

Khulisa founder takes gold at UK South African Chamber of Commerce Awards

Founder and MD of Khulisa Social Solutions Lesley Ann van Selm was recently named the Gold Award winner in the Play Your Part category of the UK South African Chamber of Commerce Awards.



Lesley Ann van Selm, founder and MD, Khulisa Social Solutions

Since the inception of the organisation 21 years ago, Khulisa has worked for social justice throughout South Africa at grassroots level through engagement with marginalised communities, gaining an understanding of local needs and how best capacity can be built through multi-stakeholder engagement to leverage wide-scale change and a measurable impact.

Programmes and partnerships

Khulisa UK has been operational for the past 11 years, rendering 'Proudly South African' programmes which have had a significant impact on a variety of communities throughout the UK. Khulisa Australia was registered last year and is currently developing programmes addressing the needs within the youth justice system through a variety of South African-developed interventions.

Khulisa's HIV/AIDS Prison Education programmes, developed over a period of ten years, are currently running in 14 SADC countries.

Through a recently established partnership with the Thuli Madonsela Foundation, Khulisa aims to deal with social injustice through leveraging the support of strategically aligned investors in community ecosystems where, through a collaborative approach, complex problems can be addressed whilst simultaneously tackling the causal factors of complex social problems from a systemic point of view.

One of Khulisa's most effective programmes is Streetscapes located in Cape Town which has been running for the past four years, addressing the fundamental needs of the homeless. Khulisa, alongside various partners, has been successful in placing 66% of the street people in the CT CBD into jobs mainly in the arena of micro-enterprises and jobs offered through public works and other such programmes.

Addressing the community-identified needs

Said Van Selm upon receipt of the award: "The sense of hopelessness prevailing over our country can be combatted. The secret lies in addressing the community-identified needs through multiple partnerships. Only by reaching a critical mass will we ever effect wide-scale change. The time for us to do things differently is now – the solution lies in the hands of each and every one of us."

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