

Lillian Kinkana



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Giving Back by Learning: Lillian Kinkana

Participant: ECD Teacher Training and Governing Body Training
– Principal, Eluxolweni

Lillian Kinkana is clapping her hands, dancing, swaying her body from side to side, and breaking out into song.

With each refrain she sings louder and louder giving thanks and praise to the Lord, the reverberation of each top note is almost too loud for the little container we're in. The container is filled with small, red, plastic tables and chairs, building blocks, books and toys. This is Eluxolweni.

This day is a far cry from Lillian's early beginnings when she started working from home in 2000.

"It was sad to see the children suffering; they were home alone while their parents worked."

When Lillian started her playgroup, she expected 120 children, 250 arrived, and her place could not accommodate all of them.

Lillian's request to local government for funding to build a crèche fell on deaf ears.

"They kicked me out. They did not worry. Every day I went there and asked, but they didn't want to do anything.

"Those people didn't worry about the community, they were there to meet the needs of their own families, not those of the community. We didn't know where the Municipal manager lived, but he knew of us

and knew what was going on here. I got no response, nothing, nothing, nothing. I gave up going to ask," says Lillian.

But in 2008 there was a shift. A new Municipal manager, Anton Liebenberg was appointed.

"In my spare time, I went to make inquiries as to how to get help with funding. I needed to put together a portfolio but I didn't know how to type and those people there typed it up for me, they helped me with everything."

Mr Liebenberg allocated Lillian a piece of land in Siteview in Ward 12 and a sponsored container while CECD supplied educational materials, toys and commissioned the building of a fence around the perimeter of the educentre.

"But," says Lillian, "I needed training and so did the ladies who were volunteering at the daygroup."

2008 marked the launch of CECD's ECD project in Grabouw.

Lillian and her volunteers enrolled so they could graduate with a Level 4 National Certificate.

"I learnt all about budgeting and asking for school fees. I know now that even if I have to ask for R10 a week, it's R10 and over a month that's R40. Before I did the course I had



no idea about admission procedures, forms and fees even. The trainers at CECD helped me so much. They also taught me about healthy child development and First Aid."

CECD also trained Lillian in ECD centre governance.

Placing her hand on her heart, Lillian says: "I was able to persevere with my studies and do my job because the CECD trainers encouraged me by saying: 'Tomorrow it'll be better. You must focus on your books and focus on your work'. I did what they said because I could see they were passionate about their work and they were passionate about me."

"Thank you Jesus. Amen," Lillian sings.

"CECD is so generous. They train us without asking us for a cent. Life is hard for us. We don't have money for books, but CECD says: 'Here is the training, here are the books – and we're not asking for anything in return'.

CECD is beautiful, CECD is beautiful, beautiful. All the people at CECD who are giving, training, are good people, good people.

"Thank you to CECD and the funder, thank you. I was not in a college, but the director of CECD and the funder went to learn for me and trained for me so they could do specialised work and give me special training. I know it's expensive to go to university, I know that, but they went to learn for me, to do special work, to give me special training.

Lillian claps her hands.

"I say thank you. Thank you Lord. Thank you Lord. I want to learn. I want to give back to them by learning."

