

2025

GAPA



GRANDMOTHERS AGAINST POVERTY AND AIDS

ANNUAL

REPORT

April 2025 - March 2026



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A message from our Chairperson

Dear readers

It gives me pleasure to write an introductory message for the 2025 annual report, beautifully prepared by our community therapist Mhuhwavo Ramukhondo and manager Mzwamadoda Mondli. The report 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.

As I reflect on another year of walking alongside South Africa's grandmothers, I am filled with both deep gratitude and renewed purpose.

The challenges our continent, country and local communities face are all but diminishing. In addition to chronic ill-health conditions, ever rising costs of daily living, unemployment, food insecurity, Gender-Based Violence and other crime and safety issues continue to bear down on the very women who hold families together. And yet, here our grandmothers stand!

Following on and building from the Constitution (mission and strategic objectives), which we had revised in previous years, in 2025 GAPA underwent a transformation of management team and Board members. GAPA acknowledges that being of service in the operational governance spaces of the non-profit sector carries a set of formidable responsibilities. As an organisation we are very grateful to the professionals who are committed to serving GAPA to the best of their abilities.

In collaboration with the University of Cape Town, GAPA started a mapping research project, intended to generate a baseline for data-informed strengthening and expansion of the programs the organisation offers to realise its mission.

This critical project is still in process and to complete it, additional funding must be secured.

We are also strengthening our advocacy work, amplifying grandmothers' voices in policy conversations about social grants, healthcare access, and the rights of child-headed households. The grandmothers are not passive recipients of support — they are leaders, and GAPA remains committed to creating opportunities for the world to listen, hear and collaborate with them.

To our funders, partners, volunteers, and staff — your commitment makes GAPA's work possible. And to GAPA grandmothers, and great teachers, we remain in 2026 with clear eyes, full hearts, and an unshakeable belief that change, rooted in community, endures.

The struggle continues — and so does the hope.



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



Senior Self-help Groups Network

The Senior Self-help Groups Network consisted of 33 self-help

groups, with 32 remaining active during the reporting period, collectively reaching approximately 500 older persons across Khayelitsha and surrounding communities.

These groups continued to serve as critical spaces for psychosocial support, resilience-building, and peer solidarity, particularly within contexts of poverty, chronic illness, caregiving responsibilities, and bereavement.

Health Club, Psychosocial Support, Advocacy & Partnerships

Every Tuesday, self-help groups gathered at GAPA for Health Club activities, creating a consistent routine of movement, social participation, reflection, and collective support. Sessions typically began with guided physical exercises promoting mobility, joint health, emotional wellbeing, and active ageing. Singing, group participation, and shared rituals continued to reinforce belonging and motivation among seniors.

Health Club remained a central platform for integrated care, with between 50 and 70 seniors attending weekly sessions and approximately 18–22 self-help groups represented at each gathering.



Health Club, Psychosocial Support, Advocacy & Partnerships

1 Monthly health screening sessions reached approximately 50 participants per cycle through partnership with the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Activities included blood pressure monitoring, glucose testing, health education, and preventative guidance on healthy ageing, chronic disease prevention, and early referral pathways. Information was further shared within self-help groups, strengthening community health literacy

Conducted in facilitated group circles, Ikhupha provided a safe and supportive space where seniors openly shared experiences of grief, caregiving stress, injustice, and emotional challenges. Through guided reflection and problem-solving, these sessions strengthened resilience, emotional wellbeing, and peer support.

2

3 Rights-based advocacy was strengthened through partnership with NOAH (Neighbouring Old Aged Homes), focusing on older persons' rights, social protection systems, reporting pathways, and access to services.

Collaboration with Age-in-Action and SASSA supported increased awareness of social grants and improved navigation of public services.

4

5 Through the Western Cape Older Persons Care Alliance, GAPA participated in parliamentary engagement processes with the Department of Social Development, contributing to discussions on policies, norms, and standards affecting older persons.

Legal literacy was strengthened through partnership with ENS Law Firm, which provided pro bono legal support, legal awareness sessions, and will-writing workshops.

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Senior Self-help Groups Network Key Events



G2G Canadian Exchange Visit

A key highlight of the year was hosting Canadian grandmothers and representatives from the Stephen Lewis Foundation through the G2G exchange programme. Twelve Canadian grandmothers joined approximately 90 local seniors in an enriching exchange focused on storytelling, cultural dialogue, Health Club participation, craft activities, and solidarity-building among older women globally.



Mandela Day Activation

Mandela Day was expanded into a large-scale community mobilisation event involving seniors, students, volunteers, and children. Activities included blanket-making, crocheting, storytelling, intergenerational engagement, and shared meals. GAPA seniors also facilitated crochet sessions with ENS as part of Mandela Day preparations, producing blankets while strengthening skills transfer and community connection.

Additional support was provided through practical community support initiatives, while Age-in-Action contributed LOTTO-funded parcels for seniors.



Senior Self-help Groups Network

Key Events

Heritage, Recovery & Community Participation

Seniors participated in heritage celebrations, recovery walks, wellness activities/ walks and provincial events promoting dignity, mobility, social inclusion, and active ageing.

Through the Khayelitsha Older Persons Forum, GAPA seniors also participated in older persons' games and wellness activities hosted by the Gugulethu Older Persons Forum, achieving recognition through active participation.



Mapping and Census Research Project

The Mapping and Census Research Project was initiated with the support of the Family Caregiving Programme and researchers from SIFAR. The process functioned as a baseline census of all GAPA a comprehensive understanding of membership profiles, household contexts, and levels of vulnerability among older persons.

The project also strengthened linkages between GAPA members, self-help groups, and service pathways, supporting improved identification of care needs and more coordinated community-based responses.





Income Generation & Livelihoods

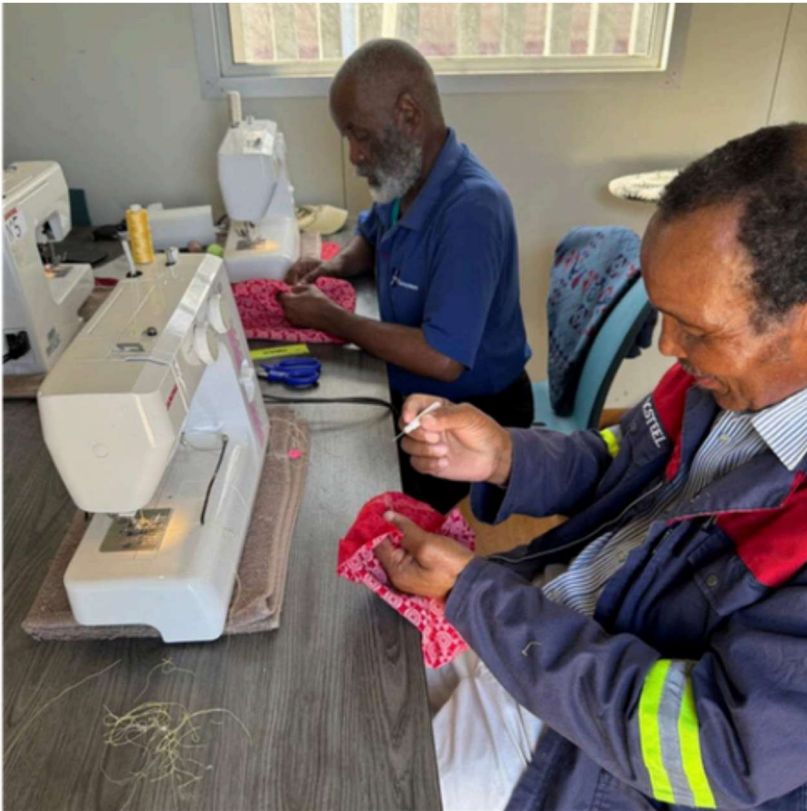
Seniors engaged in income generation activities throughout the year. Income generation remained central to strengthening economic resilience,

psychosocial wellbeing, and opportunities for meaningful participation among older persons.

Crochet sessions were held on Mondays and beading activities on Wednesdays, while weekly sewing sessions took place on Thursdays and Fridays, creating structured opportunities for creative skills development, peer engagement, and income-generating activities among participants. Under Florence Hlangadala's guidance, both grandmothers and grandfathers developed practical skills and produced items for sale, strengthening dignity, food security, and self-reliance



Income Generation & Livelihoods



A major milestone included the graduation of seven seniors from the sewing programme during Health Club celebrations. Participants received certificates recognising their achievement and readiness to transfer skills and generate income within their communities. Beading and crochet programmes also marked graduation milestones, reflecting a culture of lifelong learning, peer support, and empowerment.

> The Ubuntu Creations initiative continued to expand under Florence's leadership and was further strengthened through partnership with Tobi Petit and collaborators from the Netherlands. This partnership created opportunities for international exposure, product marketing, and sales of handmade products, while enhancing sustainability and market access.

> Craft sales were supported through multiple market opportunities and partnerships throughout the year, including Philippi Village, FoodForward Gigs, rhino crafts for National Dialogue, exchange programmes, and visitor engagements. These opportunities contributed directly to participant earnings while reinforcing dignity, creativity, and active ageing.

> The vegetable garden remained an important food security and livelihood initiative. Supported by Tia's Arms, ongoing gardening training continued to produce fresh vegetables, fruits, and herbs that supported meals for seniors and children, while strengthening nutrition and illness prevention. In addition, gardening workshops equipped seniors with practical skills to establish household gardens, thereby strengthening sustainability and community food resilience.

Aftercare Programme

The Aftercare Programme supported 96 children throughout the year and continued to provide structured care, supervision, nutritional meals, literacy support, recreation, and opportunities for psychosocial development. The programme remained a consistent and nurturing environment that promoted children's wellbeing, learning, and social participation.



Aftercare Programme

A major development during the reporting period was the introduction of the structured **Holiday Programme**, ensuring continuity of care and support throughout school breaks. Activities included arts and crafts, outdoor play, storytelling, movie sessions, relaxation activities, team-building exercises, and themed holiday experiences designed to support both learning and emotional wellbeing while creating safe and meaningful engagement opportunities for children.

Intergenerational learning remained a distinctive strength of the programme. Seniors facilitated practical skills sessions with children, creating opportunities for knowledge sharing, mentorship, confidence-building, and meaningful relationships across generations. These interactions reinforced GAPA's commitment to community connection and shared learning.

Children also participated in interactive health education sessions focused on body awareness, healthy lifestyles, wellbeing, and children's rights. Learning was delivered through engaging and age-appropriate activities that encouraged participation and reflection

Environmental education activities facilitated in partnership with the **Department of Solid Waste Management** strengthened environmental awareness and responsibility through interactive discussions, games, and practical learning experiences that encouraged positive environmental behaviours from an early age.

A meaningful collaboration during the year was strengthened with **Lwandle Primary School**, from which the majority of children enrolled in the programme attend. Continued engagement with the school supported improved communication, strengthened continuity of care between educational and community environments, and contributed to better understanding of learners' developmental, educational, and social support needs. This collaboration reinforced GAPA's commitment to working alongside families and schools to strengthen child wellbeing and educational participation.

Investment in staff capacity building also remained an important focus during the year. Members of the Aftercare team participated in training facilitated through the Department of Health and safety-focused initiatives, including First Aid, fire safety, and related child safety and emergency preparedness training. These opportunities strengthened staff knowledge, improved preparedness, and enhanced the quality and safety of services delivered to children and families.





External Visitors, Volunteers & Students

GAPA continued to benefit from strong local and international partnerships, volunteer engagement, academic collaboration, and research participation throughout 2025. These relationships strengthened programme delivery while creating opportunities for mutual learning, cultural exchange, professional development, advocacy, organisational strengthening, and community engagement.

- International engagement continued through visitor groups from the *Netherlands*, including the Petit family, whose participation created opportunities for cultural exchange, programme engagement, and support for income generation activities. Visitors engaged directly with Health Club activities, interacted with seniors and children, supported local craft initiatives, and contributed through donations and exchange of ideas that strengthened relationships across communities.
- Academic partnerships remained an important component of programme delivery and learning. Approximately eighteen Occupational Therapy students from the University of Alabama at Birmingham visited GAPA and engaged with programme activities, creating opportunities for intercultural learning and exchange on community practice approaches.
- GAPA collaborated with fourth-year Occupational Therapy students from *Stellenbosch University* conducting research as part of their undergraduate thesis exploring priorities for healthy ageing research in Africa. Through interviews with older persons and caregivers, the project sought to ensure that future ageing research reflects community voices, lived experiences, and locally identified priorities.





African Impact

- Occupational Therapy students from the University of the Western Cape and a Social Work student placement from the University of Cape Town also contributed to programme implementation and community-based learning through direct engagement with older persons and families.
- Student placements through TAL and VACorps cohorts continued to strengthen organisational capacity across programme areas. Students supported administration, Health Club activities, aftercare and day-to-day programme implementation while gaining practical experience within a community-based setting.
- A notable collaboration included African Impact hosting GAPA at Green Point for an engagement session with Social Work Master's students from the University of Denver. Discussions explored challenges affecting communities including trauma, substance abuse, family wellbeing, and social determinants of health, while creating opportunities to share GAPA's community-based responses and strengthen dialogue on social development.
- Year-Beyond volunteers also contributed additional support through youth engagement and programme activities during the reporting period.
- Collectively, these partnerships strengthened programme delivery, supported innovation and learning, and reinforced GAPA's role as a community-based organisation that brings together practice, research, teaching, and global solidarity in advancing dignity, active ageing, and social inclusion.

Staff & Organisational Structure (2025)



- ·Mzwamadoda Mondli – Manager (appointed March 2025)
- ·Vhuhwavho Ramokhondo – Community Occupational Therapist
- ·Florence Hlangadala – Income Generation Coordinator
- ·Gcinikhaya Feke – Groundskeeper and Facilities Support
- ·Nomfusi Memani – Kitchen and Aftercare Support
- ·Nosibongiseni Tsusane – Kitchen and Aftercare Support
- ·Noxolo Nongogo – Kitchen and Aftercare Cook
- ·Nobakunjani Mabede – Aftercare Caregiver
- ·Thandi Ngushelo – Aftercare Caregiver
- ·Nompumelelo Mwanda – Aftercare Caregiver
- ·Ntombizodwa Femela – Aftercare Caregiver
- ·Financial administration support (ad hoc arrangement)

Together we are stronger



Key Organisational Transitions:

- Elda Sidlabane resigned in early 2025 following her contribution to coordinating Health Club and senior programme activities.
- Natalie Adonis concluded her role as Fundraiser during early 2025.
- Cheryll Richter exited the organisation during the reporting period following her contribution to administration and financial support functions.

These transitions required redistribution of responsibilities across the organisation while maintaining continuity of programme delivery and organisational operations.





Board Transitions:

During the reporting period, board members Kurt Ackerman, Wim Schippers, and Kathleen Brodrick stepped down as part of governance transitions and board restructuring processes. GAPA extends appreciation for their contribution, commitment, and service to the organisation.

Board of Directors

- Dr Frank Kronenberg–Chair
- Sivuyisiwe Toto– Vice Chair
- Professor Lollie– Member
- Dr Khosi Kubeka– Member
- Siyabonga Buthelezi– Treasurer
- Matyida Nicolas– Member

Acknowledgements

GAPA extends its sincere appreciation

to all seniors, children, families, staff, volunteers, partners, donors, and funders whose continued support makes our work possible.

Special recognition is given to the senior self-help groups whose resilience and commitment continue to anchor and strengthen the organisation.

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 to them all and hope that our collaborations will continue!

