



Xhora Mouth, Eastern Cape, South Africa

Bulungula College

Providing young people with the support needed to ensure productive vocation paths, not just certificates.



Sakh' iinkhokheli zesizwe ngobuntu

The Bulungula College (BC) is a model for excellent high school and vocational training in an area where there was no option at all to complete schooling and no opportunities for a productive future path. Importantly, the College provides access to all learners without exclusion. Almost all learners at the Bulungula College would have been high school drop-outs. We believe that everyone deserves a chance and that we can solve the problem of chronic unemployment through the development of sustainable livelihoods by working closely with our communities. We ensure that our learners leave the BC groomed for a productive academic and work career.

Background

We are located in a remote rural part of the Mbashe municipality in the Eastern Cape where schools are of the most under-resourced in the country. The Bulungula Incubator is contributing to the solution, in partnership with our community, local government and traditional leadership through our 'Conception-to-Career' programme from health in pregnancy through to the support needed in the job skills stage. At every stage of the programme, we actively seek innovative solutions, appropriate to our remote and rural location that can improve the efficacy of our work. We have had notable success in the early life stages of the programme and have established a leading institution for grades 10-12 and accredited vocational training, applying the latest available technological solutions that can help to bridge the educational gaps in our underserved areas. By filling in this final stage of education we will demonstrate how one of the most remote and underserved communities in the world can change its fortunes in a lifetime.

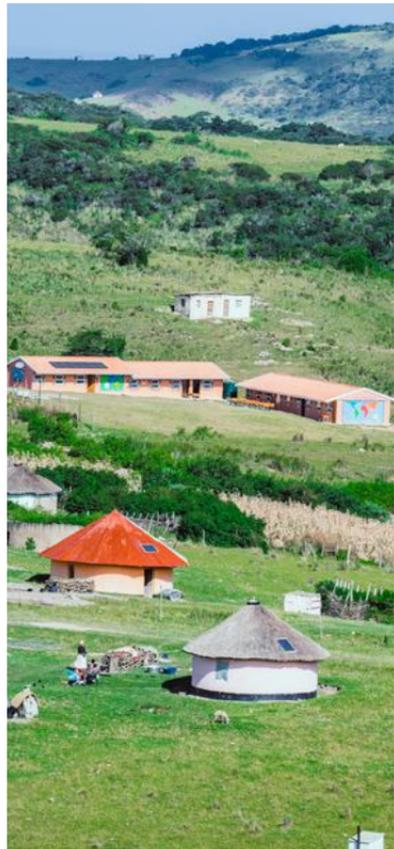


Photo: Bulungula College (center), Folokwe Village, Eastern Cape.

The Bulungula Incubator aims to address the challenges of rural poverty. We design and test the implementation of good rural developmental ideas that contributes to the creation of prosperous and sustainable rural communities. Our programmes have grown to cover a spectrum of interventions in Education, Health, and Sustainable Livelihoods. We work with the community of the Xhora Mouth Administrative Area which is based in the Mbashe municipality on the Wild Coast of the Eastern Cape.

In the last Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) census, the Mbashe municipality was found to be the poorest in the country. Mbashe has 93% unemployment with the bulk of income derived from social grants and migrant labour on platinum mines in Rustenburg; Amandelbult (Anglo Platinum/ Sibanye), Bleskop (Anglo Platinum/ Sibanye), Marikana (Lonmin). As opportunities for employment for our communities on the platinum mines dwindle, the uncertainty of the future for young people deepens, particularly where opportunities for quality schooling are non-existent.

Using data from the surrounding schools in 2015, we found that approximately 95% of the learners from Xhora Mouth Administrative Area do not ever complete Grade 12. There is no functioning scholar transport from the area to any High School or College.



Photo: Bulungula College Grade 10 class, 2022.

Learners who would like to continue beyond Grade 9 have to rent accommodation away from their families and care for themselves, while still young and vulnerable teenagers. In response, the Bulungula Incubator established the Bulungula College High School. Almost every learner studying at the Bulungula College today would have been a High school drop-out.

The College opened its doors in January 2019 with an intake of two academic stream classes, a total of 70 learners in Grade 10. We continue to add grades and classes annually, and our first cohort of learners graduated in 2021. In addition to our academic stream, our Job Skills & Entrepreneurship Programme (JSEP) provides youth in the broader region with vocational training, internships and opportunities.



Our Vision

To be a centre of excellence that fosters holistic, lifelong learning.

Our Mission

To achieve our vision by working creatively as a team and partnering with our community and other stakeholders while always remaining true to our values.

Our Values

- We treat everyone with warmth, respect and dignity.
- We approach challenges with grit and optimism.
- We treat people equally and fairly.

2022 Class Breakdown

- Grade 12: 36 learners
- Grade 11: 55 learners
- Grade 10: 60 learners
- Job Skills Entrepreneurship Programme: 52 learners to date



Academic curriculum

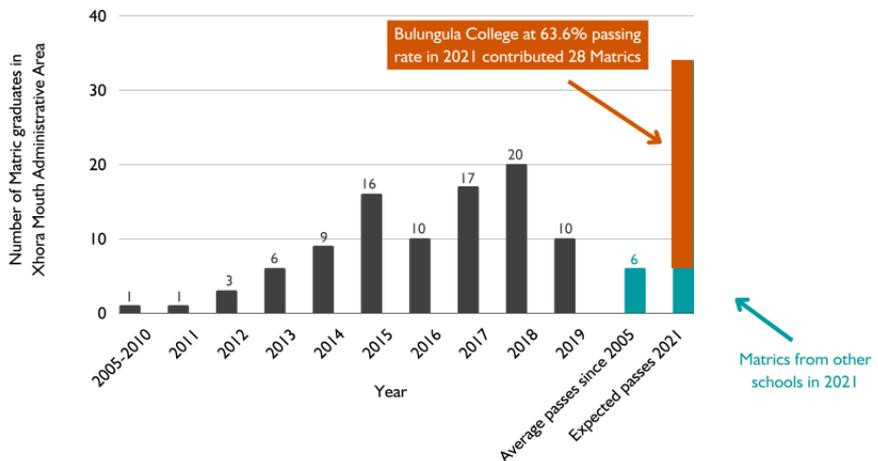
The College curriculum is designed to include traditional academic streams with Physics, Chemistry and Pure Math. The BC values a holistic approach to education, through extra-curricular activities, the College instils the concept of “a healthy mind in a healthy body”.

We have recruited an excellent staff body, and in order to retain our teachers, we offer ongoing development opportunities. We also have an active School Governing Body, which is supported by traditional leaders from our community.

Graduating the most Matrics in the history of our area

Due to the lack of access to quality education, since 2005, an average of 6 people from our community have passed high school each year. In 2021, the Bulungula College graduated its fist class, and we are proud to announce that we contributed 28 Matrics (63% pass rate), the most to ever graduate in a single year from our community.

Half our learners were 20 years or older and had failed multiple years during primary school. Many had given up on education altogether until the opening of the Bulungula College. Only one of the parents of our 28 matriculants had ever completed high school, and the vast majority of parents have never completed primary school. Our learners have persevered and overcome many challenges to get to this point. It is important for us to measure our school's achievement based on our community and unique circumstances, and graduating 28 is a profound accomplishment for our area.



Achieving zero-drop outs and productive vocations for all

It is a policy of the Bulungula College to never turn a young person away due to academic ability. While the Bulungula College Academic Stream enables Matric certificates for those able to achieve it, there were many with gaps in their learning foundations simply too deep to get through. This led us to launch the Bulungula College Job Skills & Entrepreneurship Programme in 2020 for those who had dropped out of school.

In 2022, the JSEP expanded to enrol recently graduated Matrics from the BC who wish to pursue further training, education, and work experience. While receiving a Matric certificate is a significant achievement for learners in our community, we recognise that having this certificate does not guarantee a job. With a 36% national unemployment rate for South Africans who have a Matric qualification, it is essential for us to groom our graduates for the job market.



Photo: JSEP learners during the Social Entrepreneurship Bootcamp facilitated by the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business.

A NIDS-CRAM household survey conducted by UCT found that the drop-out rate in South Africa has tripled since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. This alarming finding emphasises the importance of our JSEP model in providing young people with the support they need to ensure productive vocational paths, not just certificates.

Learnerships and Internships at the JSEP

We have been crafting the JSEP to include accredited courses and skills development that fit within the skill needs of our surrounding areas and the Bulungula Incubator projects and programmes. The model of the JSEP is to develop partnerships that can bring access to relevant accredited courses to remote communities. To this end, we have developed partnerships with Buhle Farmers Academy, Tsiba Ignition Academy and Africa Skills Village for learnerships and apprenticeships.

Accredited courses include Crop Production, Early Childhood Development, Artisanal Skills, Learner's/Driver's Licenses, Digital Literacy, New Venture Creation, Soft Skills, Tourism (guiding, guest experiences, tourist products, homestay businesses) and Business Administration.

Partnerships

The Bulungula College JSEP has been developing and implementing offerings that provide the opportunity for a productive vocation for all. We started with a partnership with the reputable Buhle Farmers Academy in 2020. Buhle Farmers Academy would bring the training expertise and accredited certification processes, and we would be the community-based implementer providing access to those most left out. This first pilot has been very successful: we learned how to assess learning gaps, adapt materials for communities in underserved educational locations, translate materials into the vernacular and create effective remote learning, teaching and monitoring and evaluation processes. We have begun to



Photo: Agriculture Business learner harvesting crops.

understand what the other missing elements might be to ensure a productive future for our youth. We are using these learnings to continue to build and enhance the JSEP.

The projected outcome of the JSEP is a productive path for each of the learners that enter the programme. Now that the Agricultural theoretical and practical course, in partnership with Buhle Farmers Academy, is bedded down, we have developed partnerships with other excellent accredited institutions, namely Tsiba Ignition Academy (TIA) and Africa Skills Village. Through these partnerships, we are expanding into courses for Early Childhood Development (ECD), Community Health Work (CHW) and New Venture Creation. TIA already offers New Venture Creation at a bachelor and NQF4 level. We have found, however, that this is too high a level for our learners to begin at. We have to do the work to adapt materials to an NQF level 2 from which learners can then proceed to higher level, as they bridge their learning gaps.

TSIBA's vision and mission— to challenge the status quo of business education through a values-based approach to teaching and learning in a changing world; investing in purpose-driven humans and emerging businesses that lead to social change— align well with the Bulungula Incubator's values. The TSIBA Ignition Academy is

the ideal partner to offer accredited vocational training at the College to the communities that the Bulungula Incubator serves.

Vocational courses offered on-site at the Bulungula College will be accredited through the TSIBA, enabling learners' recognition, articulation and career advancement.

We are currently developing a partnership with a service provider for access to valuable artisanal skills, including plumbing, electrical work, welding and carpentry. These practical skills are dearly needed but almost impossible to find in our remote rural region. The remote training model of the Bulungula College JSEP makes this possible. Leveraging the YES for YOUTH internships ensures that learners can access real work experience towards their productive careers.

A crucial element in the development of youth towards a productive path in life is the development of self-confidence. We find that this is the most likely reason for them to give up on a potential path. It is essential for them to attain achievements in increments. Therefore we have added essential life tools that they can achieve and make them feel proud. They are given the opportunity to learn essential computer skills and complete their learner and driver's licenses. It is practically impossible to

obtain a driver's license from where we are located. There are few cars, and the nearest driving school is in Mthatha, to which it can take all day to travel. In the JSEP, learners' licenses are studied via an online app. We then help learners go to the city to book and write their exams. Following that, they learn to drive on the school driving vehicle we purchased for this purpose. We also employ a driving teacher. Once they are ready, we help them to book and pass their driving tests. While they are going through this process, we find their self-confidence soars. The achievement of a driving license is so rare in our communities that it is highly prized.

A driving license and the ability to use a computer are helpful, practical skills that move learners along their paths in life and engender deep self-belief simultaneously.



Photo: Driving lesson with JSEP learner.

Strategic plan

Now that we are no longer expanding grades, we are entering into 'phase two' of our school plan. To improve and strengthen our school, we came together as a teaching staff to discuss challenges and strategically plan for our next phase.



Photo: BC Strategic Planning Workshop, 2022.

During our workshop, facilitated by Mariette Visser from ISASA, we revamped our vision, mission, values, and ethos, and set forth an actionable plan to provide the best quality education to our learners that we can.

 Strategic Action Plan

Educated and well-cared for children will carry families out of poverty and contribute to a thriving South Africa in the future.



Photo: Bulungula College grade 12 learner (first ever graduating class) receiving his Matric necktie.

Bulungula College Budget 2022-2024

| School year | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| High School Academic Learners (grades 10, 11, 12) | 150 | 180 | 200 |
| Teachers | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| Human resources (Teaching Staff) | R 1,726,973 | R 1,830,592 | R 1,860,934 |
| Overheads | R 708,358 | R 750,833 | R 765,298 |
| Teacher Accommodation Support | R 67,200 | R 71,400 | R 73,920 |
| Educational Expenses | R 345,395 | R 366,118 | R 372,187 |
| Administration Expenses | R 172,697 | R 183,059 | R 186,093 |
| Ground & Maintenance Expenses | R 51,809 | R 54,918 | R 55,828 |
| Surplus | R 51,809 | R 54,918 | R 55,828 |
| Internet ISP Costs | R 19,448 | R 20,421 | R 21,442 |
| SUBTOTAL | R 2,435,332 | R 2,581,425 | R 2,626,232 |
| COST PER LEARNER | R 16,236 | R 14,341 | R 13,131 |

For further information, contact:



Réjane Woodroffe

Rejane@bulungulaincubator.org

Tel: +27 (47) 577-8908 | Cell: +27 (83) 395-1691

Job Skills & Entrepreneurship Programme Budget 2022-2024

| School year | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Job Skills Entrepreneurship Programme Learners | 90 | 90 | 90 |
| Human resources (Teaching Staff) | R 798,600 | R 878,460 | R 966,306 |
| Programme Manager (full time position) | R 363,000 | R 399,300 | R 439,230 |
| Admin Personnel (fulltime) | R 145,200 | R 159,720 | R 175,692 |
| Course Facilitators & Consultants (part time) | R 174,240 | R 191,664 | R 210,830 |
| Service Providers | R 116,160 | R 127,776 | R 140,554 |
| Overheads | R 148,830 | R 163,713 | R 180,084 |
| Project Consumables | R 72,600 | R 79,860 | R 87,846 |
| Admin & Overheads | R 76,230 | R 83,853 | R 92,238 |
| SUBTOTAL | R 947,430 | R 1,042,173 | R 1,146,390 |
| COST PER LEARNER | R 10,527 | R 11,580 | R 12,738 |

For further information, contact:



Réjane Woodroffe

Rejane@bulungulaincubator.org

Tel: +27 (47) 577-8908 | Cell: +27 (83) 395-1691

Bulungula College & Job Skills & Entrepreneurship Programme Total Running Costs 2022-2024

| School year | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total Learners | 240 | 270 | 290 |
| TOTAL Running Costs (Rand) | R 3,382,762 | R 3,623,598 | R 3,772,622 |
| TOTAL Running Costs (USD) | \$205,016 | \$219,612 | \$228,644 |
| COST PER LEARNER (RAND) | R 14,095 | R 13,421 | R 13,009 |
| COST PER LEARNER (USD) | \$851 | \$811 | \$786 |

For further information, contact:



Réjane Woodroffe

Rejane@bulungulaincubator.org

Tel: +27 (47) 577-8908 | Cell: +27 (83) 395-1691