

International honour for Leeds based charity praised by the South African High Commissioner to the UK

The 2nd South African High Commissioner to the UK, His Excellency JN Mamabola has praised the work of the Leeds based, The Bambisanani Partnership, on being named as **International Sport and Physical Education Charity of the Year** at the annual Non-Profit Organisation Awards.

The Bambisanani Partnership is a multi-award-winning charity that originated as a partnership between St. Mary's Catholic School in Menston, UK and Mnyakanya High School in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa in 2006. The partnership, which is run entirely by volunteers, uses the power of sport as a catalyst to promote education, health, global citizenship and leadership and has gained international acclaim for its work.



His Excellency Kingsley Mamabola, the South African High Commissioner with David Geldart, CEO of the Bambisanani Partnership

The partnership now involves over 30 schools, colleges and universities in both the UK and South Africa. The University of Leeds, Leeds Trinity University and Newcastle College are key members of the partnership. In South Africa the partnership operates in the Nkandla region which one of most remote and deprived parts of the country with over 90% unemployment and one of highest Aids/HIV rates in the world. 'Bambisanani' is a Zulu word meaning 'working hand in hand' which aptly encapsulates the philosophy of the partnership which seeks to provide

collaborative learning opportunities for young people in both countries. The partnership has been recognised as making a 'significant contribution' to UN Sustainable Development Goals relating to Health and Education and is a founding member of Sport and Sustainability International.

The High Commissioner said:

“ It is heartening to see that a project that is so mutually reinforcing and beneficial can have such a wide and profound impact in rural KZN. The KZN Cycling programme, Sports Leadership Programmes and Sports and Reading festivals are exactly the kinds of projects that bring together the youth from both the UK and SA. We are deeply appreciative of the work being carried out by the Bambisanani Partnership over the past 17 years and are impressed by the ways in which this project has grown to best serve the needs of the local communities in Eshowe and further afield. Given the impact and magnitude of the work carried out by the Bambisanani Partnership, we think it highly fitting that the Partnership has been awarded the International Sport and Physical Education Charity of the Year and we offer our congratulations and support.”

John Rolfe MBE, Global School Alliance added,

“ Congratulations on this richly deserved global award to all the at the wonderful Bambisanani Partnership. This Inspirational partnership has developed some of the best international education programmes and practice in the world.”

The work of the partnership has been highlighted at conferences throughout the world, most recently at the Global Sport for All Summit held at the Vatican. At the event, Bambisanani Founder and CEO, David Geldart was honoured by an Audience with Pope Francis. The Bambisanani story is testimony of the power of sport to change the lives of individuals and communities. The charity has raised over £670,000 to facilitate its life changing work.

Over the past seventeen years more than 12,000 young people from the UK and South Africa (from primary school to university) have participated in a variety of

Bambisanani Partnership programmes and projects including Leadership through Sport, Sports Festivals, Cycling to Success, Literacy through Sport, Numeracy through Sport Art through Sport, Learning through Football, International Athletics Challenge and the joint training of Physical Education teachers and Sports Coaches.



Beyond this the charity has been instrumental in bringing clean drinking water and computers to schools as well as rebuilding houses and providing university bursaries to disadvantaged young people, always working in partnership with the local community. The partnership has a policy of never funding 100% of a project and always seeks to 'lever' funding from South African sources. David Geldart said "Our work is about building capacity and empowering people and communities not developing a 'dependency culture'. Funding everything would be patronising to say the least and ultimately self-defeating. We don't do anything that isn't driven by the local community; engagement and 'buy in' are essential. Partnership means partnership."



Members of the Bambisanani team from South Africa and the UK



Mrs Pk Zondi, Bambisanani Coordinator from Mnyakanya School said:

“ Being a member of the Bambisanani Partnership can be transformational for schools and learners - we have seen significant improvements in terms of academic success, attendance, enrolment, behaviour, confidence and self-esteem as a result of the various Bambisanani programmes. We feel connected to a wider world and involved in something bigger than ourselves. Above all this partnership has given us hope and belief. In this partnership we all play our part; we work together and we learn together in the spirit of Ubuntu. Long live Bambisanani!”

Young people involved the partnerships various programmes have no doubt about their value:

“ Much of our life in the UK has become obsessed with materialism and ‘celebrity’. We have lost touch with things that really matter. My visit to South Africa has given me a much more meaningful perspective on life” - UK student

“ We have worked together...people of different colours, countries, religions and cultures...we have proved it can be done” - South African student



Bambisanani Partnership

Working Together, Learning Together



“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”
Zulu Proverb

From the USA Philip Leopold, CEO and Executive Director, Sport for Humanity Foundation said:

“ On behalf of Sport at the Service of Humanity, I'd like to express my personal congratulations to David and his colleagues for this wonderful and deserved recognition, and more importantly I want to thank the Bambisanani Partnership for the terrific and important work they do, all day, every day.”



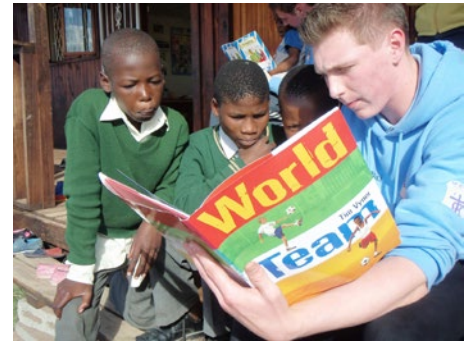
Logan Govender, South African businessman and entrepreneur commented:

“ South Africa has a history of people from abroad attempting to ‘serve’ the local community. Many of these ‘missions’ flounder because they are designed to engender a feeling of goodwill more for the giver than the recipient. Bambisanani – working hand in hand – works because there is neither giver nor 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.”



David Geldart concluded,

“ This is a tremendous honour. I am absolutely delighted that this award recognises the selfless, dedicated, pioneering work of our volunteers in both the UK and South Africa; we wouldn’t achieve anything without this amazing team of people who are committed to changing lives through sport. We are embarking on our most ambitious plans to date and this prestigious accolade will certainly spur the team on. This summer 58 young volunteers from the UK (St. Mary’s School, University of Leeds, Leeds Trinity University and Newcastle College) will work with counterparts in South Africa to deliver a wide range of existing Bambisanani projects and programmes and introduce new ones. Our new cycling partnership with KZN Cycling will see us teach 5,000 children a year how to ride and maintain bikes. In the next 18 months we aim to increase the number of young people that we have worked with from 12,000 to 20,000. We are totally dependent on donations to fund our work and would be delighted to hear from anyone that can support us. With no employees or premises, any donations received go directly to our ‘front line’ projects. There is much more for us to do.”



For more information about the Bambisanani Partnership please see:

www.bambisananipartnership.org

