

My Journey

Asoze saphela 'mandla
(we will never give up)

Sifuna Zindlu
(we are fighting for houses)



I am Nonsikileko I was born in Cape Town in 1958. My parents were forced by the Apartheid laws to move from our home in Parow, a white area, to an informal settlement named Jakkalsvlei, for Xhosa speaking people.



Johnny and I were married in the nighties. We had two children and moved to New Crossroads. We both worked in clothing factories and we both were shop steward. I even went to meetings with my little children.





Johnny and I built
our first home with
our own hands
because we did not
have money for
builders. We were so
proud of our wood
and iron shack.



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My husband and I
started the
Gugulethu
Backyarders
Campaign, in the
late 1990s. We
started it because
there was no one
looking out for
people who don't
have houses and
staying in shacks.



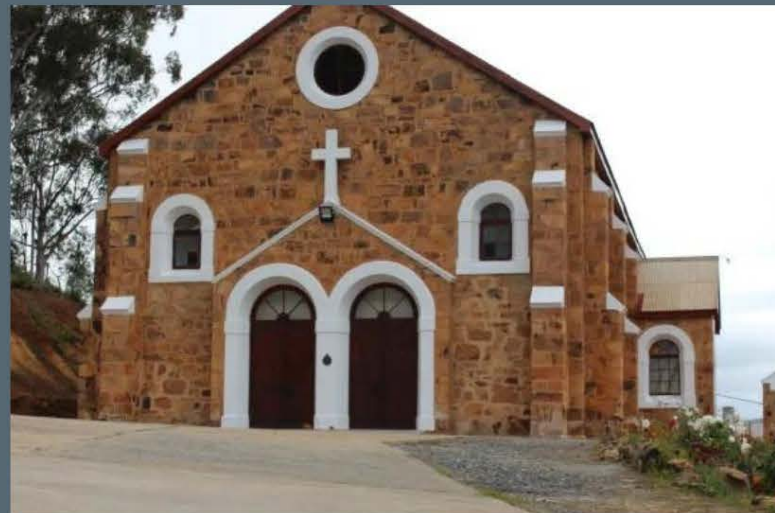
Living a shack is
very hard, people
look down on you.
My daughter was
chosen to tour
Norway with the
choir.

The people living in
brick houses did not
believe it, because
her home was a
shack



One day I was in the taxi going to Bellville. It was raining and I said to the lady sitting next to me "I am so worried now, my shack is leaking and I didn't put buckets down." The lady said to me "oh you don't look like someone that lives in a shack."

One day our church
invited us to move
into the church house
to look after the
property. We lived
there for 3 years.
That pastor passed
away and his
children came to
take back the house.



They just moved in
while we were still
there. I called the
police for help but
they said "we don't
have a van to send
out".

We were forced to
leave.



My husband was working in the Free State. So I went to the local police station for help. I was going to sleep at the police station because I had no where to go. My friend came to help me.



Life in a shack is hard. It is mostly a 1 room place. There's no running water, no electricity and no toilet. You cook, wash your self and sleep, all in the same room. My friend was so kind to help us. She invited us to come and live with her and her 2 children. We were 2 families living in a one roomed house.



I have travelled the whole of Gugulethu for a place to stay. That was my struggling life for a house. I even thought I would die in a shack, does like the lady from Kraaifontein, she was a fighter too. They finally gave her a house but after she passed away.



Finally in 2022
Johnny and I and
my 2 girl moved
into our own home,
made of brick, free
standing. I even
have a garden
now.

The End.

Read about the project [here](#).