

Transforming the local community

Growing Together in the community - IMPACT story from South Africa (Pretoria)

After many years of rethinking what our firm's focus and impact should be in our community we identified an informal settlement in the Hammanskraal area, 50 Km north of Pretoria called SteveBikoVille where we could make a long lasting difference. The local community leader explained to our CSR ambassadors what their needs and hopes were. We realised that this was where we had to become involved on a longer term basis. We could make an impact that would benefit the entire community.

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We started by identifying the areas of greatest need, which in a community like this, are endless.
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It was soon apparent that young people are a group that often gets over-looked. The young people need to work as soon as they can to support their extended families, and are often not given the opportunity to have a proper education. This became our focus.



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Our first global Growing Together in the community day helped us identify a key focus area. Education.
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Making the right subject and career choices are essential, but very difficult to achieve in under-privileged communities where facilities are stretched and parents mainly lack the education to guide their children.

Our dreams were big, but with team work, help and funding from committed partners, people, the community, and loyal clients that understood our dream, we launched the first Grant Thornton Growing Together in the community day here in South Africa in 2015.

We decided to call it the Grant Thornton Accounting and Maths Expo. We brought together 400 16 - 18 year olds from various schools in the area. We invited the teachers, the school principals and leaders from the community. Speakers from Grant Thornton and one of our co-sponsoring clients shared their success stories, testifying that with the right choices and support, one could dream and live that dream. They testified that obstacles can be overcome, if you

are determined enough to overcome them. Then it was over to expert educationalists who explained which subjects to choose and what to take into account when considering future studies.

We are very fortunate to have received full endorsement from the Department of Education, who has since asked us to partner in more initiatives.

Another objective was to source as many supplies and labour as possible from within the local community. The big winner for the day was the one act play commissioned by us and performed by the local community theatre visually enacting the result of correct or incorrect life choices, subject choices, dedication to studies and the significant impact these can have on your life.

To our surprise, our research concluded that it is not just the under - privileged children that lack correct subject and career guidance, but all children, as parents are often at work for long hours and are very busy. We therefore held a smaller scale event for scholars' from two top Pretoria schools.

Based on independent statistical analysis, we not only reached the attendees on the day, but thousands more within the community and in 2017 we are looking to continue to support this community and build our impact further.



Remember – dream big! A small nudge by someone with a dream, can result in a large impact. If someone else can see and believe in your dream, the opportunities are endless.

Johan Blignaut
Managing partner
Grant Thornton Pretoria



425 students, teachers and principals

Hosted 30 community leaders



Please contact [Johan Blignaut](#) or [Phillipa Symington](#) for further information