



# Malamulele Onward

Possibilities for Africa's children with Cerebral Palsy

## Zingisa is on his feet again- against all odds

April 2009

Issue 5

### Contact details

#### SOUTH AFRICA

Dr. Gillian Saloojee  
P O Box 52641  
Saxonwold  
2132  
Tel: (+27) 11 726 1555  
gsaloojee@icon.co.za

#### CANADA

Barbara Harrison  
Malamulele Onward Canada  
1011 Upper Middle Road  
East  
Suite 1511  
Oakville, Ontario  
L6H 5Z9  
bharrison@cogeco.ca

According to his mother Zingisa was walking around until he was three, but then it seemed he had a catastrophic seizure. We are unsure of what happened in the years before he came to the therapists at Madwaleni in 2007, but it seemed that he had not been out of bed in years.

He had rickets, causing multiple fractures in both his femurs and such severe contractures in his knees and hips that even the doctors at the orthopedic referral hospital in Umtata were at a loss as to how to manage him. With advice



*During the 2007 intervention Zingisa had his legs in plaster casts*

from MO the local therapists organized Vitamin D for Zingisa. They also used plaster serial casting to gradually straighten the legs and allow the fractures to heal.

The hospital's Home Based Care Programme also organized a carer to visit weekly to make sure Zingisa was spending time outside in the sunlight. We were astounded when we managed to get Zingisa into a standing box at the end of the intervention

week at Madwaleni in April this year. He is wearing soft splints on his legs and we had to build up one of his shoes, but for the first time in 7 years Zingisa is standing on his own two feet again.

When you consider that we were unsure that Zingisa would ever be able to sit independently, his standing is truly a miracle, and the result of two years worth of rehabilitation.



*At the first screening visit Zingisa had fixed flexion contractures, displaced multiple fractures and was in pain. He could only lie like this on his back.*



*In April 2008 those legs are straight enough to stand, and Zingisa can enjoy playing with some beads without pain!*

### Inside this issue:

Malamulele mothers organize Christmas party	2
Traveller dolls	2
Our Seet Surrender Fundraiser	3
MO attracts top therapists from overseas	3
Thanks to our sponsors	4
A first in Lesotho	4
Plans for 2009	4

## Malamulele mothers organize their own Christmas Party

Malamulele Hospital was the site of the first outreach project – back in 2005. We did three intervention visits over a two year period where we treated nearly 50 children, provided them with equipment and showed their caregivers how to continue the programme at home. We have kept touch with the therapists and the caregivers at Malamulele Hospital and the nearby Mhinga Clinic through six-monthly visits. The objectives of these short visits is to work with the caregivers in facilitating support and self-help groups and to assist the Malamulele therapists to develop and improve their therapy service to the children.



*The Malamulele Support Group meet with MO Board member Teresia Ralintja*

Teresia Ralintja, one of the Malamulele Onward Board members, is herself the mother of a young man, Thabo, who has cerebral palsy. Teresia was part of a support group at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital and from this support

group, the Ratanang Day Care Centre for children with multiple disabilities was born. Ratanang recently celebrated its tenth anniversary. Teresia has been working with the caregivers at Malamulele, encouraging and advising them on how to run a support group for caregivers. We are thrilled to report that there are now two support groups for caregivers at Malamulele Hospital and Mhinga Clinic – and that they organized their very own Christmas Party in December last year. This was the very first Christmas Party ever for the children and we are so proud of the caregivers – they did it themselves.

## Malamulele Onward has its own offices ..... and a Project manager

Yes, that's right – MO has moved out of Gillian's study into its very own offices. We are located on the second floor of The Memorial Institute for Children in Empire Road, Braamfontein. This building used to be a children's hospital but it now houses non-profit organizations working with children. Furniture for the office was kindly donated by Rennies

Travel – and we say a very big thank-you to Lynda Green at Rennies for organizing this very generous donation.

In February, we welcomed Jean Elphick to MO where she is the Project Manager – Malamulele Onward's first staff member! Jean is a physiotherapist and worked

at Madwaleni Hospital for two years where she established the rehabilitation department. She is passionate about Malamulele Onward and we are delighted to have her on board. She will be assisting with the administrative and logistical aspects of the outreach projects in addition of course to treating the children.

## Traveller dolls

We're selling beaded dolls in support of the Hillcrest AIDS Centre in South Africa, and Malamulele Onward. Our fundraising team has recently grown - Northern Secondary School in Toronto is committed to raising local and international social awareness amongst their student body. As part of the

school's efforts, the Guidance Department has agreed to have the students participate in making the beaded dolls available on each of three Parents' Days at the school, for a minimum \$5.00 donation. They have taken 500 dolls and we hope that they sell out and ask for more!! Thanks to everyone who



has either bought or sold a doll or two or three.

## Our Sweet Surrender Fundraiser

In November 2008 Nazreen Garda, Tara Seon, Victoria Diaz, Ava Green, Darlene Hannan and Barbara Harrison (members of Malamulele Onward Canada) hosted a fundraiser that they called "Sweet Surrender: An Evening to Discover, Uncover, and Donate". The evening was a great success—both financially and as an evening of enjoyment and self-discovery. Sue Kenney ([www.suekenney.ca](http://www.suekenney.ca)) volunteered to be the keynote speaker for the evening. She spoke of her walk along the Camino de Santiago de Compos-

tela across Spain, and the lessons that she learned on that pilgrimage. In addition a group of energy workers and tarot card readers volunteered their time to help people to "discover and uncover" their potential on their own journeys. Guests



*The very hard working Canadian fundraising committee*

enjoyed desserts and coffee while they perused the items on the silent auction and raffle tables. Our thanks go to Denbok Landscaping ([www.denbok.com](http://www.denbok.com)) for their very generous sponsorship of the majority of the prizes for the evening. It was such a wonderful evening that several people mentioned that they hope that we offer an evening like this on an annual basis as they want to come back, with friends! As Sue Kenney said "this was a special group of people". Thanks to everyone for their support of this fundraiser.

## Malamulele Onward attracts top therapists from overseas

The Malamulele Onward team of volunteers to Tafalofefe Hospital in October last year was strengthened by the participation of two therapists from the Bobath Centre

in Scotland. Occupational Therapists Maia and speech therapist Clare paid their own way to South Africa and persuaded their respective husbands David and Stephen to join them for a holiday at the end of a week of very hard work. We at Malamulele Onward are delighted that our outreach projects attract therapists of such high calibre who are so willing to volun-



teer their services and share their skills and experience. To Maia and Clare, we say a big, big thank-you!

## Malamulele Onward Canada and IDRF support therapists from African countries

Thanks to a number of travel bursaries from Malamulele Onward Canada and IDRF, Bobath/NDT trained therapists from Zambia, Rwanda and Malawi have been able to join the Malamulele Onward outreach teams. Justin, Brian and Dominic from Zambia were part of the team of volunteers to Tafalofefe in October last year whilst Augustin and Paul from Rwanda and McFarry from Malawi

joined the Madwaleni team this April. All these therapists work in isolation in their respective hospitals where there are no occupational therapists or speech therapists. Hence being a Malamulele Onward volunteer offers them the opportunity to consolidate and enhance their clinical skills as well as the chance to be part of a multidisciplinary team. This assists them in offering a more

comprehensive service to children with cerebral palsy in their own countries.

*Dominic and Aphelele at Tafalofefe*



## Thanks to our recent sponsors and supporters .....

- Our Canadian friends and supporters
- Canadian Autoworkers Union (CAW)
- Momentum Life
- International Development and Relief Foundation (IDRF)
- Blue Label
- Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (Canada)
- Andrew Harrison—for the sponsorship he received from his cycle race in the Rockies
- Charlotte and Douglas Roberts Trust
- Pretoria Portland Cement (PPC)
- Carlos Fransisco—for making us a video at Madwaleni
- Glenda Gray and Haroon Saloojee—for donating the proceeds of their NEJM editorial
- Lynda Green and Rennies Travel—for the office furniture
- Cynthia Alter—for the sewing machine
- The Boksburg knitting circle—for the ongoing supply of hand knitted jerseys and ponchos
- Gagic Hakopian, orthotist, for the materials and splints
- Parents from private practices in Gauteng—for the generous donations of clothes
- Marilyn Herson and Keri-Ann Hacker for the laptop and software for Matimba
- All the therapists who so generously give us their time

## A new Bobath / NDT therapist for Rwanda

For the past three years, Malamulele Onward has run annual five to ten day training courses for therapists in Rwanda who work with children with cerebral palsy. We were thrilled this year when one of the Rwandan therapists, Paul Ndahimana, was able to come to Johannesburg for 9 weeks to complete the basic paediatric Bobath/NDT therapist. This brings to four the number of Bobath/NDT trained therapists in Rwanda – compared with just one when we started our work in Rwanda in 2006. Paul's training here in South Africa was made possible by a bursary received from Barbara Harrison in Canada who has set up a bursary fund in honour of her late parents.

Paul works in the remote Kibogora District Hospital in Nyamasheke and it is great that the children in this area will now have access to the specialised therapy that they need. Paul has attended all the short training courses held in Rwanda and it was a delight to watch his growth as a paediatric therapist and to see him successfully complete the tough 8 week course. Paul is also one of Malamulele Onward's newest volunteers and directly after the course, he joined the team which went to Madwaleni hospital.



## A first in Lesotho

With just a handful of therapists and virtually no therapy equipment, very few children with cerebral palsy living in the mountainous kingdom of Lesotho enjoy access to any kind of therapy or assistive devices and equipment. Malamulele Onward has committed itself to reaching the un-



reached children of Lesotho and as a start to this initiative, Gillian

Saloojee and Corneli Strydom (SANDTA Speech Therapy tutor) led a five day Introductory Course for thirteen therapists in Maseru, Lesotho in September last year (*see photo*). They were impressed with the dedication and enthusiasm in the small group of committed therapists who are trying their best to deliver a service despite the overwhelming challenges they face. It is our hope that sufficient funding can be obtained for a long term outreach project to Lesotho which will combine training of therapists with hands on therapy and equipment for children with cerebral palsy living in the remote areas of the country.

## Plans for 2009

Plans for 2009 include outreach and intervention visits to:

- Madwaleni and Zithulele Hospitals, Eastern Cape
- Dilokong Hospital in Limpopo (an annual visit)
- Butterworth and Tafalofefe Hospitals (second year visit)
- Malamulele Hospital and Mhinga Clinic (annual follow-up visits)
- A new site—Siloam Hospital in Limpopo

Further training courses for therapists in

- Rwanda
- Lesotho

We still need more funding to complete all these projects, so if you can help, we would love to hear from you!