

UBUNTU

Newsletter December 2008

In May 2008 you received a newsletter from the Ubuntu project where we informed what's been done throughout the project since the start in May 2005. We now have the honor of announcing that the project is standing on its own self-sufficient, locally funded feet. This means, among other things, that we achieved our goal in making the project independent from international economic aid. In this lies the closure of our coordinating and financial contribution.

We like to use this opportunity to thank everyone for your fantastic support and engagement during these first years of the project. You have all contributed in spreading ubuntu: "embracing goodwill and sharing between people". With your help and support we together managed to improve the social and economical situation for young inhabitants in townships surrounding Queenstown. The Ubuntu project makes a difference, provides new opportunities and strengthens individuals and local communities in South Africa.



We are incredible proud of what the project has achieved in cooperation with local resources in South Africa. We firmly believe that the project is sustainable and that it will continue to blossom. In more than three years the local participants gained experience and competence regarding project managing, marketing, analysis, strategy, accounting and cooperation. This makes them highly qualified to continue on their own. And it's with great joy we witness the progress of the project also after Hilde Maries departure from South Africa June of 2008.

The last two years Hilde Marie has operated as a local coordinator in South Africa. Nina has been international coordinator primarily focusing on accounting, while in close dialog with Hilde Marie and updating you all in Norway. Even though we've now pulled out and are no longer active within the project we'll still be getting updates both from the project and other local partners in Queenstown. Our webpage will be updated one last time within short time. After this the project will form its own page.

We've come to the conclusion that it's natural to close down the export of soaps to Norway. Both due to the fact that it was a refinancing strategy no longer needed, and higher import expenses given that we're no longer part of the production process. If any of you wish to continue importing/buying Ubuntu products, or wish to contact the

project directly for other information, feel free to mail them at ubuntusoap@gmail.com.

The soaps can still be purchased through private persons both in Oslo, Copenhagen and Kristiansand. For more information, contact Nina in Oslo (phone: + 47 97 64 50 63)

We have had the honor of experiencing three amazing, challenging and educating years together with the Ubuntu-crew. In spite of all the frustrations from time to time we definitely would do it all over again! 😊

Once more, we are so grateful for all of your contributions and support that helped us realize our dream of expanding the Ubuntu project. You have truly showed us the meaning of Ubuntu – embracing goodwill and sharing between people.

News from the Ubuntu project in Queenstown, South Africa

There have been many positive surprises for the project since May 2008, and many of the frustrations aired in the last update reached a solution within Hilde Maries last six weeks in Queenstown. It has been amazing to be a part of these surprises and a good old breakthrough with the Ubuntu-crew! Although, for Hilde Marie it of course made it even more bittersweet to pack her things and head north.

The project lives on

The stick has now been passed to Andile Hoho. He will be working full time in the store and be in charge of the daily business. Alongside him his wife Thumeka Msheweshwe now has the title assisting daily manager.

In addition to the personnel in the store we also have the pleasure of benefitting from Basil Wormalds experience. He is a retired chemical engineer and has agreed to assist in developing the products and ordering of raw materials. He has showed a phenomenal dedication to the project and we are grateful that the cooperation between him and the rest of the project is on a daily basis.

As mentioned in previous updates the project is under the protective wing of the Chamber of Business and members of this organization – businessmen like Ken Clark, Hugh Wormald and Mark Wilson – are all assisting the further development and daily business of the project. As a result of this commitment Mark Wilson and Andile Hoho meet every Friday to go through sales and expenses for the Ubuntu store.

Another happy thought is the fact that we've got the store lease-free for one more year! 😊

Packaging and bar codes

As some of you might remember from the last update there were quite a few frustrations regarding ordering of packaging for both new and old Ubuntu products. After months of patients and a handful of excuses from the supplier we finally received ten thousand folds of bottles and jars. At last the Ubuntu project had expanded financially to the point where we could order the packaging from a large company in Johannesburg, The Rep. Costs per unit dropped almost 15% due to ordering large quantities. This was a day of joy in the Ubuntu store and our product repertoire is as follows:

- Soaps (100g/25g)
- Body Lotion (250ml/35ml)
- Body Butter (250ml)
- Shower soap (250ml/35 ml)
- Lip Balm (10ml)
- Massage oil (150ml)
- Bathing salt (250ml)
- Shampoo (250ml/35ml)



The Products are produced with the following essential oils:

Lavender, Tea Tree, Geranium, Rooibos and Orange, Rosmarin, Eucalyptus, Ylang ylang, Cinnamon, Peppermint and Rose.

As you can see we've now evolved our range of Ubuntu-products and implemented other essential oils. We've produced a new range of smaller products assigned to hotels and Bed&Breakfast. Our products are also found in containers up till 5 liters – to meet environmental requests for those who wish to use dispensers in their B&B/hotel room.

Bar codes on all Ubuntu products have been a long time wish that we've put on hold since they've been very expensive. After some negotiation a local business man, Ken Clark, agreed to sign over 25 bar codes and put them under the Ubuntu project. Ken runs the local dairy and brewery, and now he's also one of Ubuntu's beneficiaries in Queenstown. The bar codes opened up an entire new market for Ubuntu and as a result we can sell much larger quantities to chain stores and supermarkets.

The Osner Group:

Last time we introduced you to The Osner Group, a group of hotels under the worldwide hotel chain Kat Leisure. Kat Leisure owns hotels all over South Africa and thirteen of these are run by The Osner Group. Coming to an agreement of supplying these hotels with our soaps, shampoos, shower soap and body lotion has been quite the goal for us. The negotiation to make this started already back in November 2007. After changing size, content and price on our products we finally signed an agreement in May 2008. As a result our first order of 6000 soaps à 25gr, wrapped in special designed Ubuntu boxes, came in. The Ubuntu project continuously supplies four of The Osner Groups hotels and management are positive to expand this to several hotels when we've proven ourselves as a reliable business partner delivering

both quantity and quality. The 25gr soaps are delivered without original Ubuntu packaging we designed a brochure with information about the project, and it included in every hotel room where the visitors find our soaps in their bathroom. This is a breakthrough of great magnitude for a project that came to life in a small church in the township only three years ago!

Children- and Youth projects:

By now there are two children- and youth projects (ASCP's) run on a daily basis by the Ubuntu project, and a third is on the rise. The project managers in these three SFO's are now also starting to get paid for their effort of running these projects. They receive 1000 Rand (650 kr) every month through the Ubuntu project.

Thumeka Mshweshwe runs her project on Van Coller P&P School, in addition to a part time job in the Ubuntu store. After numerous challenges we finally managed collaborating with the school. Thumeka now has her own classroom to run the project in.



Ntombekaya Tonyela, who's been involved in the Ubuntu project from the start, now has a degree as primary school teacher and runs her project in Nquanga P&P School. Both Thumeka and Ntombekaya take care of 30-40 students every day. They try to vary by taking in different children on different days. The demand for SFO's is significantly higher than existing projects.

Due to Andile Hoho responsibility as daily manager of the Ubuntu store he can no longer run his project Thembile. It's to be handed over to a good friend of Andile as soon as possible.

Already introduced Ken Clark also agreed to provide our children- and youth projects



with food and beverage. This includes milk, juice, yoghurt, butter and mineral water – all merchandise with slightly erroneous packaging causing it not to be put out for sale. The local bakery, Star Bakery, run by Tim Brittain also wanted to contribute and now supply the projects with fresh bread. The fact that we can offer the children some nutritious food and drinks has huge impact. It might be the only thing these children get to eat throughout their school day.

In previous newsletters we've presented the cooperation between Ubuntu and the Chamber of Business, and head of the organization Mark Wilson. Mark is the owner of General Motors (GM) Toyota department store in Queenstown. He is also a board

member in GM's new board for child care projects. The idea is that a certain percentage of the sales amount per car soled in South Africa is to be dedicated to orphanage, projects or schools in local communities. The Ubuntu project has applied for a children- and youth center we dream of building in the Mlungisi township. The members of the board promised to come and conduct a preliminary look in the fall of 2008. We can only hope that the financial difficulties GM is experiencing these days won't cause too much damage and that the children of Mlungisi get to experience a child care center of their own within 2010. That would have been extraordinary! ☺

All the best;

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If any of you are interested in reading more about the Ubuntu project Nina's masters "*Ownership in Small Scale Organizations supported by Foreign Aid*" has now been published. It can be found on Amazon.com and Bokkilden.no