

Private sector social investment raises over R3 million in social investment to young girls and women in Tsakane through Aspire Higher Project.

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What started as a co-created idea, has become an example of how partnerships with a purpose can provide a gateway to shift the trajectory of a community's future. Following two years of implementation the winner of the **Aspire Higher Project** was announced at a final judging event. **Imbokodo Launchpad** was awarded £80 000 (approximately R1 500 000) which will go towards scaling the implementation of their project to provide education on sexual and reproductive wellness to young girls in Tsakane township in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The Aspire Higher Project aims to fulfil a vision of girls and young women in sub-Saharan Africa having access to engaging sexual health education through innovation and ideation that delivers a combination of HIV prevention, and sexual and reproductive health services.

Hosted by Centre on African Philanthropy and Social Investment (CAPSI), Gilead Sciences, Reckitt, UNAids and Wits Business School; the final judging event provided the four finalists teams; Aganang Skills Academy, the Gratitude Project, Imbokodo Launchpad and Girllead SA; with the platform to share the successes and lessons that they gained over what was a challenging period of implementation of their ideas. In opening the session, Prof Bhekinkosi Moyo from CAPSI commended the finalists on their resilience to continue with their projects by pivoting to the changing times and making use of the resources available to them. Peter Edwards of Reckitt and Dr Michael Reid of Gilead Sciences were present at the event to express their support to the finalists on behalf of their organisations who were provided the social investment funding for the Aspire Higher Project.

In his first address as the winner of the Aspire Higher Project, Jazzman Simelane from Imbokodo Launchpad, extended a hand of strategic partnership which he expressed as being one of the key success factors. He said "With social development, there is no competition as we are on the same team. Our model shows that we believe in partnerships as what our sponsors have shown us." Jazzman continued, "With this funding, we want to take Imbokodo Launchpad into other townships in South Africa and across Africa. Together we can win the war against HIV/AIDS and other social ills that affect our communities."

The Aspire Higher Project is a collaborative initiative which promises to grow through its body of knowledge, research, education and social investment across Africa.

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The winner of Aspire Higher and founder of Imbokodo Launchpad, Jazzman Simelane and Director of CAPSI, Bhekinkosi Moyo, are available for media interviews on national and regional platforms.