



▶ Case Study: Muldersdrift Home Trust Foundation (Ethemba lethu)



Type of Organisation

Non Profit Company



Founder

Molefi Sebilo (Chairperson)



Employees/Beneficiaries

250 families



Aim of the organisation

The establishment of the Muldersdrift Home Trust Foundation not only helped a community to organize its efforts and save money to buy their own land and build homes, it is now a thriving township where community development remains central to the ambitions of the Trust.



Location

Muldersdrift, Gauteng



Website/contact details

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ethemba lethu%20Phase%201/566975126754571/>

▶ Ethemba lethu: Mobilizing hope and determination to own homes

The story of Ethemba lethu (meaning “Our Hope”), a peri-urban suburb 27 km north-west of South Africa’s economic hub of Johannesburg, is a story of patience, perseverance and tenacity and starts in 1996 with the establishment of the Muldersdrift Home Trust Foundation (MHTF). At that time the area was still considered rural and the black communities that lived there mostly found menial work and lived on land owned by white farmers.

In the mid-1990s, Molefi Sebilo, a community leader and long-time resident of the area was motivated by the widespread tenure insecurity and poor living conditions of farm workers and farm dwellers in Muldersdrift, and began to organize families into a housing association.

Altogether, 250 families banded together to start a savings scheme and make their dream of owning their own land and homes a reality. Members made fixed monthly contributions and by 1997 the Trust had saved R125,000 – enough to make their first purchase. But it took more than a decade of cancelled sale agreements, wrongful arrests, being sued, and a court case in which they were paid R250,000 not to move into a “white” area before the MHTF approached the Mogale City Municipality and entered into a land availability agreement to have the site declared a township.



The land was purchased outright and with the new-found support of the municipality and local government the proper infrastructure was installed for houses to be built. Altogether, 150 houses were built and inhabited in Phase 1.

This was just the starting point for this determined community, which continues to contribute fees for infrastructure development beyond what the municipality will provide. The municipality funds basic infrastructure and construction of the houses, while the community has already built a taxi rank, park, library centre and church as part of Phase 2. Planned, but yet to be built, are 150 more houses, a community centre, enterprise development site, school and sports complex.

The development is hailed as a success and a community that once lived in fear of homelessness now not only has security of tenure but a thriving township. Despite the fact that the land acquisition costs are long paid for, the community is determined to remain self-sufficient and sustainable. By leading the way and partnering with government they have been able to build on their hope for a better life for future generations.

Additional reading and information

[A Place to Call Home for Ethembaletu Residents](#)

[In Search of Land and Housing in the New South Africa](#)

For more information on the SSE go to www.socialeconomypolicy.org

or visit
www.ilo.org/coop
www.thedtic.gov.za
www.idc.co.za