

2025 REPORT

CATCH

PROJECTS

CARING, AFFIRMING AND
TRAINING FOR CHANGE

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INTRODUCTION

I begin this report with profound thanksgiving to our loving God for His faithfulness, provision, and guidance throughout 2025. As we reflect on CATCH's 23rd year of service to the Mzamomhle community, I am humbled by the continued impact of our work and the dedication of our team.

This year has been marked by significant growth, new initiatives, and deepened partnerships. Despite challenges including severe weather patterns and resource constraints, CATCH has remained steadfast in its mission to champion change by building partnerships for health, education, and self-sustainability of vulnerable women, children, and families impacted by poverty, violence, and disease.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

Bambelela School Programme

At the beginning of the second school term, we identified a critical gap in the education system at Mzamowethu Public School. Grades 8 and 9 students were alternating school days due to insufficient classrooms and desks. In response, CATCH launched the Bambelela programme, welcoming approximately 425 students to our facility on their non-school days for homework support and sports activities. By the third term, this initiative blossomed into a full school where the Grade 8s came every school day and used our venues as classrooms. This provided continuity in learning and prevented academic regression among these vulnerable learners.



Enhanced Student Support Hub

Building on our existing Student Support and Employment Hub, we introduced two new streams:

- *Driver's Licence Programme*: Fifteen graduates enrolled in both theory and practical driving lessons to enhance their employability. By mid-year, 13 candidates had passed their learner's tests and begun practical lessons. These beneficiaries demonstrated their commitment by volunteering in our after-school clubs, gaining valuable experience.
- *Nail & Beauty Training*: We piloted this vocational training with one participant who completed the course and launched her own home-based salon service. The next group of five will be attending the course in December.

Siyakhula Playgroup Expansion

The tremendous growth and impact of our Siyakhula playgroup programme necessitated expansion from two to three days per week. Two additional assistants were hired to support the increased workload through the end of the year.



International Youth Exchange Program with Monkstown Boxing Club in Northern Ireland

CATCH Projects and Monkstown Boxing Club collaborated on a six-month international exchange program. The theme "Breaking Silence, Building Power," is dedicated to addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV), running from October 2025 to March 2026.

The program's initial phase was marked by the Northern Irish team's visit to CATCH (four youths and two coordinators) from October 28th to November 2nd, 2025. During this time, they facilitated the after-school

club and engaged with Grade 12 students at Mzamowethu Public School and the primary school learners at Vanani Farm School. The exchange will conclude with a reciprocal visit by the CATCH team (four youths and two coordinators) to Monkstown Boxing Club, Northern Ireland in March 2026.

Special Celebration

A special joint celebration was held on June 7th to honour two significant milestones: the 80th birthday of CATCH Projects' founder, Sue Davies, and the organization's 23rd anniversary.

PROJECT 1: FOOD SECURITY

The Food Security project faced significant challenges in 2025 due to unstable weather patterns, causing localised flooding and waterlogged gardens. This caused leaching (soil nutrients being washed away). Despite these setbacks, it is a pleasure to report that our garden MAMAs have been harvesting consistently from the later part of the year, and we continued serving 162 households.

Key Developments:

- We appointed two staff members as mother mentors to oversee the welfare needs of beneficiary families
- We employed Luzuko, a former CATCH beneficiary with a degree in Agricultural Extension, as garden supervisor.
- We distributed food vouchers to all 162 women during the Easter season and in August (women's month), to bolster household food access.
- We maintained our perimeter fencing and storage facilities after 2024 upgrades

Challenges:

- Climate change has become our most significant challenge. Recovery efforts in our gardens were consistently interrupted, as subsequent rains damaged newly planted seedlings shortly after they recovered from earlier flooding. Compounding these environmental pressures were supply chain disruptions: we experienced a prolonged shortage of seedlings from our supplier and faced lengthy delays in receiving chicken litter (manure). This shortage of manure was attributed to its diversion during the winter season, when it is used as cattle feed to facilitate milk production, reducing the supply available to us. The greenhouse was also closed due to severe flooding and rehabilitation plans are underway.



PROJECT 2: CHILD AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

This project seeks to increase emotional and physical resilience, safety, and independence through sport, recreation, and training on positive lifestyle choices.

Child Protection Week Partnership

In partnership with our local SAPS, we hosted a transformative two-day workshop series in May, focusing on children's safety, rights, and resilience. Activities included role-play scenarios, group discussions, and practical advice from police officers. This partnership visibly reduced anxiety among children regarding authority figures, particularly for those navigating trauma or neglect.

CATCH Inaugural Talent Show

We launched and hosted our first-ever CATCH Talent Show - an electrifying celebration of youth creativity! Children showcased their gifts in modelling, singing, dancing, and spoken word poetry. Many children who had previously shied away from group activities stepped forward with newfound courage. Participants began forming informal peer mentorship groups, practising after school and encouraging one another's growth.

August to November Programs

The August Life Skills theme was on Gender Equality, and this inspired enthusiastic participation, with children showing strong critical thinking, engagement, and verbal expression in challenging social norms. In September, afternoon clubs celebrated Heritage Month with traditional attire, cultural performances, and showcases. The event boosted children's self-esteem and strengthened their cultural identity, fostering pride, self-awareness, and expressive confidence. October theme centred around Gender based violence, with three youths from Northern Ireland facilitating the programs. The clubs closed at the end of November with an end-of-year Christmas party.

Netball Programme

The CATCH Netball Club successfully executed its 2025 season theme of "Community Engagement" under the leadership of Coach Athie.

Community Clean-Up Initiative: The U13, U15, and Senior teams spent the day collecting waste and cleaning the community. This act of service left the area noticeably cleaner and included an effort to educate young children on responsible citizenship.

Mother's Day Event: The club hosted a highly successful community event involving daughter vs mother games. The initiative fostered strong relationships between the club and family members and concluded with a positive shared meal experience.

Role Model Engagement: A significant personal development initiative was undertaken in September by arranging a surprise meeting between a high-league player and a deserving U13 player role model. This gesture was vital for inspiring commitment and passion within the junior ranks.

Championship Achievement: The Senior Team's selection for the Buffalo City Netball Association Championship was a highlight, securing the 3rd overall position. This high-level exposure provided invaluable experience for the entire squad.

Nomfusi Gobozi Tournament: Despite an admirable performance at the Nomfusi Gobozi tournament in Mdantsane, the team was unfortunately knocked out in the semi-finals due to significant player injuries. Notably, the club was formally awarded a Certificate for being the Most Disciplined Team, reflecting the high standards of sportsmanship upheld by our players. We are so proud of them!

The season demonstrated that the club is winning hearts in the community and games on the court.



Soccer Club

It is a joy to see Coach Bonile's dedication continuing to bear fruit:

- Our U13 and U15 teams are currently leading their league tables
- The boys have demonstrated exceptional discipline, dedication, and teamwork
- Our teams participated in multiple tournaments throughout the year
- We even appointed an assistant coach to support the growing programme



Presidential Youth Scheme

Unfortunately, in April, the contracts of our Presidential Youth Scheme volunteers ended, significantly affecting our facilitator capacity for after-school clubs. We recognised the need to employ at least five part-time staff as permanent facilitators to ensure programme sustainability. Then in October, the program returned, and we currently have about 25 youths facilitating the after-school clubs, helping in the community creches, and with cleaning our venues.

Meal Programme

We continued providing protein-rich meals to all club attendees. However, meal costs rose dramatically beyond our budget, requiring us to rely heavily on unspecified donor funds to meet this critical need.

Safety Measures

The ongoing challenge of girls' safety remained paramount. We maintained our taxi contract to transport girls to CATCH on Wednesdays and Fridays, with staff walking them home afterward.

PROJECT 3: PEOPLE EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (PEP)

The PEP team continued providing critical support to vulnerable community members in crisis to gain self-control and experience lessened anxiety, confusion, and hopelessness.

Over the past 10 months, the PEP team, comprising 1 Chief Social Worker, 1 Auxiliary Social Worker, and 1 Social Work Assistant, has counselled and supported 243 clients. Added to this number are 76 people who have been personally escorted to Home Affairs offices in order to gain life documents. Not included in the number given above were 30 mothers who came to CATCH in January to report that they were not able to gain entrance for their children into school. With the help of the Department of Education, all the children were successfully placed in schools.

An impressive total number of people empowered to varying degrees in PEP to date is 389. 197 of these, mostly women, walked in seeking help (self-referrals). Other referrals came from the local police, Living Hope, Mzamowethu Public School, and Vanani Farm School. Reasons for interventions were rape, harassment, child neglect, child abandonment, hunger, destitution, and conflict. Children with learning barriers (special needs) increasingly came to our attention.

Challenges

The need for more Social Workers is at the top of the list. Then the need for a separate counselling room for privacy. The PEP team desires to be trained in play therapy so that they can help children who need counselling.

Key Achievements

- Several children were successfully reintegrated into school
- CATCH conducted a gender-based violence (GBV) awareness campaign in collaboration with local SAPS, drawing strong community participation
- We secured 76 life documents
- We supported families with disability grant applications
- We intervened in cases of child neglect, ensuring relocation to safe environments
- Two perpetrators of GBV are now behind bars

Awomi Safe House

Our foster home, *Ekhaya Lihle*, successfully transitioned to become *Awomi Safe House* in February 2025. This change addresses the critical need for a safe place for children in crisis, as identified by our social workers. The single beds currently in the house will be changed to baby cots to ensure the safety of the babies.

Consultations with *Guardians of Hope*, who are experienced in running a safe house for children, are ongoing. Official registration with the Department of Social Development is in process. This development fills a crucial gap in East London, as other existing safe houses do not accept children on their own.

PROJECT 4: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Part A: Student Support & Youth Employment Hub

- We supported tertiary education applications for 30 young people
- One candidate gained admission to a TVET college in the second semester
- Thirteen graduates passed their learner's licence tests and began practical driving lessons. One candidate has now obtained his driver's licence
- One participant completed nail & beauty training and launched her home-based salon
- Beneficiaries in the driver's licence programme volunteered in our after-school clubs, gaining work experience



Future Vision: A significant gap has been identified for a Vocational and Skills Training Centre to train young people who drop out of school or are not interested in furthering their education after Matric. This centre would serve as a hub for equipping out-of-school youth with practical skills, enabling them to become self-reliant and employable. We are positive that we will receive funding to accomplish this vision in 2026.

Part B: Early Childhood Development (ECD) Outreach

Our ECD outreach programme continued supporting five creches in the community.

Major Achievements:

- We established food gardens using the box-in method at six creches, with a fence to add support in food security and nutrition at schools.
- We partnered with Small Projects Foundation's Eye-Care Program to screen children over four years old at ten creches. An audiologist and optometrist identified three children with vision issues, including one requiring cataract surgery
- Our support groups helped unify the teachers in the community and strengthen their voice as teachers to bring encouragement and support.
- In our training & workshops we partnered with Cotlands, Toy Library, and GROW Educare for accredited curriculum & resources.
- The Lunchbox fund provided daily lunch meals.
- Our ECD Buckets are reaching children in the streets, helping natural development at home - home visits empower us to spot children/families in need of life documentation or other support.
- We conducted fire safety workshops with hands-on extinguisher practice
- We installed fire extinguishers and signage at five creches

STAFFING

New Appointments

- Five casual staff were appointed: two assistant sports coaches (soccer and netball), two assistants for Siyakhula playgroup, and one cleaner for the Safe House
- Luzuko was appointed as Garden Supervisor in February
- Thobeka Majali was appointed as Safe House Mother in February
- Nokuphiwa was promoted to Cook following Siyasanga's resignation in March
- Zodwa, a beneficiary in the Food Security project, was appointed as Kitchen Assistant in August

Learning and Development

During the year under review, several staff members had valuable opportunities for learning and professional development. In May, our Chief Social Worker and Social Work Assistant attended the Refugees, Undocumented Migrants, and Stateless (RUMS) workshop in Cape Town, gaining insights into the challenges faced by vulnerable populations and the support mechanisms available to them. In July, two Power Girls facilitators attended a training session in Johannesburg, equipping them with new tools and approaches to strengthen their work with adolescent girls.

Also, in August, two staff members from the Food Security Project attended a specialised Workshop on Malnutrition in Limpopo, which enhanced their understanding of nutrition-related interventions. Furthermore, in September, the director and the Student Hub Officer engaged in a peer learning visit to two NGOs, where they observed innovative community projects and gathered ideas to inform the development of similar initiatives within our organisation.

Additionally,

- Twelve staff members participated in First Aid First Responder training (April-May), sponsored by Mamas Alliance.
- Our HR/Support Services Manager, Anita Mveke, graduated with a B.A. in Community Development in June.
- The director completed her Post Graduate Diploma in Public Administration in June and has commenced a Master's program in Public Administration.
- Three other staff members are currently pursuing degrees: two Bachelor's Degrees and one Post Graduate Diploma in Education.
- The Cook, Cleaner, and Caretaker had English coaching with Mrs Di Grimmer



Current Staffing Challenges

We currently have only two managers overseeing 34 staff members, including part-time staff. Our Chief Social Worker works part-time (three days per week), which is insufficient for the department's workload. She is assisted by one Social Auxiliary Worker.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

- The Blue House and Soccer Clubhouse benefited from the 24 solar panels installed in 2024
- Awomi Safe House received bathroom upgrades, including casual cleaner employment
- Gardens maintained despite weather challenges
- Monthly grass cutting continued across our 3.8-hectare property
- All facilities are maintained to safety standards with new fire safety equipment in ECD sites

GOVERNANCE

Board Changes

- Our Board Secretary resigned in March
- Our Board Treasurer relocated to another city.
- Pastor Mana also resigned at the end of July
- Three new board members were co-opted during the year to replace the outgoing members.

FINANCIAL NEWS

I am pleased to report that CATCH's finances have been healthy throughout 2025, enabling us to meet every budget need. Moore East London completed our annual financial audit, and the Annual Financial Statement was presented by their representative at our final board meeting of the year.

Budget Adjustments

- The Bambelela programme, not in the original budget, required additional funding to provide meals twice weekly for 425 students in July at the inception of the programme.
- Our proposal to the Department of Social Development for the PEP programme was not approved, resulting in a budget adjustment of R150,000
- Minor adjustments were made to the creche outreach budget

Donor Acknowledgements

We extend heartfelt gratitude to our faithful donors:

- Kinderfonds Mamas (Netherlands) - our primary partner
- Mzamomhle AIDS Project (UK)
- Elegant Living Solutions (Australia)
- KFC ADD HOPE
- National Lottery Commission
- H A Taylor Will Trust
- D T Hudson Trust
- SKG
- Audio Visual Gallery
- The Lunchbox
- Small Projects Foundation
- Individual donors: Jennifer Truebody, Jennifer Mort, and Kerry Raats

Thank you!

PARTNERSHIPS

Our valued partnerships remained strong throughout 2025:

- Kinderfonds Mamas
- Workers of Mother Theresa (Louise Hinsch)
- Christelike Maatskaplike Raad (CMR)
- Masimanyane
- SAPS (with improved collaboration under the new Commander)
- Community Policing Forum
- Ward Councillor and team
- Vanani Farm School
- Mzamowethu Public School
- Department of Education
- Department of Social Development
- Cotlands
- Taking Care of Business (TCB)
- The Lunchbox
- Small Projects Foundation

CHALLENGES AND RISKS

Programme Level

1. Climate Change: Torrential floods are repeatedly ruining gardens and crops
2. Facilitator Shortage: End of Presidential Youth Scheme contracts significantly impacted after-school club capacity.

Governance Level

1. Board Treasurer Departure: Loss of our Chartered Accountant's expertise and difficulty in finding a replacement with similar qualifications
2. Management Capacity: Only two managers for 31 staff members; a part-time Social Worker is insufficient for the workload Management

FUTURE PLANS & VISION

Immediate Priorities

- Rehabilitate the greenhouse and resume sustainable crop production
- Register Awomi Safe House with DSD
- Launch Grade R afternoon club
- Roll out Skills & Vocational Training Centre for out-of-school youth to gain practical, employable skills
- SETA/ QCTO Accreditation

- Adopting Vanani Farm School and assisting with after-school recreational activities
- Expanding into the nearby informal settlements of Thikhinini and Kwelerha

Long-term Vision

- Proper Sports Facilities: construct a dedicated netball court and soccer pitch with changing rooms
- Counselling Room: establish an equipped space for play therapy and mental health support
- Self-Sustainability Initiative: discussions are ongoing with investors regarding a multipurpose hall for conferences/weddings and a private primary school on undeveloped CATCH land to generate sustainable income

CONCLUSION

As I reflect on 2025, I am overwhelmed with gratitude - to God for His provision, to our dedicated staff who pour their hearts into serving Mzamomhle's children and families, to our faithful donors and partners who make our work possible, and to our Board for their guidance and support.

The challenges we faced, particularly the devastating floods and staffing transitions, tested our resilience. Yet through it all, we witnessed transformation: children gaining identity documents for the first time, young people discovering their creative gifts, students achieving academic success, families accessing justice, and our community growing stronger together.

As we look toward 2026, we do so with hope, determination, and unwavering faith that God will continue to sustain and expand this vital work. The precious children of Mzamomhle remain at the heart of everything we do, and they deserve nothing less than our very best.

Delight Omoike

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Managing Director - CATCH Projects