

Amava
OLUNTU



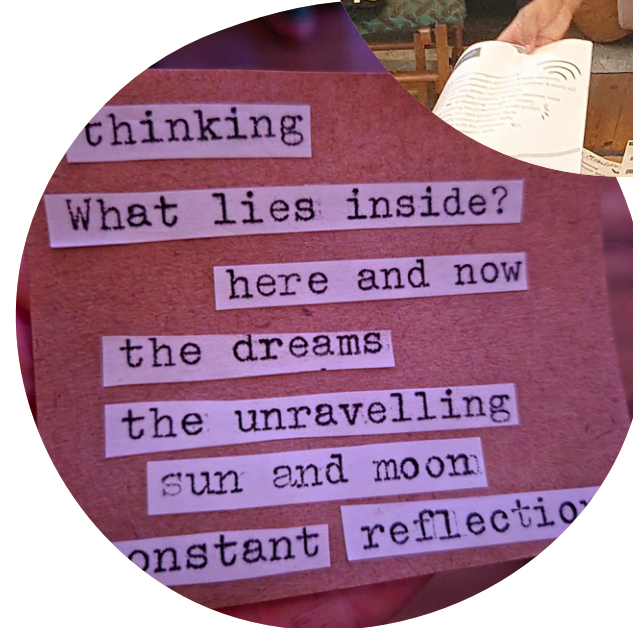
Annual Report

March 2024 - Feb 2025

Reflections

While it felt like the world fell apart around us, it seemed strange not to leap into action, but in response to the devastation, we committed ourselves to practicing the skills required to rebuild. We slowed down, we looked inward, we reflected on where we wanted to go and how we would get there, we practiced listening, we practiced patience. Still, we wait, and while we wait we gather our energy for what is to come.

Part of the journey has been moving towards a change in our leadership. As I stepped backwards to make room for someone to step forwards, Zaid Philander has been walking towards this role. In October last year he joined the board, and over the course of the year we have been collaborating on projects and getting to know each others motivations and ways of working. We are all very excited for the fresh vision and enthusiasm he brings with him, and look forward to him growing into this role.



THERESA WIGLEY
FOUNDING DIRECTOR

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Who We Are

Amava Oluntu was founded in 2018 in response to the urgent need for learning spaces outside of the formal education system that prepare us for sustainable livelihoods.

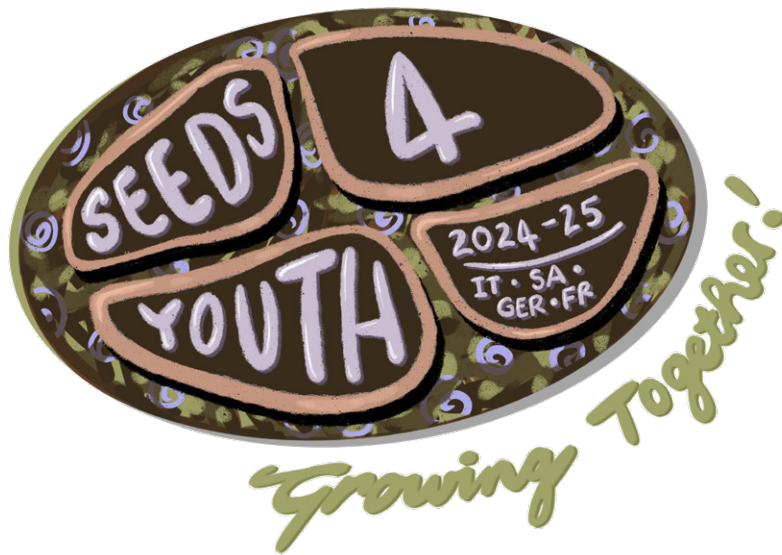
Amava is isiXhosa and means “*wisdom of the people*”. We create spaces for people to come together to build community through co-learning.

Vision:

Diverse, just, and resilient communities where youth engage with their full potential.

Mission:

We nurture connection between youth and existing resources within the community.



Seeds4Youth

Learning through sharing best practices

This Seeds4Youth project has given four different organisations from four different countries, the opportunity to host and be hosted, to share learnings and methods and hopes and aspirations and challenges and successes and failures. Each of us works within our home ground to create spaces of opportunity for migrant and displaced youth with entrepreneurial visions to access networks, knowledge and resources.

In June 2024 we kicked off the exchange with our first visit to Italy where we were hosted by Il gusto del mondo and Eufemia in Torino. Here the focus was on food and we were struck by many of the similarities between our experiences of running community kitchens. It relieved us somewhat, that our challenges at home weren't unique to us. The core issue across the board being the sustainability of something that runs as a social service on volunteer time but actually has real hard costs involved. We spent much time discussing how we can move these models more towards businesses whose profits sustain the service to the community.

In October 2024, we had the pleasure of hosting the group in Muizenberg. We had a very full programme aimed at allowing the group to experience the vast range of lived realities across the divides of South Africa, as well as giving them a sense of the work we do on a local level. As usual, it spanned the full spectrum of all of the emotions that left everyone deeply moved and largely unable to articulate and slowly over time those learnings have threaded their way into conversation and writing.

Torino, Italy, June 2024



Cape Town, South Africa, October 2024





VRYGROND PEACE GARDEN

NATURE • NURTURE • NUTRITION

Vrygrond Peace Garden

Nurturing Sustainability, Unity, and Learning

Remembering the intentions for creating Vrygrond Peace Garden: the impulse was to create a place of safety for children, youth and those who care for them that is available after hours. Trauma doesn't only happen between 9 and 5 and for the most vulnerable, it is important to have a space to go to when everything else is closed. Secondly, bringing people together to deepen their connection with the earth and its resources. There is unity to be found in the cultivation of a garden connected to the humble act of sharing a meal. Finally, creating space for ideas and thoughts to grow wild like vines.

The children, youth and carers continue to return to the garden, excited to be part of activities because this garden has become more than just a place of play and learning, it has become a beacon of hope and change, a place to digest what is happening in one's life and an opportunity to breathe. Seeing the positive impact the space has on those who use it urged us to expand from 1 location to 3.

What we give each child or young person using our space is a time for growing together, where they can be an active agent in everything they give and receive. We offer an opportunity to be heard and to be seen that translates into their lives beyond the garden gates. Our hope is that inspiring agency in these young people activates them to feel empowered enough to effect the change they wish to see in the world.

We aim to create a council spearheaded by these young people to help us to further develop activities and programmes directed primarily by what they wish to see and experience in the space, developing a sense of personal responsibility and pride in the designation of a space of real belonging and agency.





Youth Visions in a Changing Climate

With Centre for Sustainability Transitions (CST), Beach Coop, CareCreative, HC360Crew and Global Resilience Partnership.

The project entails engaging with youth communities through a series of immersive and creative workshops which involve art-based processes, beach and urban waterway cleanups and a participatory mural development. Our themes have focussed on experiences in nature, creativity, diversity, exchange, science, culture & public art, all whilst creatively surfacing visions for the future. After a two year journey of participatory 'walk'shops and activism, we consolidated our imaginings into public space at the the Three Anchor Bay slipway.

We are in the process of securing further funds to update our Seapoint mural as well as to run more workshops and keep building the collaborations and diversity of partners & participants of this exciting project.

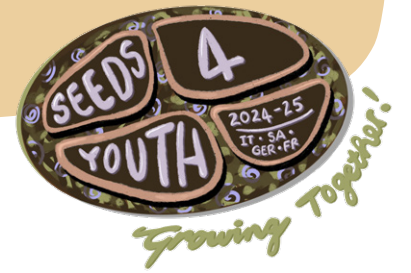
See more here.

Workshops & Events



Jar Jamming Workshop

Inspired by what we learnt and practiced in Italy, this activity aimed to educate young people on reducing food waste by transforming commonly discarded ingredients into delicious, usable products. By exploring creative ways to repurpose food scraps, participants gained practical skills that support sustainability and open doors to small business opportunities in food production. Hosted by The Vrygrond Peace Garden, the workshop encouraged resourcefulness, showing how simple changes in perception and practice can have a meaningful impact. The workshop planted seeds in the minds of some of the youths who participated, who now exploring starting up an enterprise of their own around this concept.





Embroidery Project

37 participants, including six art therapy students and parents of children who are not in school participated in an embroidery project that combined creativity with reflection on heritage. The artworks, stitched individual marks onto panels designed by Dylan McGary, explored themes of colonialism, history, and reimagined spaces within the Muizenberg area. These pieces will feature in a collective exhibition, celebrating the power of art to tell diverse stories and the completed artwork will be installed at Folk Cafe in St. James. The project also included discussions about the historical context of the designs, deepening participants' understanding of cultural heritage.



Oluntu Online

Turning Passion to Profit was a transformative project (funded by City of Cape Town, Grants in Aid), aimed at empowering youth through creative workshops, providing them with the skills to learn traditional methods of crafting products, and enabling them to turn these products into sustainable small businesses. By blending tradition with entrepreneurship, our initiative engaged and upskilled young individuals, with the goal of economic independence, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting community development. Some examples of the workshops that took place include:

Bag-making workshop: introduced 22 youth to sewing and embroidery techniques, equipping them with practical skills and entrepreneurial potential. Participants explored innovative ways to repurpose everyday materials, discovering the power of resourcefulness and sustainability. The workshop served as a foundation for building self reliance, empowering the youth to see traditional skills as a gateway to economic opportunity.

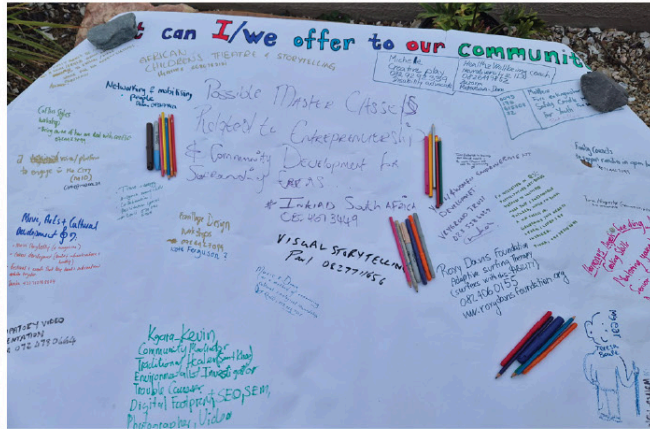
Doll-making workshop: brought together 12 youth in an inspiring environment where they crafted handmade toys. This workshop aligned with our commitment to sustainable business education, highlighting how creativity and craftsmanship can be channels for generating meaningful income. These hands-on activities not only provided participants with valuable techniques but also inspired them to consider the broader impact of their work on community and culture. The workshops exemplify Oluntu Online's vision of turning passion into profit, enabling young people to shape their futures with confidence and ingenuity.

Dynamic pop-up emporium: established a space at Groot Constantia that attracted daily foot traffic ranging from 50 to 100 people, creating a lively atmosphere for participants and visitors alike. Within this environment, participants had the opportunity to showcase and sell their handcrafted products, allowing them to display their unique talents and also connect with potential customers.



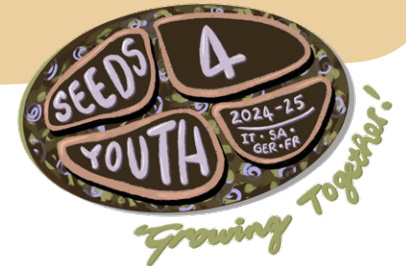
Cape Town Opera

Twelve youth attended a Cape Town Opera performance, an experience that expanded their cultural horizons and deepened their appreciation for the arts. For many, it was their first encounter with opera, a chance to witness the power of live classical performance and its ability to convey complex emotions and stories. Following the performance, participants engaged in a discussion session, reflecting on the themes presented and their relevance to their personal lives and communities. These conversations provided a platform for exploring the intersection of art, identity, and societal issues, further enriching their understanding and appreciation of the medium.



Networking Event

Hosted by Muiz Community Kitchen, organisations from Muizenberg and Vrygrond working with youth gathered to meet and share their work and challenges and share a meal. Again we were reminded how powerful these simple gatherings that create connection between us are. There are so many overlaps between us all and the work that we each do, which creates so much potential for collaboration and support of each other's processes.



Fiscal Hosting

One of the inspirations for creating an organisation, was the multitude of incredible projects that existed within our community, and we wanted to be able to offer the structures required for people to run their projects without each project having to do the administration of starting an organisation and keeping it compliant.

For this reason, we offer the service of fiscal hosting, which means that we run the financial administration for projects (with clearly defined outlines and budgets) that are working towards the same vision and mission with shared values, thereby giving them the opportunity to apply for funding that requires a registered entity and audited books.

Muiz Kitchen

Towards the end of 2024, our official relationship with the Muiz Kitchen came to an end. We had been playing the role of fiscal host since the point the kitchen moved from serving free meals as a Covid response, to serving paid meals as a sustainable response to the need for affordable nutritious meals for everyone.

While we worked closely alongside each other, the Kitchen has always operated as its own independent entity. Last year it started becoming very apparent that the model was not sustaining financially, which after many months of hoping it would improve, eventually brought us to all sit down at a table and question these things. Times had now changed, circumstances shifted and the original players within the Muiz Kitchen Team had begun new journeys.

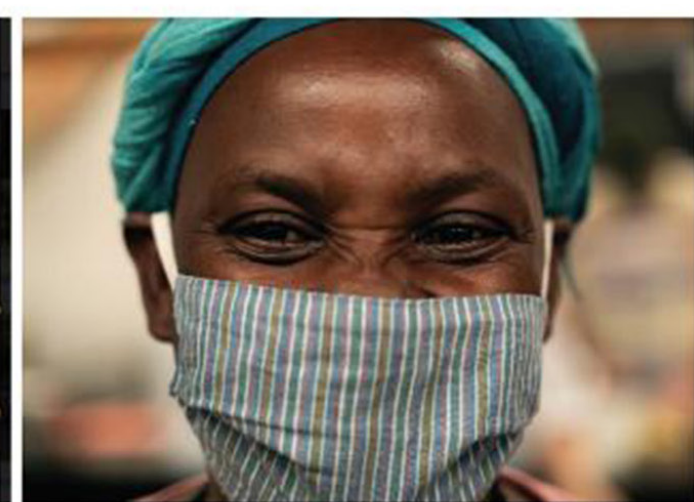
This led to the decision that it was time for the present kitchen team to shift its model from service to community towards self-sustaining business that could generate enough income to cover its running costs and still continue to provide nutritious affordable meals to the community. And so they decided it was time to register an entity of their own through which to do this. Dave Romero offered to support the business strategy to get them to the point of self-sustaining, alongside the Kitchen seeking additional funding for the incredible work being done in offering a safe and supported space of rehabilitation and job readiness.

So much appreciation for the journey alongside each other and so much admiration for all of the beautiful work they have done and continue to do. Wishing them all of the best going forward.

The new NPC number is 2024/806276/08 with board members Sandra Voges, Melanie Christensen and David Romero.

The current Kitchen Team is Sandi, Melanie, Patrick and Butandwa, they are happy to welcome you into the kitchen space, as guest, volunteer or collaborator.

Find out more about Muiz Kitchen here.







Seed Share SA

UNITING ALL
BACKYARD FOOD GARDENERS

6 packets of veg seeds for only R15:
Spinach, Carrots, Onions, Kale,
Beetroot & Lettuce.

To qualify:

- Gardeners have to work in community gardening groups.
- Gardeners agree to meet once a month to explore how to support each other.
- Gardeners agree to start a Community Based Food Market to sell to their community.




For More Information
WhatsApp Steph
068 514 3540

[ENVIROSOLUTIONSCENTRE.COM](https://envirosolutionscentre.com)



Enviro Solutions Centre

In 2023, Enviro Solutions Centre began its partnership with Amava based on a shared appreciation for the Asset-Based Community-Led Development (ABCD) approach. At the heart of this pro-poor development strategy is the recognition of “assets” in five categories: personal, social, infrastructure, environmental, and economic resources. This stands in stark contrast to the commercialized, capitalist approach that focuses almost exclusively on economic resources. The ABCD approach recognizes a broader range of assets/resources that individuals and communities have access to, shifting the focus from “what we need” to “what we have.” When groups of people start by identifying their assets within these five categories, they quickly discover that they already have much of what they need to create the changes they want to see in their community.

Equipped with an ABCD mindset and an extensive history of using Permaculture as a tool for social, environmental, and economic development, ESC began the Swellendam Food Security Initiative. This intervention focused on using seeds as a catalyst for forming food gardening communities, encouraging backyard gardeners to work together to strengthen their local food systems. Originally intending to serve their immediate community of Swellendam, word quickly spread. Within a few months, neighbouring communities of Barrydale and Suurbraak—and later Slangrivier—began asking how they could also get involved.



Essential to ESC's approach is a careful consideration of the role that outside resources and role players have in either cultivating dependency or fostering autonomy. Being aware of the potential dangers that outsiders can bring into a community—especially when resources are involved—ESC invited interested community members to lead the local process independently. As gardeners reached out, they were encouraged to form their own local group of backyard food gardeners, willing to commit to exploring three topics and then develop their own implementation plan based on their answers to:

- How do we want to support each other as backyard food gardeners?
- How do we want to support other community members to start their own backyard food gardens?
- How would we plan, implement, and manage our own community-based food market?

These three questions form the basic building blocks of community cohesion, household food security, and community food security—founded on local backyard food gardening. Our strategy aimed to mobilize grassroots action that is owned and operated by the community. And it worked.

Within a few short years, the Swellendam Food Security Initiative has grown into a national program: Seed Share SA. This program distributes vegetable seeds (spinach, beetroot, onions, carrots, kale, and lettuce) to groups of backyard gardeners all across South Africa at a price of R15 per multipack—enough seed to fill a 50m² garden. By 2024, the Swellendam Food Security Initiative had evolved into Seed Share SA, with small groups of self-organized backyard food gardeners emerging in every province, especially the Eastern Cape. Seed Share SA believes that improved access to seed and strong community cohesion are essential elements that can ignite food sovereignty at the community level.

Enviro Solutions Centre is a registered NGO (NPO 080-975) with the core focus is on supporting people to do what they want to do. ESC also provides training to community groups and other NGOs in Permaculture/Agroecology, ABCD and Basic Project Management for Community Workers.

If you would like to know more about the work, please check out our **website**, **facebook** page and **YouTube** channel.

Accounts Summary

INCOME		
Admin Fee	35 228	2%
Co-working Space	6 100	0.4%
Seeds4Youth	843 577	50%
Local Development	301 392	18%
Muiz Kitchen	489 918	29%
TOTAL	1,676,215	

OPERATING EXPENSES		
Management	131 610	7%
Facilitation	327 110	19%
Media/Documentation/Film	78704	4%
Stipends	7 525	0.4%
Admin/Accounting	84 360	5%
Materials	116 458	7%
Data	13 292	1%
Production	29 124	2%
Events	72 600	4%
Equipment	15 109	1%
Stationery	4 307	0.2%
MuizKitchen	567 995	32%
Accommodations	84 550	5%
Food	99 665	6%
Travel	74 024	4%
Office (rent, storage, insurance, software)	39 451	2%
Bank Fees/CIPC/Advisory	21 914	1%
TOTAL	1,767,775	

Organisational Structure 2024/25

Amava Oluntu is a registered Non-Profit Company. In 2024-25, Amava Oluntu's governing board consisted of Yoliswa Mahobe, Theresa Wigley, Sue Soal, Alex Mveleli and Zaid Philander.

The board members meet at least 4 times a year. They follow the guidelines in accordance with section 16(1)(c) of the Companies Act, 2008 as evidenced by the Memorandum of Incorporation. The duties of the directors include mainly to keep the planning, strategy and work of Amava Oluntu aligned with the vision and objective of the organisation.

The Board of directors invites certain stakeholders, partners and interested parties as it sees fit, to join the Advisory Hub. The Board may consult with the Advisory Hub on matters of vision, policy and other matters from time to time and draw upon experience and expertise of those in the Advisory Hub. The advisors make themselves available as reasonably required and take part in the work as co-creators of shaping Amava Oluntu's strategy, projects and initiatives.

The Amava team consists of core members who meet on a weekly basis with the focus on operational management, planning and communications. Additional freelancers join the team when necessary depending on the projects.

Find out more about the people we work with here.



Book Keeping



Board of Directors

Thank You.

