



Proud Executive Committee members of the Impumelelo Yethu Savings Club

ASPIRES inspires youth to save for life

With 95% attendance and increased financial and life skills, low-income youth in KwaZulu-Natal have been inspired by the combination prevention knowledge and practical skills approach of the ASPIRES project. Capacity development and mentoring support has helped community organisations to reach and successfully retain youth in savings clubs.

ASPIRES works to improve the long-term economic security and HIV prevention knowledge and skills of at-risk youth in South Africa. NACOSA provides training, mentoring and technical support to three community organizations to deliver the ASPIRES Project – Zisize Educational Trust, Ezisakweni Development Initiative (EDI) and Unyezi.

MAKING BETTER CHOICES

The organisations work with low-income youth infected or affected by HIV and AIDS, mainly between the ages of 14 and 17. Because of their increased risk of becoming infected, young women and girls are of particular concern and make up at least 60% of the groups.

Community organisations help build the sexual and reproductive health knowledge and financial capabilities of youth so that they are empowered to make better choices. With 95% attendance across workshop sessions, the ASPIRES project has clearly inspired the youth in these communities.

SAVINGS CLUBS

Drawing in youth from deep rural communities, Zisize and EDI have each helped set-up and run 3

savings clubs in 3 different schools (6 in total). Reaching 154 youth, most of whom have not missed a single session, the project has generated great excitement in the area with other young people clamouring to join. Peer facilitators say they feel better equipped to help youth deal with the reality of their poverty in a constructive way.

“We do this work trusting that one day when they have to start tertiary education, these children will proudly withdraw their own funds to pay for application fees.”

- Makhosi Zondi, EDI

OUR SUCCESS

The Impumelelo Yethu (‘Our Success’) Savings Club, facilitated by EDI, is a prime example of the project in action – young members have elected an executive committee, opened a bank account and are even generating additional income by providing catering services to EDI.

“I was so proud of myself for saving money on my own. I lifted the weight on my mother's shoulders for buying the blazer that I wanted to have for so long, since Primary [school].”

- Ayanda, 16