



# ILITHA LABANTU

PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE

## ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

2024



**ILITHA LABANTU**  
PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE







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GET IN TOUCH



# OVERVIEW

## Since 1989



**Ilitha Labantu** established in 1989, is a social service and educational organisation that focuses on addressing violence against women and children and supporting those affected by it.

Founded by Mandisa Monakali, at its inception, it was the only organisation in the Western Cape that served to empower women in townships and to address issues related to domestic violence, political violence and the abuse of women and children's rights. With its head office in Gugulethu, Cape Town, Ilitha Labantu has grown from being an organisation run by a few committed women to establishing satellite offices in five provinces in both township and rural areas and is committed to increasing the scope of its work throughout the country.

Through individual and family counselling as well as skills training, empowerment and capacity-building workshops, Ilitha Labantu meet the needs of communities affected by high levels of violence and limited socio-economic opportunities. Located within the residential areas of its target group, the organisation provides easily accessible and inclusive services to gender-based violence survivors and the broader community.

As an experienced civil society organisation, Ilitha Labantu is a trusted advisor to government and community processes related to the prevention and elimination of violence against women and children and uses this platform to advocate for the implementation of grassroots solutions nationally and internationally.



# MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

**35 years of championing the rights of women and children has been a difficult journey but we stand ready for the decades ahead.**



Resistance, challenges and difficulties are well known to us; but thirty-five years after we first opened our doors, our achievements far outweigh the adversities that have come our way.

When Ilitha Labantu began its work, we expectedly had resistance from men but were surprised that women too opposed us. As our work began to take root, it emerged that many of these women were experiencing domestic violence and did not know how to navigate their way out of these situations. These learnings from our early community engagement and our history in the anti-apartheid movement, where we brought together the women's brigades of the warring political parties to help bring peace, set us up for the long haul in reclaiming women's right to a peaceful existence.

While our operating context has evolved with greatly reduced political violence, poverty, unemployment and low levels of education continue to render women financially dependent on men, exacerbate violence, and hinder men and women from achieving their socio-economic potential.

We therefore focus on providing immediate access to survivor support services including the provision of counselling and legal advice to those who need it; assistance with court processes such as filling in interdicts and court orders and importantly holding training sessions that enable women to participate broadly in both individual and community development. Another critical avenue of our work is creating an open and supportive atmosphere for dialogue – bringing women together to talk freely about critical issues affecting their daily lives and share their own solutions.



## LOCAL ACTORS, GLOBAL THINKERS

Though we operate out of the Western Cape, we always keep in mind to “think globally and act locally”. My personal experience at the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women, cemented this approach which has led to Ilitha Labantu’s extensive involvement nationally in policy development including the domestic violence act of 1998 and the sexual offences act of 2007 in tandem with representation at global forums such as the Commission on the Status of Women and, annually bringing together women from grassroots organisations to deliberate and strategize on the prevention and elimination of violence against women in peri-urban and rural communities. The results of these discussions were subsequently presented at international forums and have resulted in policy shifts globally.

## THE WAR AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN CONTINUES

As an organisation that fights against the gross violation of human rights and violence perpetrated towards women and children for over 35 years, Ilitha Labantu believes that a lot more can be done to address the scourge of violence against women and children and to improve the status of women in society. 2024 is a significant year as it is celebrated against the backdrop of 30 years of democracy in South Africa and the 68th anniversary of the women’s march of 1956. These momentous occasions serve as a reminder of how far we have come as a nation and it dawns upon us to reflect critically on where we are heading.

South Africa finds itself in a very peculiar position in that in light of having one of the world’s most progressive constitutions with laws and legislation which serve to protect the rights and dignity of women, the country has a monstrous record of gross human rights violations against women and children. Violence that is perpetrated on women and children in South Africa occurs at an incomprehensible scale, the South African Police Services (SAPS) revealed that in the 5 year period between 2015 and 2020, a total of 13 815 women were murdered in South Africa, that is an average of 2763 murders a year, and about seven women killed a day. The femicide rate in South Africa is five times higher than the global average, with South Africa having the fourth-highest female interpersonal violence death rate out of the 183 countries as listed by the World Health Organization in 2016. The second quarter national crime statistics which covers the reporting period between July and September 2023, revealed that 881 women and 293 children were murdered during this 90 day period. Furthermore 10 516 rapes were reported to the South African Police Service, almost the same as the 10 590 cases recorded in the same period last year. According to the figures, 4 726 rape incidents took place at either the home of the rape victim, or the home of the perpetrator which are known to the victim, such as a family member, a friend or a neighbour. Bearing in mind that all of these atrocities occur in spite the fact that South Africa has ‘progressive’ laws in place.





## THE NEXT THIRTY-FIVE YEARS

As we look forward to the next thirty-five years we continue to seek partnerships that will enable our work to grow and evolve as the socio-political and economic climate changes. We are especially calling on the private sector, philanthropists and donors to play an even greater role to support Community Based Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations across the country to ensure greater access to services that seek to address violence against women and children.

We are grateful to the government departments, international donors and corporates that have supported us thus far to keep doing our work and making an impact in the lives of women and children in South Africa. Throughout our 35 years of active existence, we have reached over 10 million women in South Africa, on the African continent and over the globe. It has not been an easy road and we have no doubts that it will get any easier but it has been a worthwhile journey as we continue to positively transform the lives of women and children.

Ilitha Labantu is of the understanding that going forward there is a need for the implementation of more transformative measures that seek to address the structural causes of gender inequality at all levels – national, local and at the household level. This sees the need for the introduction of more stringent measures to help curb the rate of violence against women, an improvement in the conviction rate of perpetrators of abuse and the enforcement of a responsive social protection system and access to long-term and sustainable economic opportunities for the empowerment of women specifically as a response to the cataclysmic effects of the covid-19 pandemic which has resulted in over two million women losing their jobs and livelihoods in South Africa.

**MANDISA MONAKALI**

*Ilitha Labantu Founder and President*



# OUR VISION, MISSION, PHILOSOPHY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## Our vision

To assist in the elimination of all kinds of violence especially those that occur in the domestic domain where the ideology of privacy is strong.

## Our mission

We strive to end violence and abuse against women and children in disadvantaged communities. We provide emotional support, practical advice, education and training for coping with and addressing violence against women and children. We utilize interactive and inclusive methodologies in our education and empowerment programs.





# Serving all survivors of domestic violence and those supportive of them at any time

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

- **Empathy:** awareness of power relations and respect for human rights
- **Confidentiality:** to protect and maintain client confidentiality
- **Professionalism:** Communicate, behave and execute all duties in a manner that enhances the positive image of Ilitha Labantu, to use available resources efficiently and effectively to stop the surge of violence against women and children
- **Listen:** to be able to listen attentively, supportively and objectively to a client
- **Assist:** to be able to assist each and every client at all times
- **Equality:** adherence to principles and practices that promote substantive equality
- **Integrity:** commitment and adherence to organizational values and gender equality
- **Accountability:** honesty, transparency and responsibility

## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Serving all** survivors of domestic violence and those supportive of them at any time, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, income, ability, religion or geography
- Providing **timely access** to services and programs
- Creating a **safe, welcoming and respectful environment** where survivors and their families can heal and grow working to end the silence surrounding violence against women and children, and to end the stigma found within our communities through outreach programs
- **Raising awareness** about how societal acceptance of oppression relates to the incidence of sexual violence
- Promoting a **work environment that empowers** each person to do their work to their fullest capacity; that supports each person in their efforts, and that inspires teamwork in order to **provide the best service to the community.**

# SITUATION ANALYSIS

## PREVENTING AND ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

While South Africa has one of the world's most progressive constitutions that protects women's rights and dignity, women and children are consistently violated at an incomprehensible scale. Statistics from the South African Police Services (SAPS) indicate that between 2015 and 2020, 13815 women were murdered in South Africa - an average of 2763 murders a year, seven women daily. According to the World Health Organization, South Africa has a five-times higher rate of femicide than the global average, with the fourth highest female interpersonal violence death. National crime statistics for the second quarter of 2023, which cover the period between July and September, reveal 881 women and 293 children were murdered. Additionally, 10 516 rapes were reported to the South African Police Service, almost on par with the 10 590 cases reported last year. The figures show that 4,726 incidences of rape were committed at either the home of the victim or the home of the perpetrator, such as the victim's family member, friend or neighbour. Factors contributing to the high rate of violence against women by men in South Africa includes gender inequality, high rates of poverty and unemployment and cultural norms that normalize violence.

## PREVALENT FORMS OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA



**Physical and psychological violence** often in a domestic environment



**Sexual offences** including rape and sexual assault



**Murder of women (femicide)** by their male intimate partners



**Sexual harassment** often in the workplace, educational institutions and public spaces



**Elderly neglect** including physical and economic violence



**Cyberbullying or online harassment** including verbal abuse and threats of physical violence



**“Domestic violence, rape, and the abuse of women remain disgraceful blots on the reputation of a country that is called a miracle nation in other respects.”**

NELSON MANDELA

## OUR SOLUTIONS

Our solutions therefore seek to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence by empowering survivors, sanctioning perpetrators, seeking justice for victims, and working with communities so that they take the responsibility to recognize and denounce violence. Our work is guided by national comprehensive policy and normative framework which focuses on the elimination of gender-based violence in line with international standards. Our key pillar is therefore violence prevention with a focus on tackling the root causes of violence such as inter-generational poverty and negative gender norms and stereotypes.

**Our key pillar is violence prevention with a focus on tackling the root causes of violence**









# OUR SERVICES



## CLINICAL PROGRAMME

Walk-in service centre for survivors



## POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Para-legal services, court support, and lobbying



## OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Learner-centred outreach support, public awareness, community workshops



## EMPLOYMENT READINESS

Building Bridges programme closes the gap between life experience and job readiness



## DOROTHY ZIHLANGU TRANSITIONAL HOUSE

Providing three months shelter for abused women and their children



## COMPREHENSIVE FOOD SECURITY

Operating provincial food distribution centre and 20 community nutritional development centres

# CLINICAL PROGRAMME

Perhaps the most urgent and crisis-driven aspect of Ilitha Labantu's work is to provide counselling to women, children and other vulnerable groups in townships and rural areas who have suffered abuse and violence.

- **Assessment and referrals:** We screen cases to assess eligibility for Ilitha Labantu services and refer cases that do not meet our eligibility criteria to relevant service providers.
- **Counselling:** We assist survivors of domestic violence and other violations to break the cycle of abuse by dealing with the trauma of abuse and developing coping skills to deal with their problems. We provide an atmosphere that allows women to heal emotionally and increase their capacity to regain self-confidence and a sense of purpose and direction. We now also provide Mobile Counselling Services for remote areas. In 2023 the Clinical Department assisted approximately 11020 beneficiaries, this includes direct and indirect beneficiaries.
- **24-hour line:** The support emergency lines are available 24/7 for those clients who are in distress. They are also used for easy access for clients who have access to cell phones. Clients can WhatsApp, SMS, call or request for a call back.
- **Support groups** offer a platform for survivors of domestic abuse or those affected by it to discuss the dynamics of abuse and share their experiences often leading to their growth and development.
- **Clinic visits:** Entail providing patients who visit community clinics with relevant information, for example domestic abuse, elderly, child abuse and practical tools to prevent and avoid occurrence of any form of abuse in homes.
- **Home visits and school based interventions:** Investigations are conducted in situations where it warrants understanding of home circumstances. Home visits are also conducted when required by courts. In other situations where home visits are not successful, schools are visited to assist in gathering the necessary information.

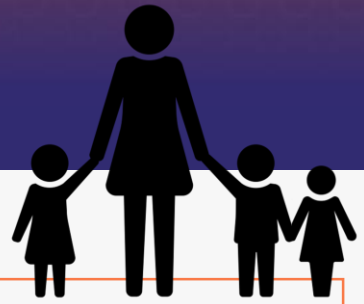




- **Training and community-based workshops:** in 2023 approximately 900 beneficiaries benefitted from our various trainings and workshops that took place throughout the year.
  - *Self-Realization* – focuses on empowering young women by helping them gain a better understanding of themselves and helping them to realise their potential in spite of the traumas they have experienced.
  - *Positive Parenting* – provide parents, guardians and caregivers with useful parenting tips and updated information on laws and regulations regarding child offenders.
  - *Family Enrichment* – designed for families, these workshops aim to facilitate open and honest conversations between family members.
- **Capacity-building for South African Police Service:** 355 members of the South African Police Service representing police stations from the Cape Metro and Cape Winelands Districts were trained as part of the organization’s mission to help capacitate members of the police service.
- On an annual basis the **Dorothy Zihlangu Transitional House** accommodates about 20 women and 40 children.



# Success stories



## CLIENT A

Age: 26 years

Gender: Female

Number of dependents: 03

The client was admitted to our shelter on 15 August 2023 with three of her children aged 6, 3, and 2 years. The client was referred to us by another place of safety after running away from her elderly boyfriend due to domestic violence.

The parents of the client are both deceased and she has been in foster care most of her life. Her extended family has not been helpful.



## INTERVENTION

The client has been struggling to get an ID document throughout her adult life. She had no access to her parents' death certificates nor did her family stand for her. It was only when she was in our care that we managed to successfully overcome this hurdle. She also defaulted on her chronic treatment. She was put back on treatment through negotiations with the clinic she used to attend.



## SUCCESS

- The client, who defaulted on the chronic medication is now back on treatment and has been diligently attending her appointments and receiving medication.
- She has now received her ID document.
- She will now be able to apply for the children's birth certificates.
- The children can access the Child Care Grant.
- The older child will be able to register for school (Grade R).
- The client will be able to apply for a disability grant, which her doctor recommended. This is a possible income of approximately R5000.00 making her financially independent and not rely on an older, abusive partner.
- She is now placed at a long term shelter for further recuperation and finalisation of all the other processes.



# Success stories



## CLIENT B

Age: 15 years

Gender: Female

Number of dependents: 0

The client was suicidal and did not have confidence in herself, she had been referred to Ilitha Labantu by her ballet teacher because she was withdrawn and had a low self-esteem. The client's mother accompanied the client to her first session where the mother shared that the client alienated herself at home and would not talk to her about what bothered her and had a several times tried to commit suicide. The client shared that she felt alone and was grieving the loss of her loved ones (grandmother and her father). She further shared that she was being teased by her peers because of having an abnormal eye and this contributed a lot to her low self-esteem.



## INTERVENTION

The social worker provided psychosocial support to the client, focusing on bereavement, self-confidence, decision-making and goal-setting.



## SUCCESS

- The client was very interactive in the sessions and she expressed how she felt.
- The client was able to accept the loss of her loved ones and was encouraged through writing a grief letter and expressing how she will learn to let go.
- The client's self-esteem was enhanced through attending sessions as she was enabled to accept and love parts of herself that she deems unlovable.
- The client became aware of her strengths and talents that she did not know, during the sessions she had shared that she won an award for best performance at the ballet class.
- The conflict and misunderstanding that the client had with her mother was resolved through a mediation.
- The client received coping skills and learned how to make decisions and set goals for herself.

# Success stories



## CLIENT C

Age: 37 years

Gender: Female

Number of dependents: 01

The client was referred to Ilitha Labantu who reported continuous abuse of the client by her mother. She had a physical disability after suffering a stroke. She was placed at a temporary place of safety and then transferred to our Transitional House, Dorothy Zihlangu in December 2022. Due to her disability she not only required emotional support, she needed assistance with moving around.

The client was formerly employed and later placed on medical boarding. It was discovered that the mother had applied for Power of Attorney and could access the client's account. None of the funds went to the client nor child.



## INTERVENTION

Apart from receiving emotional support, we also accompanied her to clinical and hospital appointments. Investigations were made with the former employer and it was confirmed that her monthly income was being paid into her account for more than two years.



## SUCCESS

- With the former employer and the bank, the Power of Attorney was revoked. The client took over the management of her own finances. The client then re-opened funeral and educational policies for herself and her child. These had lapsed as the funds were withdrawn as soon as they were deposited into her account.
- She was able to reunite with her child after years of being apart from him.
- We facilitated a new wheel chair.
- She relocated to Orion Organisation, which caters for people with disabilities, where she still receives the care she needs.



# POLICY AND ADVOCACY

The Policy and Advocacy department focuses on para-legal activities, court support, training workshops and lobbying and advocacy with the ultimate goal of ensuring that women, children and the vulnerable who are survivors of violence are able to access quick, efficient and sensitive criminal justice while also taking great effort to educate communities and relevant stakeholders about the laws that protect women, children, the elderly and the vulnerable.

## PARA-LEGAL ACTIVITIES

The department provides free legal advice and legal counselling to clients at the office, at court and telephonically on a wide variety of legal matters such as succession, estate planning and administration of deceased estates, wills, maintenance and divorce. Over **200 clients benefit yearly from the provision of free legal advice** and the wills initiative from Gugulethu, Langa, Khayelitsha and Retreat.





## **COURT SUPPORT**

The departments liaise with stakeholders in the criminal justice process such as (SAPS) investigating officers and (NPA) prosecutors especially in rape, Femicide and Domestic Violence cases and keep clients updated about progress in their cases. Client's cases are also monitored on the court roll and clients are accompanied to court for court attendances, from consultation to trial until the case is finalised.

On average the department provides court support and accompaniment 20 times per month, though the frequency varies based on the number of cases received by the organization that are in the criminal justice system. Support for court attendances is also conducted through tracking and tracing of clients who have not updated the court with their latest contact details at the court's request.

Together with our community network, we conduct court picketing especially in rape and femicide cases to provide support to affected families and communities, exert influence on relevant authorities and draw attention to the continued scourge of violence against women and children working closely with Magistrates courts such Wynberg, Athlone, Khayelitsha, Bellville, Parow, Philippi, Cape Town among others in the Cape Metro.

Since the establishment of the Philippi Magistrates Court in the early 2000s, the organization has played a pivotal role in the fight against domestic violence and abuse by assisting women survivors with protection order applications. In the reporting periods covering January to December 2023, over 354 interim protection orders were granted to applicants.





## LEGAL PROCEDURES WORKSHOPS

The department holds empowerment and educational training workshops on Legal Remedies and Usable Acts which is a module designed to train the South African Police Service as first responders to issues of violence. The SAPS training in the Cape Metro and Cape Winelands initiative remains very critical as we try to equip SAPS members on relevant pieces of legislation to build more capacity and knowledge on critical laws on violence against women, children and the vulnerable as they assist survivors of violence and victim families. Public educational workshops to simplify legal terms and process to communities also enable community members to understand the justice system, both civil and criminal systems to increase their assertiveness on legal processes and procedures including domestic violence, gender based violence and femicide issues. Our elderly programmes are intended to bring the elderly together from various communities such as Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, Nyanga, Langa, Manenberg and Heideveld appreciating their contribution to communities and also empowering them with necessary information on various issues.







## LOBBYING AND ADVOCACY

It is very critical to influence and engage policy makers to place consistent attention on domestic violence, gender based violence and femicide matters as this will ensure improved integration of domestic violence issues with other issues such as crime, policing and social cohesion. As such, the department responds to the call for submissions on bills of law affecting women, children and the elderly. The department also engages with a close network of relevant stakeholders taking seat on the Western Cape Gender Justice Forum platform to ensure a coordinated effort and find collaborative solutions in order to deliver comprehensive services to the communities we support.



## LEGAL CAMPAIGNS

The department has campaigns to inform survivors of violence of their rights especially the "Bail Conditions Campaign" aimed at informing the survivor of their right to receive a copy of the bail conditions of the perpetrator should the perpetrator receive bail. The "Know Your Rights campaign", focuses on citizens know their right to report particularly those experiencing domestic violence, harassment in the work place and outside, that there are no statutory limitations in how many times they report as well as advising on access to support services such as courts for a legal remedy and counselling services for coping skills. The campaign also equips women beneficiaries on family law (divorce and maintenance processes) and property rights. These campaigns aim to have better informed beneficiaries and communities with regard to various issues of law and access to various services and resources at disposal.



# Testimonials

## ZICINA FAMILY'S STORY

*On the 3rd of May 2023, the Wynberg Magistrate court eventually handed down judgment to a femicide perpetrator after a period of five and half years after the incident. A young woman was gunned down in her home in front of her parents. It took the courts five and half years to finalise the matter as during this time, the perpetrator escaped lawful custody twice.*

*Mbali Zicina\* was a hardworking young woman who was running a catering business at her parents' home. She had had an on-and-off relationship with the perpetrator. When she finally decided to end the relationship, she realised that she needed a protection order. An interim protection order was granted in her favour against her former boyfriend. In November 2017, a few days before she was due to appear in a Domestic Violence court for the hearing of whether the interim Protection Order application was to be made final, the former boyfriend fatally shot her in her home.*

*Ilitha Labantu assisted the family with emotional and legal support until the finalisation of the matter. Court legal support also saw the organisation engaging with various stakeholders within the criminal justice cluster especially when the perpetrator on two occasions escaped lawful custody.*

*Ilitha Labantu conducted extensive engagement with the National Prosecuting Authority, the Correctional Services and the Department of Justice leading to an enquiry into the correctional services processes. As a result, the perpetrator's details were flagged on the SAPS most-wanted list leading to his re-arrest and the finalization of the matter. The perpetrator was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment without the option of parole.*

*\*Not the real names.*

## NOMBUZO'S\* STORY

*I approached Ilitha Labantu after my granddaughter advised me to approach the organisation. My family, including my children and grandchildren made my life intolerable such that I had no other option but to leave my own home for an old age home so that I could live in peace.*

*Being an elderly person, you need to live the rest of your days in a peaceful environment and not have to worry about being abused. When my granddaughter brought me to Ilitha Labantu, I was advised to make an application for a protection order and then assisted by an employee of Ilitha Labantu at Philippi Magistrates Court. The Magistrate gave me a final protection order against the children and grandchildren emphasising the wrongfulness of elder abuse.*

*\*Not the real name.*

## SINAZO'S\* STORY

*Sinazo's mom approached the organisation for assistance with counselling and court support. Her 16 year old had just reported to her teacher of the abuse and rape by her father and the father had just been arrested. Sinazo revealed to her teacher that her father had started raping her when she was only 12. Since her mom and dad were not together, this would happen each time she visited her father.*

*They approached the organisation for counselling and court support. The court support rendered to the family included a no bail campaign where the court was petitioned to refuse bail to the perpetrator because of the nature of the crime. The organisation during this campaign also made contact with the community members of the area where the perpetrator was informing the court that he would be accommodated should the court grant him bail. Resultantly, the community came together and collected over 80 petitions which were submitted to court in support of the no bail campaign. The court denied him bail and recognised the participation of the organisation and the community having taken into account the interests of society and justice. Sinazo's father and perpetrator is still awaiting trial and the evidence before the court is overwhelming and there are prospects of him being found guilty and then registered on National Register for Sex Offenders (NRSO).*

*\*Not the real name.*



# OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

**Our outreach program focuses on raising public awareness and empowering communities on issues affecting them. Among the communities we operate in, violence against women and children often remains obscured by consensual silence and fear. Through our on-going awareness raising programmes in townships, we aim to create a supportive atmosphere in which people can address interpersonal violence openly in spaces that foster community cohesion such as schools, clinics, youth forums and churches.**

## LEARNER-CENTRED OUTREACH SUPPORT

Our Learner-Centred Outreach Support programme forms part of the existing Life Orientation subject at schools. The programme is delivered to learners in early childhood development centres (ECDs), primary and secondary schools. It is tailored for children who live in communities where violence and abuse have been normalised. Topics covered include: children's rights, sexual harassment, rape, domestic violence, HIV/Aids, teenage pregnancy and drug abuse, among others. The programme has also created a referral system for school pupils, parents and educators to have immediate access to our holistic services. Over the years, Ilitha Labantu has created a network of schools in the Western Cape region covering 70 schools in Gugulethu, Langa, Nyanga, Khayelitsha and Athlone (46 primary schools, 14 secondary schools and 10 ECDs) with an estimated annual reach of 96 000 learners.





## PUBLIC AWARENESS

Public Awareness campaigns are an integral part of informing and educating communities about the scourge of violence against women, children and vulnerable persons. Ilitha Labantu utilizes a multi-faceted approaches to engage communities affected by abuse. The organization has a key understanding that through meaningful partnerships, collaboration and the use of effective messaging we can create effective prevention and response mechanisms to help combat the scourge of abuse and in turn eliminate every vestige of it.

Following the violent turmoil which came as a result of the covid-19 pandemic which saw an increase in incidents of gender-based violence, Ilitha Labantu established the #Uthuleleni Anti-GBVF Campaign. Uthuleleni which is translated to (Why Are You Silent) is Ilitha Labantu's solidarity campaign that encourages multi-sector partnership with various stakeholders including the South African Police Services, government agencies, NGOs and communities to respond effectively to the scourge of gender-based violence and femicide. Since its inception, the campaign has been instrumental in effectively responding to gender-based violence incidents throughout the greater Western Cape region and not only limited to the Cape Metro but has also made its mark in the rural outskirts of the Western Cape. The campaign has reached the following areas: Gugulethu, Langa, Mbekweni, Joe Slovo, Belhar, Delft, Lwandle (Strand), Grabouw, Samora Machel, Dunoon, Paarl, Lentegeur, Nyanga, Philippi, Browns Farm, Khayelitsha (Makhaza, Harare, Site B), Montagu, Robertson, Vredendal, with 50 000 plus pamphlets and information leaflets distributed.





## MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Ilitha Labantu understands that the media plays a vital role in increasing awareness about the scourge of violence against women, children and all GBV related crimes. Ilitha Labantu's media relations strategy engages a diverse set of media outlets to reach a wide array of audiences; these include broadcast media (radio and television), print media (newspapers) and digital/online media and social media. Ilitha Labantu has a key understanding of the sensitivity and complexity involved in reporting on cases related to GBVF based on this experience has become the foremost commentator on issues related to violence against women, children and vulnerable persons. The collective readership of article features by Ilitha Labantu amount to 1160 305 readers, this is the cumulative figure of all the major newspapers the organization is featured on including Cape Argus, Cape Times, Weekend Argus, Times the Live, Vukani, City Vision (News24), Ground Up and the African Media Agency to name a few. The collective listenership from the various radio interviews that were conducted in 2023 amounts to 1696 000 listeners, from radio stations including Bush Radio, SAFM, Zibonele FM, Smile 90.4FM, Cape Talk 567AM and The Voice of The Cape Radio.



## COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Our workshops are geared towards providing members of the community with an opportunity to actively engage on broader societal issues affecting society. The organization is committed towards creating inclusive platforms of engagements in an effort to challenge gender inequalities and gender-based violence, create a new generation of thought leaders, ignite a greater sense of Ubuntu and make society a better place for all.

Over the years, Ilitha Labantu through the Outreach and Education department has hosted men's dialogues in hopes to steer constructive discourse amongst men about issues relating to the conduct of men in society particularly in relation to violence against women and children. Since 2017 the organization has spearheaded its efforts towards eradicating gender-based violence and addressing rape culture at institutions of high education through the creation of online GBV awareness webinars. Through these two-hour long interactive webinars which involves 60 plus first year students per session, the organization sought to educate students and staff representing various institutions of higher education to think critically about the scourge of gender-based violence and rape culture at universities as well as to apply greater thought towards implementing more stringent measures to eradicate the scourge at institutions of higher education. Since 2017 the organization has hosted **48 online GBV sessions** with the Cape Peninsular University of Technology, the Nelson Mandela University and the Cape Town College.



# EMPLOYMENT READINESS - BUILDING BRIDGES

**Building Bridges is a unique employment training and capacity building initiative designed to empower women survivors of abuse. The programme takes a holistic approach to employment preparation and capacity building by addressing the individuals' physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs.**

The Building Bridges programme has a specific focus on holistic training to develop and capacitate women survivors of abuse to be self-sufficient and independent. The specific objectives of the programme include:

- Assisting women to break the cycle of abuse by moving from being dependent to being self-directed and independent.
- Providing specific training in “bridging” or transferable skills to improve learning potential and further training or employment opportunities
- Enabling abused women and young mothers to develop and implement their plans for employment and economic independence.
- Facilitating the ability of the women to support themselves and their families.

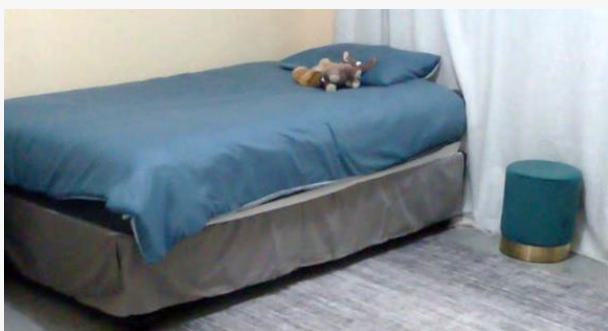
Since 2020, the main training courses provided under the building bridges programme include: nails enhancement course, make-up course, sewing course and the beading course. Together these training courses have capacitated over 366 women survivors of abuse.



# DOROTHY ZIHLANGU TRANSITIONAL HOUSE

**The Dorothy Zihlangu Shelter operates as a transitional house programme offering immediate shelter specifically for battered and abused women and their children for up to three months.**

Any woman, with or without children, who has been physically, emotionally, verbally, financially, psychologically or sexually abused will be welcomed into the transitional house. The house also assists women who want to remove their children away from abuse at home. In addition to temporary accommodation, women are also offered psychosocial support so that they can move on successfully with their lives after leaving the transitional house. These services include: counselling and advice; crisis intervention; legal advice; referrals services; training and education and access to support groups. In 2020, the Dorothy Zihlangu Transitional House underwent a year-long reconstruction to meet the growing demand of women and children who required places of safety in the Western Cape. The house, which is meant to be a rehabilitation space for abused women and children, now accommodates 12 women and children at any given time.





# COMPREHENSIVE FOOD SECURITY

**With food insecurity prevalent in its beneficiary communities, Ilitha Labantu made it a priority to ensure people had access to a daily meal. Safeguarding food security meets Sustainable Development Goals 1 (End Poverty) and 2 (End Hunger) and aligns with Ilitha Labantu's core mandate. In 2006 Ilitha Labantu established its Comprehensive Food Security Programme as an expansion of the services already offered since food remains an integral part of ensuring health and safety for women and children.**

## HOUSEHOLD FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAMME

The Household Food and Nutrition Programme, started in 2014 in partnership with the National Department of Social Development (DSD). Ilitha Labantu started its comprehensive food security programme in 2009, prior to the DSD outsourcing its Household Food and Nutrition programme. The DSD has a constitutional mandate to provide social security including social assistance to persons who are unable to support themselves and their families.





Ilitha Labantu has been the implementing agent of the Household Food and Nutrition Security Programme since December 2014. We were allocated 17 Community Nutritional Development Centres which were former Soup Kitchens. The DSD had highlighted that the model would change from the existing soup kitchen platform to Community Development Centres so that in addition to the provision of nutritious meals, holistic social services including skills development, psycho-social support and community engagement could be offered, ensuring an exit strategy for those that form part of the programme.

Currently we work with the Western Cape Department of Social Development under the Sustainable Livelihoods Programme which targets 100 Community Based Kitchens (CBK) throughout the rural areas of the Western Cape. Each kitchen reaches approximately 250 beneficiaries. Through the programme over the years we have managed to feed on average of 5000 people daily with a nutritious meal. Additionally, we have supported local farmers and engaged with cooperatives through engagements with the National Development Agency, and other institutions in the training and development of many of the kitchens and communities.



## PROVINCIAL FOOD DISTRIBUTION CENTRE

The Provincial Food Distribution Centre (PFDC) is the hub of all the activities linked to the Household Food and Nutrition programme. The PFDC stands to ensure that timeous delivery of Perishable and non-Perishable food is delivered to all the Kitchens that are supported by the HFNS Programme. The PFDC further stands to be the first point of contact when dealing with disasters and other forms of aid aimed at those who have suffered a loss in any shape or form.





### Key Functions of the PFDC

1. The procurement of goods and services for the benefit of Community Based Kitchens is critical to the functioning of the PFDC
2. Distributing of goods to all Community Based Kitchens throughout the provinces in a timely manner
3. Sustaining the livelihoods of our beneficiaries by providing oversight and opportunities for the Community Based Kitchen



## COMMUNITY BASED KITCHENS

Community based kitchens (CBK) provide communities with direct access to food on a daily basis. The kitchens benefit people who may have to use other forms of social assistance to try and sustain multiple aspects of their lives such as education, shelter, electricity and clothing. CBK provide an immediate relief for those who suffer from hunger and have no other means or very limited means of sustaining themselves.



## DISASTER MANAGEMENT

As an organisation, we recognize that communities may require humanitarian relief that falls outside of our regular service provision during disasters. When these events occur, we provide support and interventions to ensure that survivors of such situations can regain and rebuild their lives in a quick and safe manner. We also assist with food parcels, family donations and other means of intervention that are directly and indirectly aligned to household food and nutrition. Our disaster support is solely reliant on the availability of sponsors and funds.

# OUR GLOBAL PRESENCE AND SPECIAL EVENTS

**Ilitha Labantu forms part of the Civil Society National delegation of the annual United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) conference - a commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), dedicated exclusively to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and the advancement of women worldwide.**

## UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

In the lead-up to CSW, Ilitha Labantu organises community dialogues and consultative forums where women activists at grassroots and national level discuss issues, challenges and recommend solutions. The report based on these consultations are presented at the United Nations during high-level meetings and side events involving senior government officials, international civil society organisations and development institutions.







## MEETING GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Working with Statistics South Africa, we are also active in tracking and reporting on key indicators related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - particularly Goal 5 on Gender Equality - including the economic, social, legal and customary barriers holding back women and girls that need to be addressed in order for South Africa to meet this goal by 2030. Since 2005, Ilitha Labantu in partnership with Statistics South Africa have organized national summits to compel local stakeholders to partner and work together to ensure South Africa meets global development targets (previously the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and currently the SDGs). Through the summits, Ilitha Labantu and Stats SA provided feedback, progress reports and plenary sessions for the coming year. Additionally, we work with government and international organisations to ensure that civil society plays a prominent role implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.





## ILITHA LABANTU ANNUAL LECTURE

In 2019, Ilitha Labantu hosted an International Conference on ensuring access to justice for victims of violence and abuse as well as the inaugural **Ilitha Labantu Annual Lecture** which was delivered by UN Women Executive Director, Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. These initiatives among others continue to cement our role in promoting global and intersectional exchange and identifying key learnings between countries and between sectors to safeguard and advance the rights of women and girls across the world.

Following the first annual lecture that was held as part of the organization's 30th anniversary in 2021, Ilitha Labantu hosted its second annual lecture during the 16 days of activism campaign in 2022 in partnership with AWIF and UN Women under the theme "Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities – Progress for All", the honourable guest speaker for the lecture was Aleta Miller, UN Women country representative of the South Africa multi-country office. In December 2023 the organization in collaboration with UN Women and the African Women's Independent Forum hosted the organization's third Annual Lecture. The Honourable Guest Speaker was political activist, physician, academic and businesswoman, Dr Mamphela Ramphele. The theme for the lecture was "The evolution of human rights and its effects on women's rights". The lecture considered how human rights have evolved over time and its overall effect on women's rights, as well as the fundamental gendered shifts in the universal human rights culture that has shaped contemporary society.





## ISISELE SENYATHI HUB ON AFRICAN WOMEN'S HISTORY

In 2022 Ilitha Labantu launched the Isisele Senyathi Hub on African Women's History. Isisele Senyathi - a Xhosa idiom that means "a reservoir of knowledge" or "a mine of information" is a hub for African Women's History. The Hub brings to life the countless untold and unheard stories of African women throughout history. It serves as a space for all to inspire, experience, collaborate, and amplify African women's impact— past, present, and future.

From 28 to 30 September 2022, in partnership with the Cape Peninsular University of Technology, Ilitha Labantu hosted the first Isisele Senyathi conference themed "*Mobilizing African Women Memories through Collective and Collating Historical Knowledge*", and hosted the second conference in partnership with the African Women's Independent Forum and UN Women under the theme "*Recovering and Preserving the Culture and History of African Women: Past and Present*" at Freedom Park - Heritage Site and Museum in Pretoria from 27 - 29 September 2023. Furthermore on the 2nd of February 2024, Ilitha Labantu launched the official first edition of the anthological stories of women and girls entitled "Our Stories, Our Voices, Discovering Ourselves". The anthology brought together the collective of personal narratives, short stories and poetry from 21 women and girls from all walks of life, the launch formed part of a series of planned activities in commemoration of 35th anniversary of Ilitha Labantu.

# Celebrating women's voices

## BOSSA LEDWABA

MY PAIN, MY JOY, MY LIFE

*"That year I didn't enjoy Christmas, all the girls plaited their hair and put ribbons on. How on earth was I supposed to put a ribbon on a head without hair?"*



## BUYISWA JACK

NDINGUYE ENDINGUYE

*"Those who planned the assassination, while enjoying life with their families, have deprived and robbed Pro's children of the love that their father was going to give them."*



## DAPHNE EROSI

A ROSE THAT GREW FROM THE CONCRETE

*"The question that I could not answer was, 'why did I stay in the relationship for so long'? The man almost killed me but because I was blinded with love, I knew I could have ended the marriage back then."*



## FALDIELA DE VRIES

ACTIVIST BY CHOICE

*"Currently I am grappling with the community members' reaction to gang murders. The first reaction when someone is killed is 'oh he belonged to so and so gang'. It is not related to a murder that was committed."*



## MARIA PATRICIA BASSON

A CALLING WITHIN A CALLING

*"My cousin boetie Bob, a Roman Catholic priest, came fully dressed in his priestly attire one day. He greeted all parties while we were labouring in the cotton fields. He waved at us, and I noticed tears rolling down the cheeks of our family members. I was 10 years old at the time. That was the last we saw of him."*

## MAGDELENE LIENGA GERTSE

VERGETE DAE EN JARE (FORGOTTEN DAYS AND YEARS)

*"Ek was die meisie wat graag die kinders ge - abba het in die winte, en wat nie skoene aan gehad het nie."*  
*["I was the girl who liked to babysit the other children in winter, and who always didn't have shoes on."]*





# Celebrating women's voices

## ANNELISA MLAKALAKA

A JOURNEY KNOWN BY ME

*"I was 7 years old when Uncle started touching me and asked me to do the same. I did this. My hands came across this "banana" he was hiding inside his pants."*



## SIBONGILE KHUMALO

TRACK OF MY TEARS

*"I was still in exile when most of my family members died, and as I was deemed a terrorist by the obnoxious apartheid government, I would have been prohibited from entering the country. Rather still, I would have been detained to bury my loved ones - like all other former guerrillas and exiled people."*



## NANDIPHA MADOLO

MEETING YOU

*"He stood up and went towards the bedroom. He opened his safety box. I thought that day was going to be the end of me. He brought his gun and put it on the table and told me if I left, I must know that I would leave in a coffin."*



## NONTUTUZELO MNTWANA

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

*"I am the wounded mother of a daughter who was brutally murdered at the peak of her career."*



## LIONESS SIBANDE

THE STORY OF LIONESS SIBANDE

*"My great grandfather was Gert Sibande, who fought for the liberation of the people of South Africa. He was called the Lion of the East. His spirit lives inside me, and I firmly believe I am following in his footsteps. Fighting for the liberation of my beloved people of Swaziland. I feel honoured to be a descendant of such a great man."*



## QUEEN REBECCA JOSEPHINE COMO

THE HOTTENTOT QUEEN

*"I also told her that we will rise above our circumstances and that I will not return to school until the truth of our (real) history is told. I then realized that I had to go all out for my Nama culture, as many of our people are being misled regarding our history."*

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# ILITHA LABANTU

PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE



**ILITHA LABANTU**  
PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE

