

## What is Hlokomela?

Hlokomela is an award winning HIV and AIDS educational and treatment programme targeting workers, including foreign migrants, in the agriculture, nature conservation and tourism sectors in Hoedspruit, Limpopo and in Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga. The programme aims to reduce HIV vulnerability through peer education, raising of awareness, prevention and treatment. The project has been running successfully for the past 13 years and is currently rolled out on 72 sub project sites. An estimated 30 000 people are reached annually through the activities of the programme.

Hlokomela’s key governmental and international partners include the National Department of Health, the Limpopo Department of Health, Limpopo Department of Agriculture, Limpopo Department of Social Development, the South African Police Service, Networking HIV,AIDS Community Of South Africa (NACOSA), President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Global Fund, Avon Fund, Dis-Chem Foundation, National Lotteries Commission, Discovery Fund, Adcock Ingram Healthcare, Tshemba Foundation, Vital Foundation, HCI Foundation, Maruleng Municipality and farmers.

### Vision

A culture of caring that empowers all.

### Mission

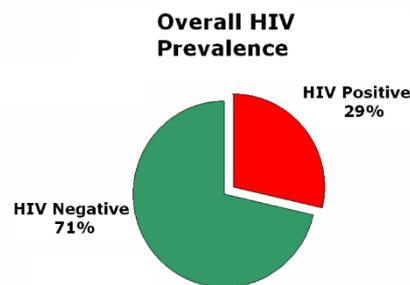
To provide quality, all-inclusive health care to everyone in the Kruger2Canyons Biosphere Region.

### Where does Hlokomela work?

Hlokomela’s geographical focus is the Hoedspruit and surrounding communities in the Maruleng Municipality, Mopani District in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The Mopani District, adjacent to Kruger National Park, is predominantly a fruit and game farming area with a large population of seasonal and migrant workers. Hlokomela also works in Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province. This area is mostly residential with government being one of the most prominent employers.

### How serious is the local HIV epidemic?

Research conducted in January 2008 on 10 farms in the Hoedspruit area found that there was a serious HIV epidemic and that workers are highly vulnerable to HIV infection. Researchers found that 29% of workers in the community were infected with HIV, a rate of HIV prevalence that was considerably higher than that for the general population of Limpopo Province. The study found that young farm workers, especially unmarried women, young women, women who live away from the farms on which they work, were especially vulnerable to HIV infection. Moreover, 60% of all employees and 53% of HIV positive employees did not know their HIV status, while a high proportion of employees reported never using a condom. This research builds on earlier studies that also revealed alarming levels of unsafe sexual behaviour among farm workers.



Hlokomela is however getting closer and closer to reaching **909090**, the UN’s ambitious treatment target to help end the AIDS epidemic. By 2020, **90%** of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status. By 2020, **90%** of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy. By 2020, **90%** of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression. During 2018 the National Institute for Occupational Health will conduct an evaluation study in Limpopo through a survey of the knowledge, attitudes, practices and HIV prevalence among farm workers. The results of this study will be important to guide our future activities by highlighting the impact Hlokomela has had over the past 10 years.

### Whom does Hlokomela benefit?

Farms in the Mopani District not only employ permanent workers, but also a large number of seasonal workers during picking seasons. Many of these seasonal workers are migrants from other areas of South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere in Southern Africa. Hlokomela currently provides services to workers and their families on 72 sub project sites in the Hoedspruit community, as well as to a number of employees on private nature reserves adjacent to the Kruger National Park. An estimated 30 000 farm workers and their families benefit directly from Hlokomela services. Each month, Hlokomela helps approximately 3 600 clients access HIV Testing Services (HTS), and helps 1000 people living with HIV receive antiretroviral therapy (ART) at three Wellness Clinic sites and 7 mobile sites (Hlokomela, Bavaria, Richmond, Klaserie Private Nature Reserve, Ngala, Thornybush, Waterside, South African Wildlife College, Singita Lebombo and Phelwana). Hlokomela's public awareness campaigns provide information about HIV and AIDS to the entire community.

### What does Hlokomela do?

Hlokomela seeks to contribute to the reduction of HIV prevalence and the impact of AIDS among farm workers and their families in part by:

- Working with farm management to assist in developing a healthier work environment, and to develop and implement workplace HIV and AIDS policies and programmes;
- Providing peer education;
- Providing Primary Health Care by training and mentoring workers as caregivers (Nompilos);
- Sensitising, training, and mentoring male role models with the aim of addressing issues such as Gender Based Violence, transactional sex, and poor health-seeking behaviour in men;
- Running a Victim Empowerment Project (VEP) that addresses issues such as domestic violence.
- Developing and implementing an integrated Social Change Communication programme, such as billboards, pamphlets and other materials, to promote behavioural change to reduce high-risk behaviour;
- Organising and implementing recreational programmes to increase social participation and improve the quality of workers' and their families' lives;
- Establishing and running wellness clinics to provide information, condoms, and health care services and referrals, including HTS and ART, to workers and their families;
- Offering pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to sex workers in addition to other HIV preventative measures.
- Improving the nutrition of sick workers by monitoring their nutritional status and giving them food donated by farmers;
- Growing and selling herbs and spekboom (*Portulacaria afra*) as well as running a charity second hand clothing shop and sewing project for income generation;
- Organising and running social interest tours to a farm crèche, Hlokomela Herb Garden and Hlokomela Clinic to raise additional funds for the organisation;
- A wellness programme to provide health services to mining-sector employees, sex workers, truckers and general community members at Hlokomela Clinic;
- Running a dedicated Women's Clinic that offers cervical cancer prevention through which nurses detect early signs of the disease and then treat malignant cells with cryotherapy. The Women's Clinic also offers ultrasound screening for breast cancer.
- Offer trauma debriefing to staff and patients through Trauma Release Exercises (TRE), offered at Hlokomela and in the communities by fully trained TRE facilitators.

### What do people think about Hlokomela?

1. Hlokomela was awarded the **Silver Prestigious Impumelelo Innovation Award 2008 and a Star reward 2010** that recognizes innovations in government and public-private partnerships that enhance the quality of life of poor communities and address key developmental issues of national concern.
2. Hlokomela showcased at the XVII International AIDS Conference in Mexico City in 2008, XVIII Conference in Vienna, 2010 and the 2012 conference in Washington DC. Hlokomela's presentation, "Farm Workers Caring for Each Other in Hoedspruit, South Africa: An Integrated Approach to Preventing and Addressing HIV on Commercial

Farms,” raised awareness about the HIV and AIDS epidemic in Limpopo and provided information about the project. In 2014 Hlokomela attended the XX International AIDS Conference in Melbourne, Australia. At the **21<sup>st</sup> International AIDS Conference (Durban) in 2016**, Christine du Preez, the HTT Director, presented a poster on behalf of The Sarraounia Public Health Trust (for Discovery Fund) titled: “Employer attitudes and practices to the provision of HIV and TB services to migrant farm workers in Limpopo and Mpumalanga”. In 2017 Hlokomela had an oral and a poster presentation at the SA AIDS Conference in Durban. In 2018 Hlokomela presented two posters at the 22<sup>nd</sup> International AIDS Conference in Amsterdam, the Netherlands on cervical cancer screening.

3. Hlokomela was nominated by the Maruleng Municipality as the **Best Non-Profit Organisation in the Mopani District**. On 22 August 2008 Hlokomela brought “The Best Non-Profit Organisation” award back to Hoedspruit.
4. Winners of the “**Investing in the Future**” **Mail and Guardian award 2009** recognizing individuals, corporations and NGO’s who have made significant contributions addressing current social, economic and political issues impacting Southern Africa by providing positive alternative for the future.
5. Christine du Preez, Director of Hlokomela, was a finalist for the individual category “**The Southern Africa Trust, and Mail and Guardian 2008 Drivers of change-Investing In the future**”.
6. In 2014, Christine du Preez, Director of Hlokomela, was the winner of **SA’s Most Influential Women in Civil Society Organisations & Related Services**.
7. Christine du Preez, Director of Hlokomela, was elected as an **Ashoka Fellow** in 2014. Christine is providing migrant and residential farm workers in rural areas in South Africa with a set of on-site integrated health solutions, especially related to HIV/AIDS, by employing a peer-to-peer caregiving structure that reinforces behaviour change towards a positive lifestyle.
8. The HTT Director, Christine du Preez, won an award for the **PPS Professional Women of the Year 2014**. This is in recognition of the community work she does and her commitments to create employment for the community.
9. Angie Rowles, then manager of the Hlokomela Herb Garden was nominated by Dept. of Agriculture as the **Best Female Farming Entrepreneur** of the Year and Amina Nkgogo as the **Best Farm Worker** of the year 2014 for Maruleng Municipality, Mopani District.
10. On 9 May 2015 Christine du Preez, Director of Hoedspruit Training Trust (Hlokomela) received a **Recognition Award** in London at the **Women4Africa Awards UK 2015**. This award, in the category International Community Workers Recognition, recognises Christine’s outstanding contributions/achievements.
11. **Hlokomela in the news:** In 2015 Discovery Fund made a mini documentary of the Hlokomela project. The video, titled “Sprawling farm clinics winning the war on HIV/AIDS in Limpopo” is available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SX62J-00S6U> . For World Aids Day on 1 December 2015, eNCA News featured Hlokomela Clinic. The video “Hlokomela Aids treatment hub fights HIV” is available on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BXI0KKsNVQ> . On 1 July 2017 Beautiful News did a feature on Christine du Preez and Hlokomela, have a look at <http://beautifulnews.news24.com/Beautiful-News/bringing-dignity-back-to-our-farming-communities-20170627> . On 8 April 2018 Kwêla, a programme kykNET, featured an insert about Christine du Preez and Hlokomela.

**For more information contact Hlokomela on 082 560 0248 or go to: [www.hlokomela.org.za](http://www.hlokomela.org.za)**