

September 2026

What's news?

"Hope Is Built by People"



Issue 008

Vol. 002

Dear Friends of Project Hope

September has been a month filled with people. Teachers who keep learning, caregivers who keep creating, schools that keep giving, and ordinary people who notice a need and decide to do something about it.

Much of what happens at Project Hope does not make a big noise. It happens quietly, through a conversation, a visit to the doctor, a bag of food, a handmade gift or a child arriving at school with a smile because someone remembered that something as simple as a new outfit matters.

As we look back over the month, we are reminded again that our work is never really about one programme or one organisation. It is about what happens when people choose to walk alongside one another.

A birthday to remember

Sometimes a birthday arrives after a child has already been through more than they should have had to face.

One of our newest little girls has had a difficult start to life. When she came into our care, she was struggling with painful skin infections and was clearly uncomfortable. We were able to connect her with a local GP, who assessed her and provided the medication she needed. Slowly, we began to see the little girl behind the discomfort. Then she turned three.

There were balloons, icing, singing and a little gift bag. For our team, it was about much more than a birthday party. It was a moment to celebrate how far this little girl had already come.

"Every child deserves to be celebrated."

At Project Hope, we believe in looking at the whole child. Sometimes that means education or nutrition. Sometimes it means a doctor's appointment, a birth certificate or simply noticing that something is not right and finding the person who can help.

Her third birthday was a small celebration, but we were grateful to be there for it.

A Little Bear With a Big Message



Earlier this year we met Mercy at a Cape Town market. Mercy makes beautiful knitted animals and uses her skills to help support her own child. This month she delivered two more little bears to us, and an idea began to take shape.

From 2027, every new child joining Project Hope will receive a little knitted bear, a book and some stationery.

For some children, starting preschool does not come with a new school bag filled with crayons and stationery. We wanted to give each child something that had been chosen especially for them.

"You are loved. You matter. You belong here."

There is something especially meaningful about Mercy making these bears. She is using her own skills to create an income, while another child will receive something made by her hands.

If you would like to be part of this, you can sponsor a little bear for R320. Your donation supports Mercy while giving a child something special to call their own. Please use the reference "Mercy" and let us know if you would like to sponsor a bear for our 2027 collection.

A simple gift, connecting one mother, one child, and one opportunity to another.

First National Bank

Account Holder: ProjectHope South Africa NPC

Branch code: 210835

Account number: 62921432176

Ref: Mercy

The Heritage Day Outfit

One of our little boys had been worrying about Heritage Day. He was afraid he would be the only child at school without something special to wear.

So we took him to Pinetown and allowed him to choose his own outfit. He chose carefully, and when the day arrived, he was ready.

"I think he may have outshone everyone!"

We laughed about it afterwards, but underneath the laughter was something important. The outfit was not really about clothes. It was about giving him the chance to arrive at school feeling proud and excited alongside his friends.

Sometimes dignity looks like a Heritage Day outfit.

Our Little Shop Goes International

One of the most exciting moments this month came when an order landed in our little online Shop of Hope from Europe.

We honestly could not believe it. Our little online shop, which began as a way to create opportunities for mothers and caregivers in the Valley, had already reached another country.

"We never imagined our little Shop of Hope would go international!"

There was something quite special about standing at PostNet with the parcel, carefully packed and ready to begin its journey overseas. Inside were products made by women in our community, each one representing time, skill and a little bit of income for the person who created it.

The journey of that parcel was a long one. The products were made in the Valley, brought to Cape Town, packaged and prepared for their new owners overseas. So many hands were involved before it even reached the post office.

And now we know that a family in Ireland has opened their parcel, which included gifts for several members of the family. We were so excited to hear that they enjoyed the unveiling, and even more excited to know that these little pieces, made by women in our community, are now being worn, admired and enjoyed in Ireland.

For us, that is what the Shop of Hope is about. It is not simply about selling something. It is about creating a way for women to use their skills, earn an income and know that their work is valued, even when the person buying it lives thousands of kilometres away.



www.shopofhope.co.za



A Month Full of Small Celebrations



September also brought fourteen little birthdays, complete with gift bags, icing, balloons and singing.

Zinhle, our Embo Lead, achieved an incredible 95% in her ECD exam and is almost finished making her first beaded bracelet.

Nonto, our Education Manager and KwaNyuswa Lead, passed a government inspection with flying colours and is now waiting for the Department of Health process as she works towards Silver Status registration of her own ECD Centre.

And then there was the less welcome surprise of a stolen water pump at one of our rural ECD sites. Replacing it will cost around R5,000, but as we often say in the Valley, 'n boer maak 'n plan! We will find a way.

There is always something happening. Some days we celebrate. Some days we solve problems. Often, we do both.

Looking Back on September

When we look back, it is difficult to choose one moment that matters most.

The little girl celebrating her third birthday.
The little boy proudly wearing his Heritage Day outfit.
Mercy's knitted bear waiting for the child who will receive it next year.

They are very different stories, but they have something in common. Someone cared enough to take the next step.

"We cannot change everything, but we can always do something."

Project Hope is made up of children, caregivers, teachers, community members, donors, schools, businesses, health professionals and friends who each play a part. None of us can do everything. But together, we can make sure that a child is seen, a caregiver is supported, a teacher is strengthened and an opportunity is not missed.

Thank you for being part of the Project Hope story.

With love,
The Project Hope Team

BANKING DETAILS:

First National Bank (FNB)

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NPC

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