

PHILANI CHILD HEALTH & NUTRITION PROJECT

PRESS RELEASE – Date: 30 November 2006

Good news for Philani's printing mothers

Philani Child Health & Nutrition Project is delighted to announce the receipt of a grant of R20 000 from Christ Church, Constantia. The money has been donated expressly for the purchase of new silkscreen printing equipment for Philani's landmark printing project.

The donation was handed over by representatives of Christ Church, Constantia at Philani's Development Centre in Khayelitsha on Thursday 30 November 2006.

Philani's printing scheme is part of its Employment Programme for mothers of malnourished children in Khayelitsha and other informal settlements outside Cape Town. Unemployed mothers are trained as skilled printers or weavers, enabling them to earn an income and become self-reliant through their craftwork.

The mothers are taught essential drawing skills before learning the art of silk-screen printing. They then use their training to create their own designs for table cloths, aprons, cushion covers, bags and other household items. Outlines are printed in black with colours hand painted. This detailed and precise art results in brightly coloured, dynamic and often socially-aware designs, favourites including a variety of images inspired by labels from domestic goods, scenes of township life, health messages and traditional Xhosa symbols. Products are sold in the craft shop at Philani's Development Centre in Khayelitsha and elsewhere and are highly prized all over the world. Recent commissions include 1000 aprons for a dentists' organization in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Philani's current printing equipment is now in urgent need of replacement, with the mothers having to go to great lengths to prevent quality being compromised. So the gift from Christ Church, Constantia is hugely appreciated. With the advent of improved equipment, the mothers expect to be able to develop their printing achievements even further.

John Richardson, Philani Coordinator at Christ Church, says: 'We are extremely pleased to be able to assist Philani in this way. The NGO's continuing excellent work with women in dire

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circumstances and their malnourished children is a source of inspiration to all who come into contact with Philani. As a vital source of income for some of these mothers, the printing project is not only a wonderfully creative venture, but, it would be true to say, a life saver.'

Philani's Production Manager, Mpathi Gocini, says: 'We cannot thank Christ Church, Constantia enough for their great generosity. We will now be able to buy new equipment and continue to improve the quality of our printed products. The mothers are very happy!'

Christ Church Constantia is a long-term supporter of Philani, regularly donating funds, food and clothing for the benefit of malnourished children and their families.

Commenting on Philani's gratitude to its donors, Nokwanele Mbewu, Outreach Coordinator at the NGO, says: 'Every year Philani's Outreach, Nutrition, Employment and Educare programmes help thousands of mothers and children in Cape Town's informal settlements, but there are many, many more whom we don't reach. With the generous support of donors such as the congregation at Christ Church Constantia, we can not only continue our work, but reach out further and further into the community, where need is greatest.'

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Notes to Editors:

1. Philani is a community-based child health and nutrition organization, operating in many of the poorest informal settlements outside Cape Town. Since 1979, thousands of mothers and malnourished children have been identified and assisted, through a network of community outreach workers and nutrition centers. Philani's employment project is a vital part of the organisation's work, offering destitute mothers education, empowerment and skills training, allowing them to earn an income and become self-reliant. Educare programmes are also provided for their pre-school children.
2. Visitors are welcome at Philani's Development Centre in Phaphani Street, Khayelitsha Site C, Cape Town. The craft shop, selling the project's weavings, printed and beaded products, is open 09h00 to 16h00 Monday to Friday, 09h00 to 13h00 Saturday (closed on public holidays).
3. If you would like to support any aspect of Philani's work, please contact Fiona Burt on philani@telkomsa.net, 021 387 5124 or 083 486 5945. Philani's website is at www.philani.org.za.