

# Bambisanani

Looking back, looking forward



Bambisanani  
Partnership

Working Together, Learning Together

# Bambisanani

Looking back, looking forward

The Bambisanani Partnership has gained international acclaim for its pioneering work using sport as a catalyst to promote education, health, global citizenship and leadership in one of South Africa's most deprived areas. Based on extracts from the recently published book *Bambisanani: Ten years of Working together and Learning Together*, twelve key individuals involved in the work of the Bambisanani Partnership offer their perspectives on the past ten years but also on what the future might hold for the multi award winning charity.



## DARREN BEARDSLEY, HEADTEACHER, ST. MARY'S SCHOOL



When thinking about Bambisanani Partnership, it is important to consider the phrase 'Working Together, Learning Together'. These objectives are essential for a successful partnership in that we do learn so much together and that we support each other. Writing as the Headteacher of St. Mary's, Menston, I have been privileged to talk to staff and students who have benefited enormously

from working with Mnyakanya High School. The philosophy of all involved within the partnership is that it is an equitable, sustainable and effective partnership that has a positive impact on both schools, but also the wider communities. The effectiveness of a school is often measured using examination data and this is important in providing opportunities for our students, but the real success of a school is how it works to develop young people so that they go on to benefit society in the future. We take this seriously and the skills and understanding that students develop in global citizenship, global justice, enterprise and leadership, by taking part in the partnership, equips them to make the world a better place in the future.

It is important that we celebrate the success of the partnership so far, but it is also imperative that we continue to develop our work. We are planning ways in which the partnership can influence younger students at St. Mary's with the introduction of the Bambisanani Award. The students have responded incredibly positively to this and I am delighted that we have recently presented our first award in an assembly at school. The influence on University students is also being enhanced by the involvement of two of our Universities in Leeds as part of the partnership.

All of these developments are exciting for the future of this inspirational work and continue to be driven by our desire to '*Work Together and Learn Together*'.

## LOGAN GOVENDER, SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESSMAN AND ENTREPRENEUR



South Africa has a history of people from abroad attempting to "serve" the local community. Many of these missions flounder in time because they are designed to engender a feeling of goodwill more for the giver than the recipient. It is to the credit of the founder and his dedicated team that the Bambisanani Partnership has persisted for a decade. Bambisanani – working hand in

hand – works because there is neither a giver nor a receiver. Two groups, from different ends of the planet, each borrowing from the culture of the other forge relationships through the medium of sport, changing perspectives of both from the experience.

I believe that hands that serve are holier than hands that are folded in prayer and I have had numerous personal experiences over the past ten years of how the interaction between the two groups, compressed into a fortnight, has fostered joy and hope in a world so full of gloom and turmoil that it overshadows the innate goodness of mankind.

From modest beginnings, Bambisanani has spread its reach and grown from sport to the social upliftment of a community through several sponsors being inspired to come aboard. The work now includes the participation of the University of Leeds, who have provided children facing a two hour walk to and from school with bicycles; sponsorship of a crèche for HIV & AIDS orphans; and the sheer joy that arises from and in anticipation of the annual interaction. The future looks bright for this community as plans are afoot to substantially enhance their lives. A sports field where once only a windswept dustbowl existed is an example of the improvements that are planned.

I consider myself a Bambisanani Partner and am delighted to have been involved with this noble project since its inception. I look forward to offering my humble help in the future in enhancing the experiences of the participants of Leeds as a small measure of thanks.

Long may Bambisanani live!

## CATHERINE CHATTOE, BAMBISANANI COORDINATOR, ST. MARY'S SCHOOL



The Bambisanani Partnership is something that I feel honoured and privileged to be a part of. The Bambisanani Partnership has been pioneering, innovative and determined in its work.

I have witnessed, first-hand, a unique partnership develop between St. Mary's, Menston in Leeds and Mnyakanya High School in KwaZulu-Natal,

South Africa. I have seen how the partnership has made a positive impact on the lives of so many people. Anybody that comes into contact with its work will have been affected by it. The approach of the Bambisanani Partnership can only be admired. The international acclaim it receives is no surprise.

By working together with a shared vision, with equal respect and common values, the Bambisanani Partnership has achieved so much. It has provided new opportunities for so many, it has developed confidence and self-belief in those that have been fortunate enough to be involved with its work and improved leadership skills which has created new opportunities. I have seen it change the attitudes and aspirations of many; it has helped to shape people's lives in a positive way. Most significantly for me is how it has created so many long lasting friendships.

The last ten years have been incredible but I know this is just the start. The willingness, drive, spirit and energy from the Bambisanani team and its supporters is unstoppable. I know they are all ready and willing to continue their work because, inevitably, it makes the world a better place.



## PK ZONDI, BAMBISANANI COORDINATOR, MNYAKANYA SCHOOL



The Bambisanani Partnership is the most wonderful collaboration that has ever been experienced by the Mnyakanya community. This partnership between Mnyakanya High School and St. Mary's School has enlightened many young people, adults and stakeholders of our community in many different ways. It is bringing hope to many

families most of which are headed by under-aged orphans. The Bambisanani Partnership is playing a major role in encouraging many orphans to further their studies, by giving them financial assistance and many other educational needs. It has produced many young leaders who can stand up and do things on their own, to bring about change in their community. It also encourages many young people to work for excellence in all school activities, like in sports and academic activities and also in community activities. Joint learning activities initiated by the partnership have inspired young people from many schools in both countries. The yearly awards presented by Bambisanani Partnership to recognise young people for their good work is a great motivation for them to work hard in all areas of school life. It is very exciting indeed to share ideas with people who are from across the world in the UK, to work together towards achieving common objectives. It is unbelievable to see a school situated in a poor rural area like Mnyakanya becoming one of the most resourceful schools of KwaZulu-Natal, with tablets, library and have access to the internet in school computers. We are always so interested to hear of the impact of our work on the UK children; like ours many are profoundly influenced by the Bambisanani experiences. Bambisanani is helping to build a more educated, tolerant and caring society. We have ambitious plans for the future that will have a positive impact on even more young people.

At Mnyakanya High School we have no doubt that, this partnership is a blessing from God, who saw the life struggle in our community and brought this partnership to our school. We hope and pray that He will give us strength to grow this partnership to its highest level.

Long live the Bambisanani Partnership, long live, through working together and learning together.

## TONY MOODLEY, CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALIST, KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



It's unbelievable that the partnership has persevered for over a decade already and is surely a testament to the dedication and passion of the partners. Whilst the partnership is not about individuals, it is most certainly the amazing passion and drive of David Geldart that has ensured that it has flourished and blossomed into something beyond the initial dreams and goals of the British

Council's/Youth Sports Trust *Dreams and Teams* initiative.

The partnership has had many material benefits which will be highlighted below but one aspect I believe is the ethos of the partnership, which is more important than just the material benefits it has provided. Firstly, it has allowed learners and teachers from both partner schools, Mnyakanya and St. Mary's to interact with each other through sport and sport related activities and given them the opportunity to develop important skills and values such as leadership, tolerance, sharing, understanding of other cultures and foster continuing links between them. Secondly, it allows for a school community in a rural part of South Africa to become a part of the global village through their regular interactions with learners and teachers from the UK thereby fostering a deeper understanding of global citizenship – skills which will be invaluable to learners from rural communities like Mnyakanya who ordinarily may not have such opportunities. The partnership has further allowed Mnyakanya learners to participate in global initiatives, notably the Diana Awards, in which learners from the school were the first South African recipients of this award again highlighting the value the partnership has provided learners from Mnyakanya to participate in international activities.

The blossoming of the partnership in the past few years has seen it move beyond just being a leadership through sports initiative but graduate to becoming one which has taken a deeper interest in developing the lives of the learners of Mnyakanya even further through the formation of the Bambisanani Charity. Through the invaluable efforts and funding by the charity in 2015 Mnyakanya was able to initially begin the first phase of an ICT rollout programme at the school which saw educational tablets being introduced to the school

and training for teachers. This has subsequently been followed by further funding from the charity which has seen the school becoming a part of the global village through the provision of a satellite Internet service at the school. The partnership has further provided uniforms to learners from disadvantaged homes, sports equipment to the school and bursaries to a few learners to pursue university study.

The partnership has also managed to gain the interest of other stakeholders like the University of Leeds which has provided the school with mountain bikes for use by learners who would normally walk great distances to school. Other stakeholders have also shown interest in developing a football pitch to further change the lives of the Mnyakanya learners and the surrounding community.

The fledgling *Dreams and Teams* initiative has developed wings and may the Bambisanani Partnership soar to greater heights and give the learners and teachers from both schools, through their regular interactions, the opportunity to continue learning about the value and importance of global citizenship. To quote the founding father of our democratic state, Nelson Mandela:

*'Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation.'*

It is my belief that the partnership and the assistance it provides to the community of Mnyakanya can allow for a lot more daughters and sons of peasants to take their rightful places in life and free their communities from the painful burden of poverty.



## WILLIAM VILAKAZI, FORMER PRINCIPAL MNYAKANYA HIGH SCHOOL



Through the Bambisanani Partnership I have witnessed many things I didn't believe could happen to the Mnyakanya community; through working together and learning together we have achieved so much since the inception of the programme in 2006. The partnership has connected South Africa and the UK and all of those that have been involved have been changed in

some way because of the others that are involved. There is a saying in Zulu culture: Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu which means 'I am because you are'. This is the very spirit of the Bambisanani Partnership; it is what makes it an equal partnership in an unequal world, it is what creates the belief and hope that sustains and motivates our work.

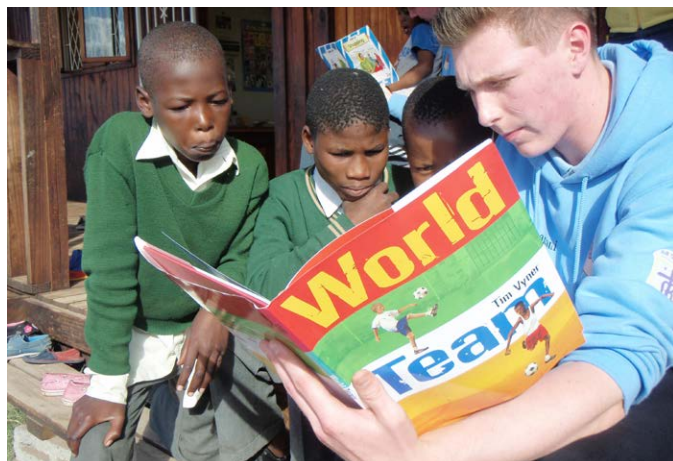
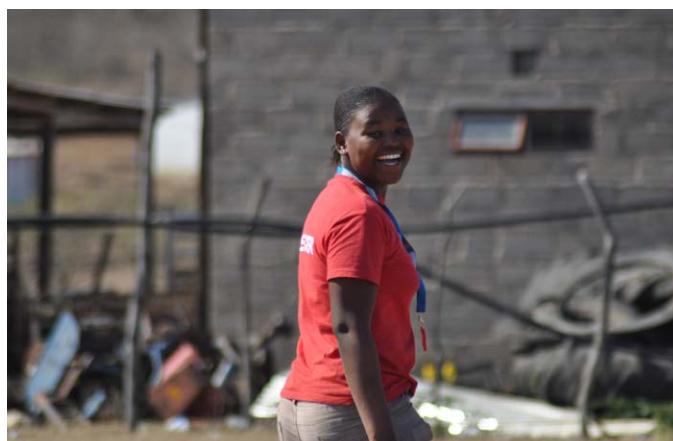
Mnyakanya School and its learners have received tremendous support in terms of equipment, facilities and opportunities and now attracts many more young learners each year who want to be part of the Bambisanani Partnership. The partnership has taught our learners to love, share, and respect and not to discriminate against other people of different colour, race or religion. They have learnt to appreciate other people and the spirit of Ubuntu is now prevalent in the whole community.

The focus on sport and developing young leaders remains at the heart of our joint work and has led to many other developments. The fact that we now have the internet to support our teaching and learning is transformational and something that I still cannot quite believe; we are now literally connected to the outside world. The exchange visits of learners and educators is something else that we thought was impossible but it has happened and it has changed lives, as many aspects of this partnership have

The Bambisanani Partnership is constantly developing and we are increasingly linking with other schools, universities and organisations in both the UK and South Africa. This project has taught me that we may have different horizons but we all live under the same sky and because of this we have to help each other in our journey through life. Mnyakanya School and St. Mary's School have been significantly enhanced because of the Bambisanani Partnership. This translates into so many young people from both countries who now see the world differently and wish to make it a better place.

This partnership has a bright future in both countries. Our educators and learners need to take the partnership in both hands and pass it on from generation to generation.

May God bless the Bambisanani Partnership



## BARBARA POUNDER, TRUSTEE OF THE BAMBISANANI PARTNERSHIP



I had often thought that South Africa held untold potential much like a child in my class who suddenly surprises you with a comment or a piece of perceptive writing. It has been my privilege to visit South Africa on four occasions as part of the Bambisanani Partnership. On my first visit the sights, sounds and smells of Africa came all at once and the prospects of new

challenges excited me and our students. There I grew “African eyes” not just for spotting wildlife but for seeing the world like our students and Mnyakanya students did. As their shyness became less visible friendships were formed. The laughter and smiles of every young person will be etched in my memory, the skills learned and developed by both the African and English students filled me with the pride every teacher is privileged on occasions to witness. The relationship became organic and we all, staff and students alike, thrived on the passion and desire to do more that emerged during that first visit. Each time I have been back the essence of Themba (meaning ‘Hope’ in Zulu) has prevailed and indeed become stronger.

I think the impact of the Bambisanani Partnership has three levels; the personal, the educational and the spiritual.



The experience has enriched many lives, including my own, in ways which I can only describe as uplifting. There is a recognition for me that suffering and deprivation can be overcome when people are not forgotten and when interest is shown.

My faith in education and its power was reaffirmed with every visit. The desire of young people to learn, support each other and make a difference in the world is palpable.

I believe that spirituality, or whatever it is that people find deep within themselves, is a facet of resilience. For many, this partnership has brought them closer to humanity and the recognition of the strength and desire that they have to make the world a better place.

The future for the partnership lies with the people who care about its expansion and development. The partnership will evolve to become as embedded as any long lasting exchange of people and their skills and in doing so raise aspirations and build capacity. As long as the desire to enhance the lives of young people remains viable then this partnership will continue its important work.

It is an honour to be part of the Bambisanani family and now that my ‘African Eyes’ have been opened, I can’t close them.



## MONSIGNOR VLADIMIR FELZMANN, CEO, JOHN PAUL II FOUNDATION FOR SPORT



The Bambisanani Partnership is a great example of Ubuntu (human kindness): what is good in KwaZulu-Natal is good in St. Mary's Menston. The relationship between the pupils in Yorkshire and South Africa has proved to be mutually life-enriching, even a life-changing, experience.

The enthusiasm with which the St. Mary's pupils speak

about their time in South Africa and the way it has changed their thinking about so much of life, says it all.

Much has been achieved over the past ten years and even more will be achieved as this partnership builds on its experiences and the pupils in all the schools mature and move into adulthood.

Play is in our DNA and the importance of play through sport cannot be overstated in this remarkable partnership. As spirituality leads to religion so play can turn into sport with all the rules and sacrifices it demands for anyone with ambition to do well. Play and sport bridge differences, heal and rebuild communities devastated by war, disaster, disease and poverty.

Sport at its best enables young people to make their values visible as they acquire life-skills or virtues through their commitment to play. Sport at its best, which is driven by values, helps young people acquire the virtues they need to fulfil their God-given potential, it enables young people to find communities which support them on their faith journey through life. The Bambisanani Partnership is a key partner of the John Paul II Foundation for Sport and together we are using this approach around the world to help young people not only survive but even thrive in the harshest areas of our 'global city'.

Here's to another ten inspirational years at the Bambisanani Partnership; we look forward to working with you.

## MAZET ZANELE LANGA, TEACHER, MNYAKANYA HIGH SCHOOL



This all started with one man's vision and his inspiration. Since 2006 this partnership has developed from one level to another to another. It has created much hope, dedication, commitment and considerable responsibility among learners, teachers and members of the community in both countries. It has taught our young learners how to develop their

leadership skills and communicating skills as well as reaching out to the people who are in need. It has brought unity between the two schools (St. Mary's and Mnyakanya) and developed respect for each other's customs, cultures and traditions and learning new things every day. It has also taught our learners to be independent and creative. Having this partnership has raised the aspirations of our learners. Several are now attending University supported by the partnership. This is transforming lives, developing not only leaders for our community but also for our country. Through sport we are promoting education, health, leadership and global citizens. As we have developed we have included more schools and other organisations in our work. From one candle we have lit many more. In the next ten years we intend to keep the light burning brightly.

Our late president Mr Nelson Mandela once said "*sport has the power to change the world*" – the Bambisanani Partnership has changed the world of so many of our young people by working together, hand in hand.





**ANDY LOCKWOOD,  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
MANAGER, SPORT AND  
PHYSICAL  
ACTIVITY,  
UNIVERSITY OF  
LEEDS**



The Bambisanani Partnership is a truly brilliant organisation. At its heart is something really special, a commitment to the enrichment of people's lives through education and sport. They are two of the most powerful tools known and the way in which the

partnership harnessed them, has changed the lives of many people.

Over the last ten years, the partnership has made a dramatic impact with the work it has carried out. Whether it be training hundreds of young leaders, supporting educationalists or 'simply' expanding young people's view of the world and their place in it. The partnership is exceptional in what it does and fully deserves its international recognition.

What makes Bambisanani special? For me, it is that it is never satisfied with its work! The partnership is ambitious and always prepared to break new ground. It is particularly motivated when it is told that something is not possible. The plans for the next ten years are fantastic and will make a significant contribution to the development of young people and communities in both the UK and South Africa. The University of Leeds is fully committed to this partnership and is keen to play its part in the future. I can't wait to see what happens!



**DIANE MAGUIRE, ASSOCIATE  
PRINCIPAL LECTURER, LEEDS  
TRINITY UNIVERSITY**



The Bambisanani Partnership is a shining example of global learning at its best, with a truly inspirational team of people working together to make a difference to children and young people's lives in the communities of St. Mary's in Menston and in Mnyakanya School, KwaZulu-Natal. St. Mary's staff and partners have been innovative and creative in their approach to building this model of

equal partnership and it is one of the best organised and sustainable models of global partnership I have seen in my teaching career. I believe in this project as it is one based on equal respect and shared values and I feel privileged to be involved in a small way in this wonderful work.

I believe the work of the Bambisanani Partnership will go from strength to strength in the future as it continues to gain recognition as a highly respected project based on mutual benefit, equity and trust. Leeds Trinity University sees this as befitting of our own Catholic mission statement and partnership will provide a tangible way of embracing the shared values both institutions espouse. I am convinced that this will enhance the work we do to develop Leeds Trinity as a global learning community.



**GRAHAM CHENNELLS,  
SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESSMAN,  
PRESIDENT OF ESHOWE ROTARY  
CLUB, FORMER  
MAYOR OF  
ESHOWE**



The Bambisanani Partnership is remarkable in many ways. For someone such as myself - having been born here and having been involved with numerous projects through the Eshowe Rotary Club for more than forty years - this project stands out mainly because of its

interactive nature and the fact that it has blossomed and developed so tremendously over the ten years it has been in existence.

I consider myself very fortunate to have been associated with the project from its inception, and I have been overawed by the responses that I have seen from all the students involved.

St. Mary's pupils arriving in deeply rural Zululand suddenly realise what privileges they have always taken for granted, and are humbled by this encounter. The fact that such a rich history exists between the two countries adds to the spice of the experience. The Zulu children, likewise, suddenly start to realise that their horizons are not, in fact, limited to what they have always considered possible

The "Leadership Through Sport" programme is particularly special for me. This fun programme encourages initiative and develops the organisational skills which our country so desperately needs. I have watched a large number of Zulu children being given a great boost of confidence by these interactions - surely a life-changing experience for them.

Here is to another 10 years!

Ngiyabonga kakhulu Bambisanani





[bambisananipartnership.org](http://bambisananipartnership.org)  
Registered Charity Number: 1163461



Follow us online!

