our headquarters and assistance to Di and Judith.
- Pauline Marlborough for cutting out 1000s of dolls
- Irene Swan who leads the doll making across Tasmania
- Group leaders, Robin (Sorrento), Doris (Hamilton Hill), Wendy (Mundaring), Julie F (Albany), Deborah (Bunbury), Julie T (Victoria), Gerry (Kwinana), Alison (Leederville), Marlene (Gosnells), Maria (Fremantle - Multicultural Futures)
- Ann Vivers for technical assistance with newsletters, social media and events planning.

CONGRATULATIONS - Georgia Efford, OAM, awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia. For Service to the international community through humanitarian aid.

Uthando Project is testament to your commitment to the well-being of vulnerable children. You have set the bar very high!

Thanks

Organisers of the Claremont Wood and Craft Fair for space in the fair
City of Kalamunda for use of room at ARCC
Matthew Hughes MLP for assistance with printing costs
Ford and Doonan Air Conditioning for providing copious amounts of stuffing
All donors of fabric, yarn, beads, lace etc.

Find Uthando Project

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Website; www.uthandoproject.org

Facebook; Uthando Project

