

PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY MEALS ON WHEELS SOUTH AFRICA

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Ntabamhlophe Adventists need a building to bake 'Bread for Life'

Thanks to the American embassy in Pretoria, the Ntabamhlophe Adventist community services Meals on Wheels branch near Estcourt in KwaZulu-Natal has all the ovens and equipment required for a commercial bakery. It just needs a premises to allow the motivated caregivers to bake 1000 loaves a day.

This is the dream of firebrand Meals on Wheels Project Manager Samkelo Mlambo, who has taken personal responsibility for the more than 100 000 people in the Imbabazane region of this very poor part of the province.

This bread will be sold to run the project which provides holistic, integrated community services for HIV infected and affected people in Imbabazane municipality (800 directly including 190 orphaned and vulnerable children). Sam believes fervently that people must be helped so they can help themselves.

"Our various programs include a soup kitchen, feeding scheme, a crèche, a home-based care project, a prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV programme, and five halfway houses, serving 30 children each, spread through the Imbabazane municipality," says Sam.

Mlambo is an absolute live-wire, with boundless energy and passion for what he does.

"We used to prepare 40 000 meals a month but due to the recession we had to cut back to 15 000. Yet the need has not gone away. We are addressing ourselves to agricultural projects to try and raise more money. We are growing yellow maize in partnership with the Department of Agriculture. We are trying to become financially sustainable and not rely on donor input all the time."

"We currently have 250 square meter piece of land fully fenced with borehole and electricity funded by AL-Imdaad foundation International where we are planning to locate the bakery. We need either a building or perhaps containers in which we can house our bakery."

In KwaZulu Natal, where the HIV/AIDS rate is at an overwhelming 40%, Imbabazane has an even higher prevalence rate found in pregnant women, ages 25 to 29 years at 42,6%. Of the 17,445 households in the Meals on Wheels service area, approximately 12,460 live below the poverty line. The unemployment rate within the Imbabazane Municipality is an alarming 89 %.

"We want to thank Cell C Foundation for school uniforms for our orphaned and vulnerable children. Later on we will need a vehicle to help us deliver meals to the halfway houses," says Samkelo.

Meals on Wheels is a charitable organization that provides meals for people too poor or infirm to fend for themselves. You can sponsor a hungry person via SMS – simply SMS the word 'MEAL' to 39055. Your SMS is billed at R15.00.

For further information or for comment, please contact Samkelo Mlambo +2776 - 296 9902.