

2024



ANNUAL

REPORT

April 2024 - March 2025



Table of Contents

A photograph of children playing on a wooden playground structure. In the foreground, a child in a light blue dress is hanging from a bar. Other children in grey clothing are also on the structure. The background shows a building with a corrugated metal roof and some trees under a clear blue sky.

01

Message from the Chair

02

Senior Self-help
Groups Network

03

Income
Generation &
Livelihoods

04

Aftercare
Programme

05

External Visitors,
Volunteers &
Students

06

External Visitors,
Volunteers &
Students

07

Board of
Directors

08

Acknowledgements

A message from our Chairperson

Dear readers

It gives me pleasure to write an introductory message for the 2024 annual report, beautifully prepared by our community occupational therapist Vhuhwavho Ramokhondo, which provides a narrated account of events across GAPA's programs: respectively Senior Self-help Groups Network; Income Generation & Livelihoods, Aftercare and Engagements with Visitors and Volunteers.

This past year has reminded us, once again, of the extraordinary resilience and care that lives in the hearts of our grandmothers or 'makhulus'.

'Makhulu' is the Nguni word, primarily used in the South African languages isiXhosa, isiZulu, and Tshivenda.

It stems from the root word 'khulu', which denotes greatness, age, or supreme importance. Across townships and rural communities throughout South Africa, the makhulus continue to rise — not despite hardship, but through it — to hold families together in the face of poverty and the ongoing burden of AIDS and other ill-health conditions.

At Grandmothers Against Poverty and AIDS, we believe that grandmothers are not simply caregivers to themselves and each other, they are the backbone of our communities.

They are raising children orphaned or made vulnerable by poverty, often inadequately, on older person's grant (R 2400 per month), ageing bodies, and inadequate social support.

GAPA exists to support their love, dignity, and determination that underlies their collective capacity to care.

This year, I am proud to report that GAPA extended its reach, deepened its partnerships, and — most importantly — listening ever more closely to the grandmothers themselves. Their voices shape every programme we run, from income-generation workshops to psychosocial support groups, from children's after-school care to advocacy on the provincial and national stage.

None of this is possible without our donors, volunteers, staff, and the broader community of supporters who share our conviction that investing in grandmothers means investing in South Africa's present and future.

Thank you for standing with us.

Viva Makhulus, Viva!



*Dr Frank Kronenberg
Chair of the GAPA Board of Directors*



GAPA IN 2023/24



33 senior self-help groups



Upcycling project was introduced



110 children registered in our aftercare



Seniors attended weekly health clubs

Mr Member of Parliament, joined by Deputy Minister Mr Andries Nel and Director-General, Adv Doc Mashabane, to our 10th anniversary for Mandela Day at the Grandmothers Against Poverty and Aids (GAPA) organisation.

100 seniors
GAPA is a non-profit organisation that serves over 600 elderly people in KwaZulu-Natal, Cape Town.

100 seniors
100 organizations

Together empowering and protecting older persons!

the doj & cd
Department of Justice and Constitutional Development

30



seniors assessed on physical, mental, emotional and social health

Senior Self-help Groups Network



Throughout the year, the Health Club remained GAPA's primary platform for promoting the wellbeing of older persons through integrated health, psychosocial, and educational programmes.

Monthly health screenings, conducted in partnership with the Heart and Stroke Foundation, reached approximately 50 participants each month and provided vital health assessments, referrals, and education on chronic disease prevention and healthy living.

The programme was strengthened through partnerships with organisations including the Arthritis Foundation, Black Sash, Age-in-Action, and EasyPay Everywhere.

These collaborations provided practical health education, support on social grants and older persons' rights, financial literacy training, and awareness sessions on issues such as gender-based violence, psychosocial wellbeing, and active ageing.

Health Club also served as a platform for civic engagement, facilitating discussions on democracy, service delivery, and community challenges affecting older persons.



Beyond health and education, Health Club fostered social connection, inclusion, and community participation. Key highlights included Mandela Day celebrations attended by more than 100 participants, Women's Month activities focused on empowerment and wellbeing, participation in the Western Cape Older Persons Arts, Culture and Golden Games, and a Recovery Walk that promoted emotional resilience and social engagement. These activities strengthened community solidarity while encouraging active and healthy ageing.

Self-help groups continued to provide essential psychosocial support for members experiencing grief, illness, caregiving responsibilities, and social isolation. Efforts to strengthen the network resulted in the integration of three new groups during the reporting period. The year concluded with a special tribute to GAPA founder and Occupational Therapist Kathleen Brodrick, whose legacy was honoured through the naming of the Kathleen Brodrick Classroom, recognising her lasting contribution to community-based care and support for older persons.



Income Generation & Livelihoods



Income generation activities remained central to strengthening economic resilience, skills development, and psychosocial wellbeing among older persons within GAPA.

Weekly sewing, crochet, beading, and crafting activities were implemented under structured programme facilitation, enabling participants to develop practical skills while fostering creativity, confidence, and social connection. A key development during the year was the introduction of an innovative clothing upcycling initiative, implemented in partnership with Dr Mduzi Khumalo from Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and TCB. This research-led project enabled older persons to repurpose donated clothing into unique handcrafted products, creating new pathways for income generation through design, creativity, and sustainability. The initiative strengthened both environmental awareness and economic opportunity, with participants actively engaged in developing market-ready products.



Income Generation & Livelihoods

Skills development was further strengthened through Sewing, Beading and Crochet training, where participants successfully completed a structured programme and graduated with certificates. This milestone reflected both personal achievement and the organisation's broader commitment to lifelong learning and empowerment among older persons.



The vegetable garden, supported by Tia's Arms and SANITEC, continued to play an important role in food security, nutrition, and community participation. The garden also supported multiple self-help groups through the provision of seedlings and compost, strengthening household food production and local sustainability efforts. SANITEC additionally contributed through deep cleaning services and the revitalisation of the garden space, improving both environmental conditions and programme functionality.

Throughout the year, income-generating craft activities were supported through ongoing sales opportunities, including market days facilitated by partners such as Philippi Village, as well as through visitors and exchange programmes. These activities contributed directly to participant income while reinforcing dignity, purpose, and active ageing



Aftercare Programme

The Aftercare Programme provided structured care, supervision, nutrition, and learning support to 96 registered children. The programme remained a consistent and safe environment for children throughout the year, offering nutritional meals, structured play, literacy support, and psychosocial care.



A key milestone included the donation of a trolley library through AVBOB and Oxford University Press Southern Africa, significantly enhancing access to reading materials and educational resources.



Aftercare Programme



Additional support from **The Whole Person Foundation (Nigeria)** provided books, stationery for children, and crafting materials for older persons, strengthening intergenerational integration across programmes.

African Impact continued to contribute meaningfully to literacy development, sports activities, and child engagement programmes. Their support remained an important component of structured aftercare delivery throughout the year.

Parental skills development sessions facilitated by Life Choices strengthened caregiver capacity among older persons, equipping them with tools to support grandchildren and enhance family wellbeing. These sessions contributed to improved caregiving confidence and stronger intergenerational support systems within households.



External Visitors, Volunteers & Students

- GAPA continued to benefit from a wide range of local and international partnerships, volunteer engagement, and academic collaborations.
- **VACorps** interns completed six-week placements at GAPA, contributing meaningfully to programme delivery, administrative support, and community engagement. Their involvement strengthened organisational capacity while providing valuable cross-cultural learning experiences.
- Occupational Therapy students from the University of the Western Cape completed community-based placements at GAPA, contributing to interventions addressing the psychosocial and functional needs of older persons within the Khayelitsha community. Their engagement supported service delivery while strengthening training and professional development in community occupational therapy practice.



External Visitors, Volunteers & Students



- International engagement continued through visiting Dutch student groups, who participated in programme activities, engaged with seniors, and contributed through craft purchases and donations. These exchanges created opportunities for cross-cultural learning, storytelling, and solidarity-building between communities.

- African Impact volunteers remained actively involved throughout the year, contributing to aftercare literacy support, craft facilitation, and broader programme assistance. Their sustained involvement provided valuable continuity across multiple programme areas.

- GAPA also hosted additional visitors and donors who contributed materially and financially to programme strengthening, including food donations, learning resources, and craft support. These contributions played an important role in sustaining both aftercare and income generation activities.



Staff & Organisational Structure



- Donovan Adonis – Manager
- Elda Sidlabane – Seniors Group Coordinator / Health Club Coordinator
- Buhle Mc-Arthur – Community Occupational Therapist
- Cheryll Richter – Administration & Finance
- Natalie Adonis – Fundraiser
- Florence Hlangadala – Income Generation Coordinator
- Gcinikhaya Feke – Groundskeeper
- Nomfusi Memani – Aftercare Cook
- Nosibongiseni Tsusane – Aftercare Cook
- Noxolo Nongogo – Aftercare Caregiver
- Nobakunjani Mabede – Aftercare Caregiver
- Thandi Ngushelo – Aftercare Caregiver
- Nompumelelo Mwanda – Aftercare Caregiver
- Ntombizodwa Femela – Aftercare Caregiver

Together we are stronger



Board of Directors

- Dr Frank Kronenberg – Chair
- Sivuyisiwe Toto– Vice Chair
- Kurt Ackerman– Member
- Wim Schippers– Treasurer
- Kathleen Brodrick– Secretary

Acknowledgements

GAPA extends sincere appreciation to all seniors, children, and families who remain at the heart of our work, as well as to our dedicated staff, volunteers, students, partners, donors, and supporters whose commitment and collaboration make our programmes possible.

We are deeply grateful for the continued trust, generosity, and partnership that sustain GAPA's work in strengthening wellbeing, dignity, and active ageing within our communities.



Together we are stronger



Our Supporters

The work we do is made possible by the various people, businesses and organisations who connect with our vision and decide to support us financially and/or in kind. We are so grateful them all and hope that our collaborations will continue!



THE HEART
AND STROKE
FOUNDATION
SOUTH AFRICA

