1985 - 2025

Aktion Bundesschluss

GEMEINSAM FÜR GERECHTIGKEIT

TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE

40 Years partnership

Aktion Bundesschluss Hildesheim - Sekhukhune"

Later, this partnership was enriched by the friendship with the **Martin Luther Kantorei** (a gospel choir founded by Dean Mminele in the region) and with the **Mathebela Church**.

Another result of the partnership is the connection to the **MCM Trust**. After the death of Dean Mminele, this trust was established by his immediate family and the Martin Luther Kantorei. The work of the MCM Trust aims to continue the important initiatives that Dean Mminele started. Its goals include alleviating poverty, promoting self-reliance, and fostering a culture of reading and understanding.

The goals of the partnership are:

- *Encounter and exchange*
- *Truth and reconciliation*
- *Mutual support*
- *Commitment to justice and peace*
- *integrity of creation*

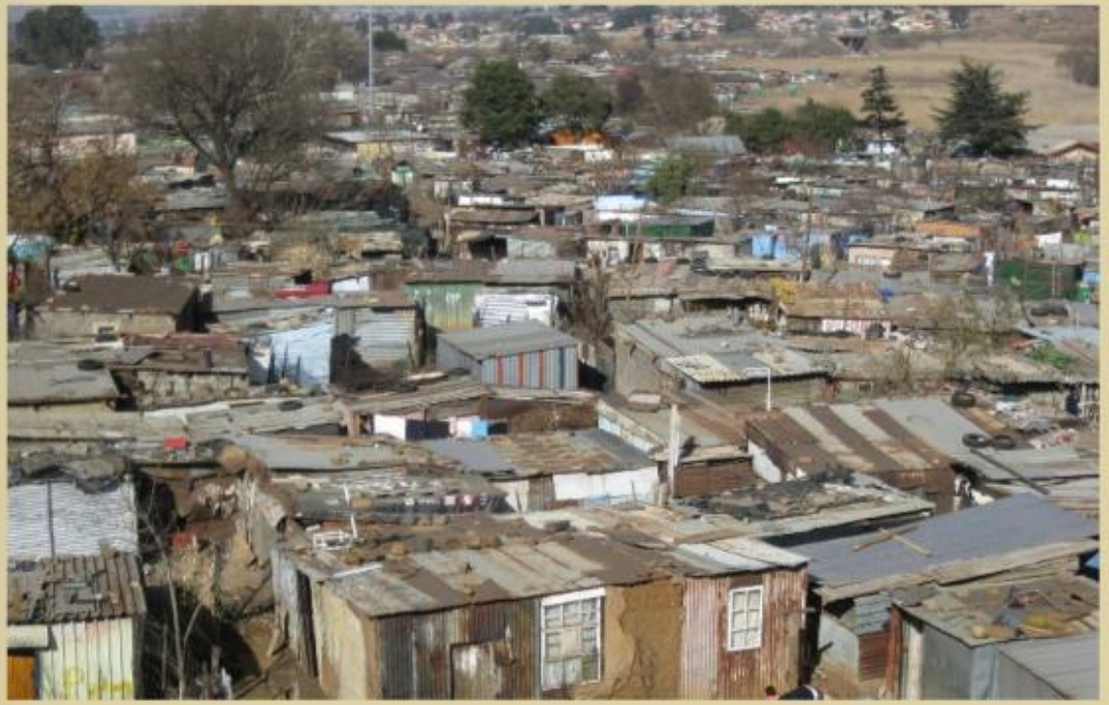
Dean Mokebe Cleopas Mminele

The history

1906 Chief Michael Dinkwanyane purchases the "Boomplaats" land. Size: 25 km², Hundreds of families pooled all their savings for the purchase.

1956 The chief's daughter and several families "voluntarily" move to Phiring to preempt the threatened forced relocation by the racist apartheid regime.

1961 The remaining (most) families are forcibly relocated. All houses are destroyed. The families are scattered into widely separated areas: Soweto, Jane Furse, Mishishing, and others.

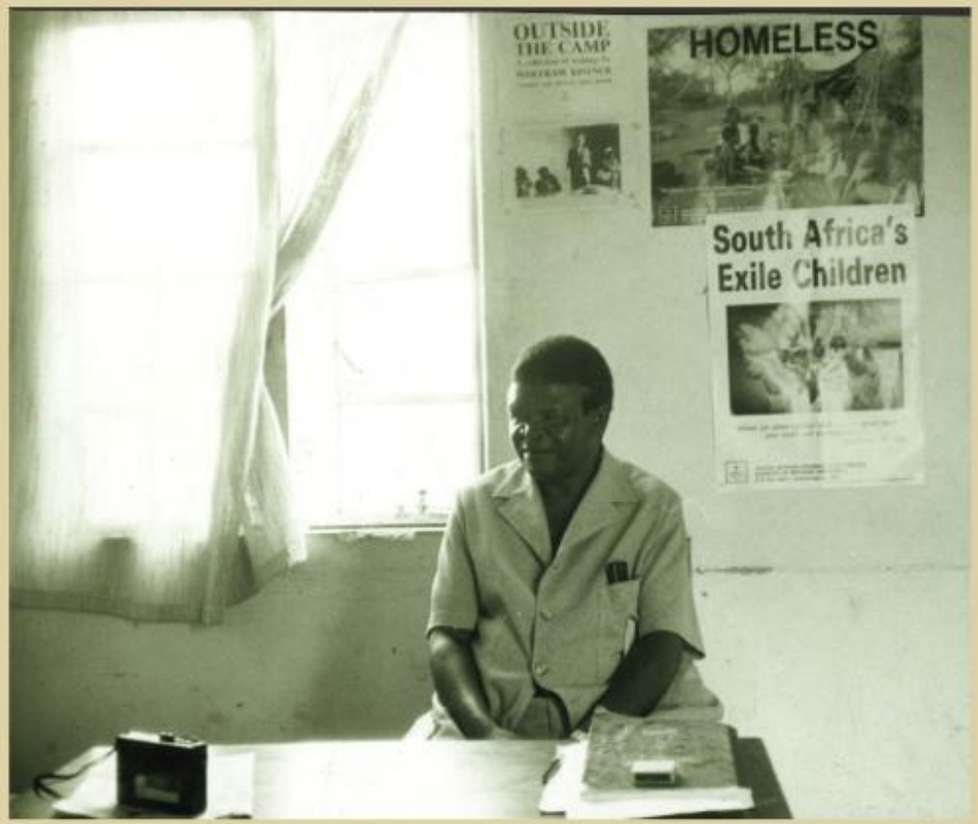


1985 The connection between Sekhukhune and Hildesheim begins. The Hildesheim, Sarstedt and Alfeld church districts fund a fieldworker.

1988 The first fieldworker, Tom Gumbo, visits the Hildesheim region.

1991 A delegation from the Hildesheim region visits Sekhukhune.

1994 Negotiations begin with the new government regarding land restitution.



Fieldworker Tom Gumbo

A delegation from the Hildesheim region visits Sekhukhune

In April 1994, the first general and free election was held in South Africa.

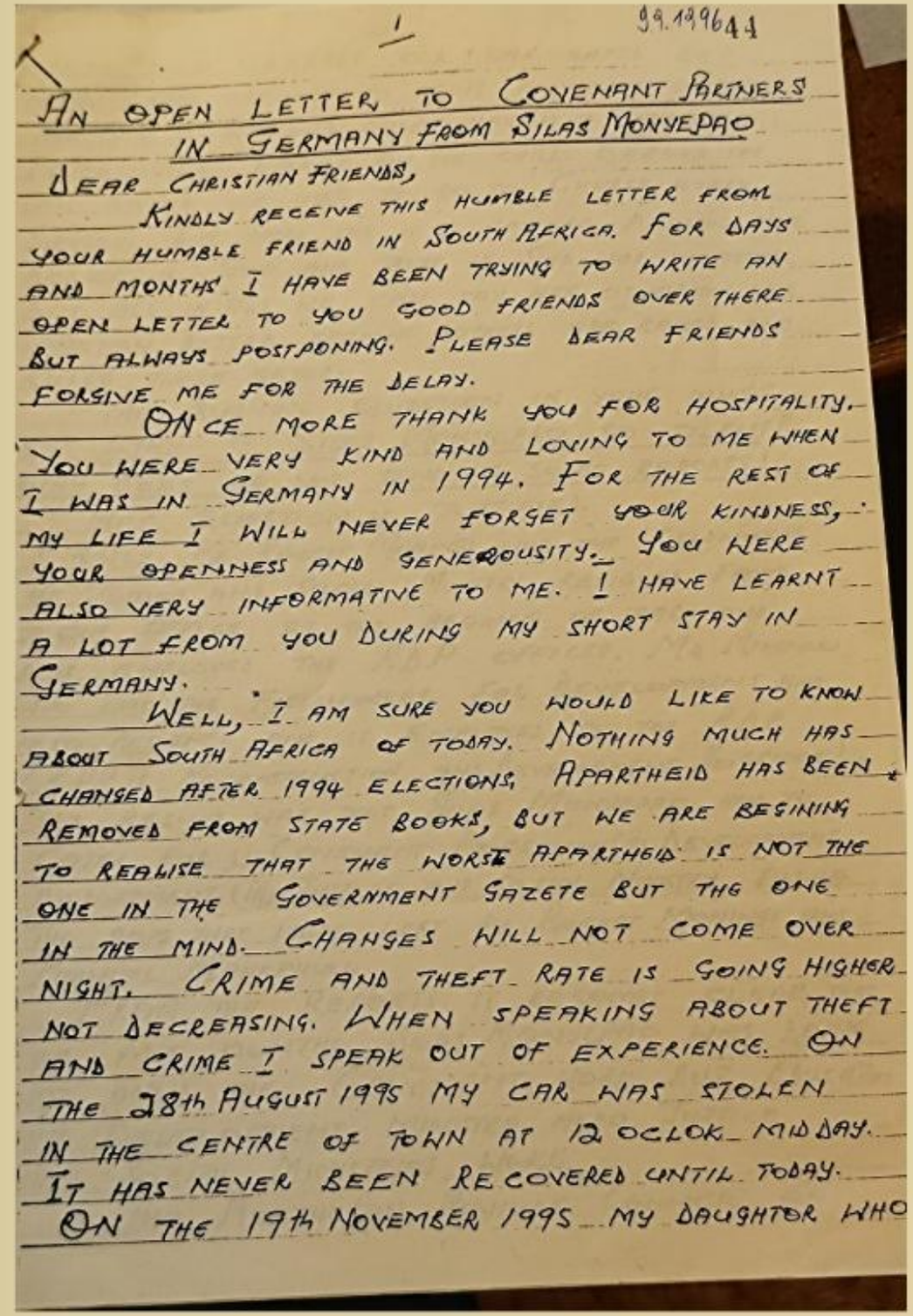
Queen Mokhabela, Fieldworker Silas Monyepaom Salome Ratau

1994 A delegation from Sekhukhune, including the fieldworker Silas Monyepao, visits the Hildesheim region.

1996 The Martin Luther Kantorei visits the Hildesheim region.

1997 A delegation from the Hildesheim region visits Sekhukhune.

2000 The Martin Luther Kantorei visits the Hildesheim region and performs at the Expo 2000.



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AN OPEN LETTER TO COVENANT PARTNERS IN GERMANY FROM SILAS MONYEPAO

DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

KINDLY RECEIVE THIS HUMBLE LETTER FROM YOUR HUMBLE FRIEND IN SOUTH AFRICA. FOR DAYS AND MONTHS I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO WRITE AN OPEN LETTER TO YOU GOOD FRIENDS OVER THERE BUT ALWAYS POSTPONING. PLEASE DEAR FRIENDS FORGIVE ME FOR THE DELAY.

ONCE MORE THANK YOU FOR HOSPITALITY. YOU WERE VERY KIND AND LOVING TO ME WHEN I WAS IN GERMANY IN 1994. FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE I WILL NEVER FORGET YOUR KINDNESS, YOUR OPENNESS AND GENEROUSITY. YOU WERE ALSO VERY INFORMATIVE TO ME. I HAVE LEARNT A LOT FROM YOU DURING MY SHORT STAY IN GERMANY.

WELL, I AM SURE YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA OF TODAY. NOTHING MUCH HAS CHANGED AFTER 1994 ELECTIONS. APARTHEID HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM STATE BOOKS, BUT WE ARE BEGINING TO REALISE THAT THE WORST APARTHEID IS NOT THE ONE IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETE BUT THE ONE IN THE MIND. CHANGES WILL NOT COME OVER NIGHT. CRIME AND THEFT RATE IS GOING HIGHER NOT DECREASING. WHEN SPEAKING ABOUT THEFT AND CRIME I SPEAK OUT OF EXPERIENCE. ON THE 28th AUGUST 1995 MY CAR WAS STOLEN IN THE CENTRE OF TOWN AT 12 OCLOK MIDDAY. IT HAS NEVER BEEN RECOVERED UNTIL TODAY.

ON THE 19th NOVEMBER 1995 MY DAUGHTOR WHO

Pastor G Harms
Hildesheim - Sekhukhune
HILDESHEIM
GERMANY

P O Box 850
JANE FURSE
1085 RSA

Dear Friends

On behalf of ourselves, Boomplaas Community I would like to apologise to you due to the fact that we take long time not writing or phoning you.

We have received your message from Mr Monyepao. He explained everything to us and this is accepted. This shows that you really remember us.

You are friends indeed and friends in need. Friends are those people who touch one another's lives and become part of them, learning to share in happiness, in their problems and their deepest secrets. Friendship is made up of things such as sharing and warm memories and all the wonderful happy things too.

Now concerning our land claim, I don't know where to start, as you know that it's long time we started working with this claim. The Government always tells us that our claim is simple and straight forward, but the claim got stuck and no further moves forward are taking place. As such the slowness of the restitution process frustrates the hopes of many Boomplaas people. There is no restitution taking place although the claim was gazetted long ago.

Trust in the Commission is lost, because the Community showed a high degree of frustration about the slowness of the restitution process and continous meetings are held without tangible results.

Most of the Community members who used to be involved in the restitution process in some years back, are now getting more and more apathetic, discouraged by the slowness of the process and little outcome it showed up to now.

On 15th September 1998 we filled some forms. The Government's representatives promised us that not long we shall go to the Land Court, but till today we are still waiting. There is no reply. They don't inform us what is the cause.

The Government also promised us long ago to workshop us on the drafting of a constitution, but they failed. This is discouraging.

Well, I cannot say a lot, but the fact remains that our claim got stuck even now, no further moves forward are happening.

Please remember our strugle in your prayers and let us all pray

Boomplaas Committee
P.O.Box 850
Jane Furse
1085
May 1999

Dear Mr Harms

We from the Boomplaas Committee were very happy to receive your letter. We thank very much. It shows that you really love and remember us.

We heard all the news and we passed your greetings to Mrs Mashupye. She was very happy to heartheat you are still remember her even if her husband is no more.

As we wrote a letter and inform you that our claim got stuck, for today I am having good news for you. The Ci is about to finished. The government had with us, and they informed us that they the claim. with the farmers and they were left. Community.

that the property has already been valuers had submitted their report. and Land Affairs and the meeting to discuss the report in particular. In principle, an reached between the two

Gerjet Harms, Chairperson

AKTION BUNDESSCHLUSS
Hildesheim - Sekhukhune

Braunsberger Str. 3
3114? Hildesheim

Tel./Fax: 05121/84340

27/7/98

Boomplaats Committee
c/o Michael Mashupye
P.O.Box 1590
Sekhukhune 1124
Rep. of South Africa

CC.: Rev. Silas Monyepao, NPCC

Dear Michael, dear Members of the Boomplaats Committee,

Please find enclosed a postcard from our last committee meeting, i.e. those who had visited you last year. We love remembering those days and all your great hospitality. We are happy that Kathrin Lieb from Hildesheim is staying in Jane Furse, living with Salome. And it is a blessing that her parents will visit her in these days.

We got some time ago an application from the committee of Pelepele Pre-school Glen Cowie (chairperson: M.M. Madihlaba) for financial assistence towards building a pre-school. The quotation is on R 110.860,60. As you are our partners we would like to ask you a few questions:

- What is your assessment about this application?
- Would you like to support it?
- Is the quotation realistic or is it advisable to ask for a second one in order to compare (as we do it normally in Germany)?

We hope that you do understand our questions: it is not because of distrust but because you are our covenant-partners and we are interested in your advice.

Finally, what about Boomplaats? Are there substancial plans for resettlement, and under which perspectives?

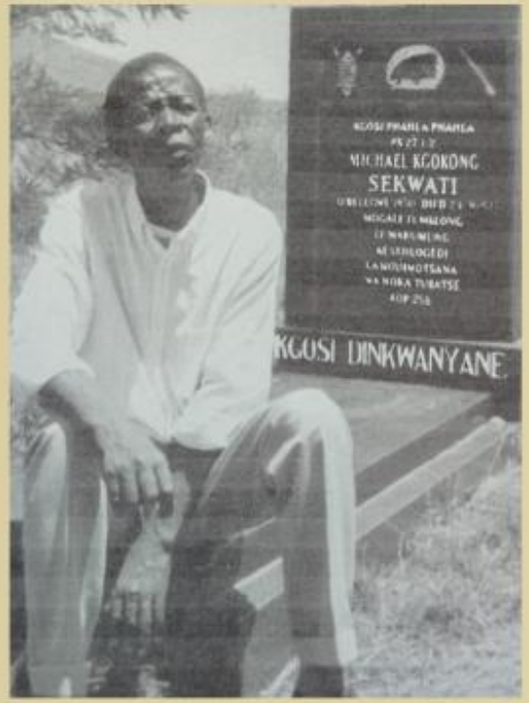
May God bless you all and all your efforts. With heartily greetings

Your

2001 On February 3, 2001, the Boomplaats farm was officially returned to the Dinkwanyane CPA (Communal Property Association) by the Minister of Land Affairs and Agriculture, Thoko Didiza.

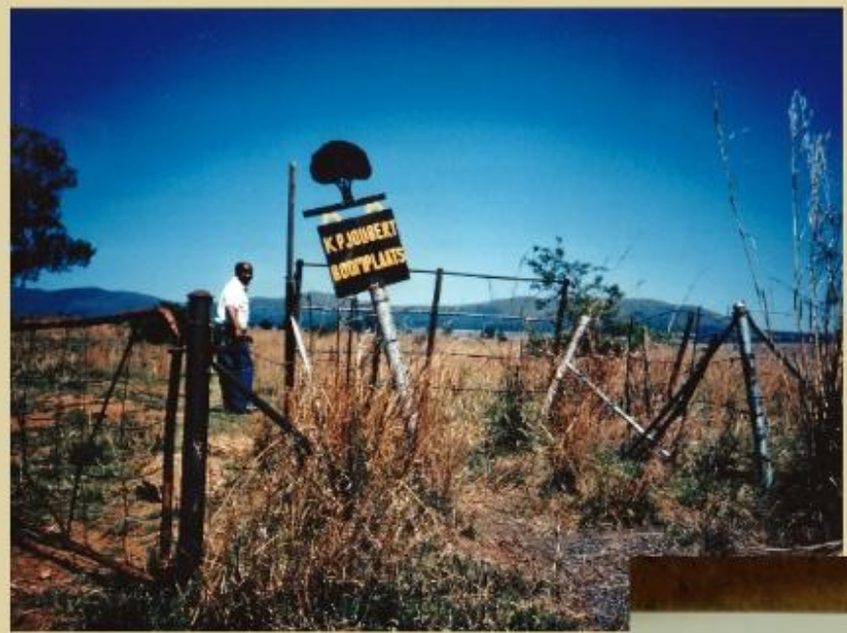
Thoko Salome Marime from Jane Furse with the deed of ownership for the Boomplaats Farm.

Official land restitution



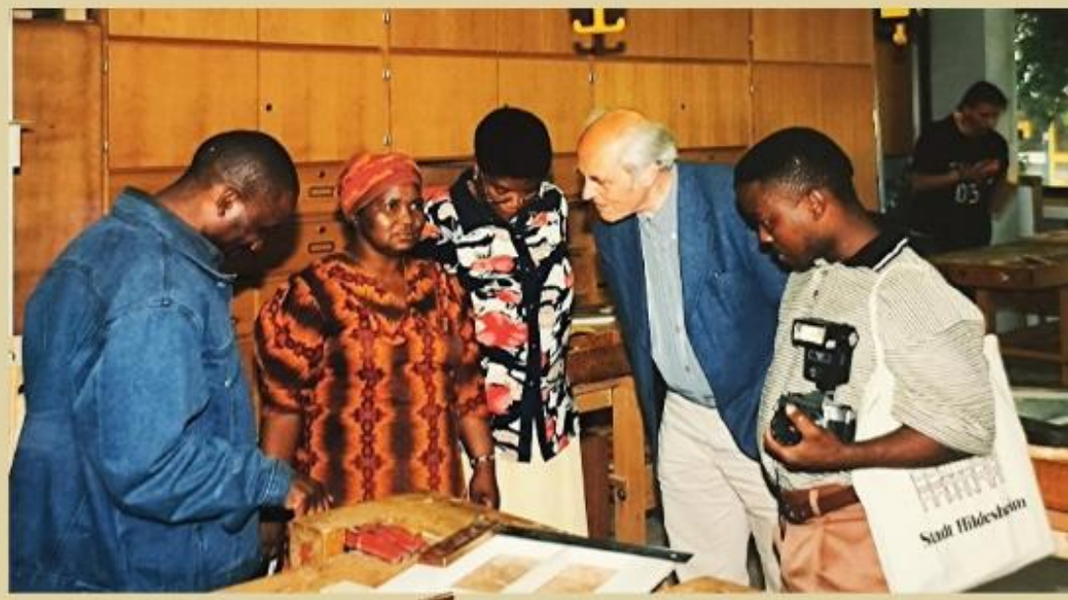
A visit to the ancestral graves is finally possible again. Michael Mashupye at his grandfather's grave.

2001 A delegation from Sekhukhune, including Fieldworker Sejanamane Mashilo, visits the Hildesheim region.



After expropriation and restitution, the Boomplaats farm was not cultivated for a long time

Fieldworker Sejanamane Mashilo with his family



A delegation from Sekhukhune visits a vocational school in Hildesheim.

A kindergarten is planned, built and inaugurated.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION
FOR PARTICIPATION

This certificate is awarded to

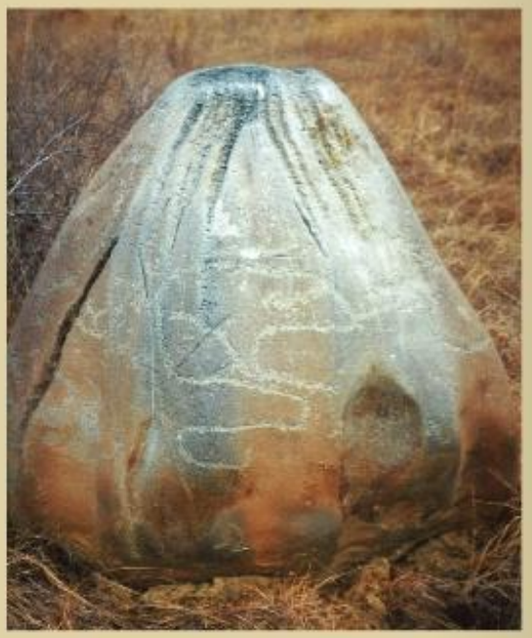
PASTOR GERJET HARMS & ST. MATTHEW CONGREGATION

IN RECOGNITION OF SPONSORING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ON THE BUILDING OF PELEPELE NTEPANE CRECHE
AT GA—MOLOI

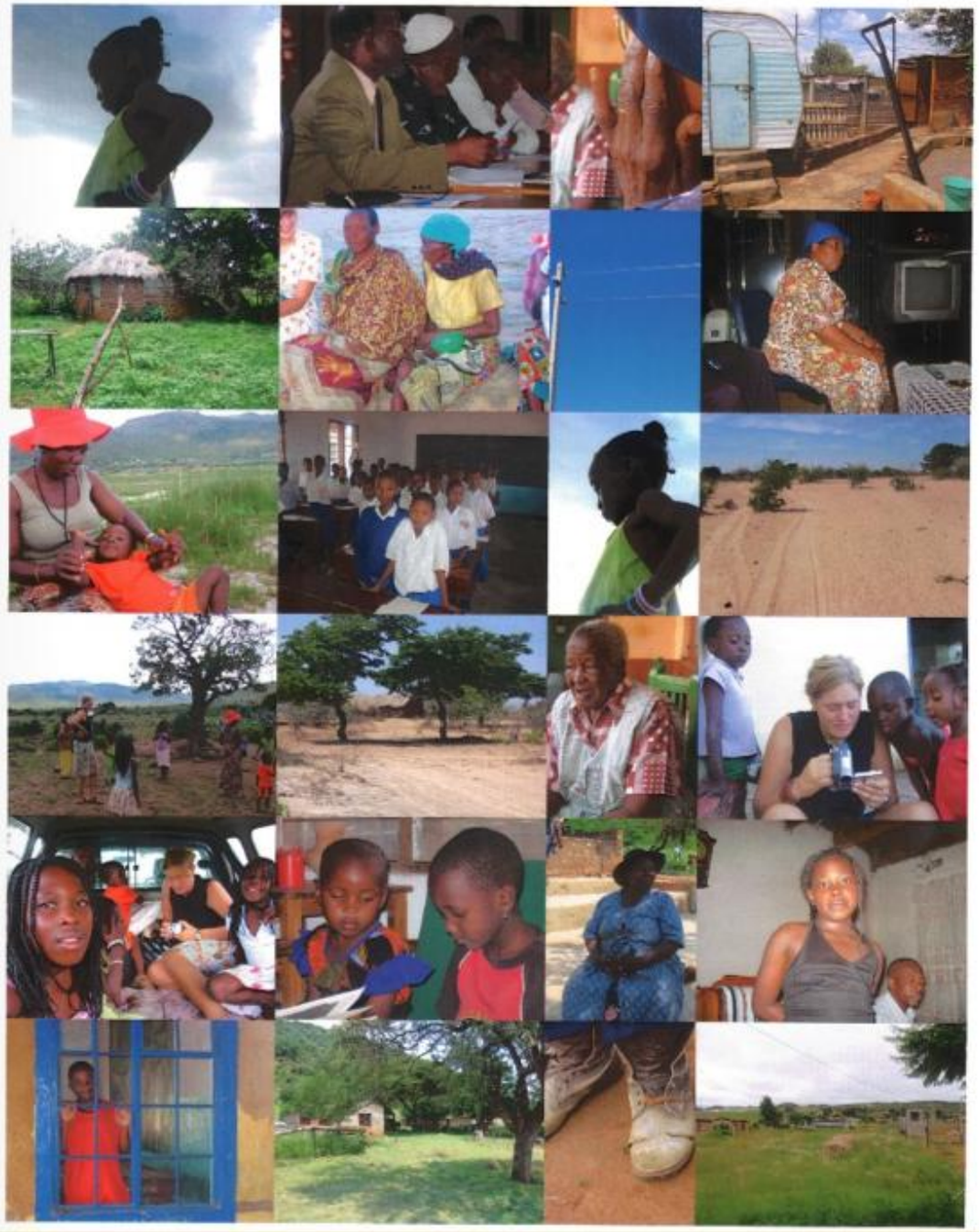
SEKHUKHUNE LAND
SOUTH AFRICA

2003 A delegation from the Hildesheim region visits Sekhukhune.
The jointly built Pelepele kindergarten in Ga Moloi is inaugurated.

2006 Three high school graduates from Hildesheim visited the Dinkwanyane community and, with the help of eyewitnesses, created a documentary and a film about their forced displacement.



September 2005 - März 2006



The Martin Luther Kantorei gives a concert in the Hildesheim region.

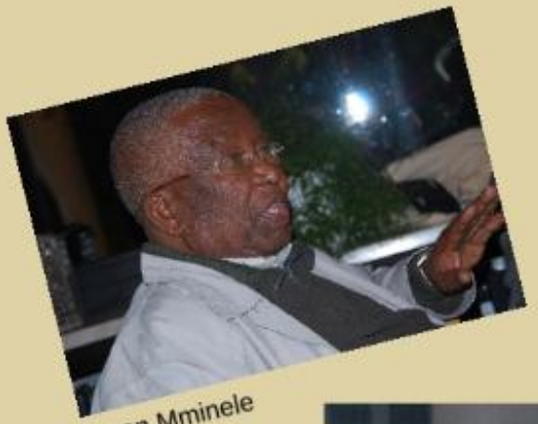
2007 The Martin Luther Kantorei visits the Hildesheim area for concerts and meetings

2010 Members of the **Aktion Bundesschluss**, **Gospelvoices Hildesheim**, and other regional gospel choirs formed the project choir "**Join hands**" for a trip to meet the **Martin Luther Kantorei** in South Africa.

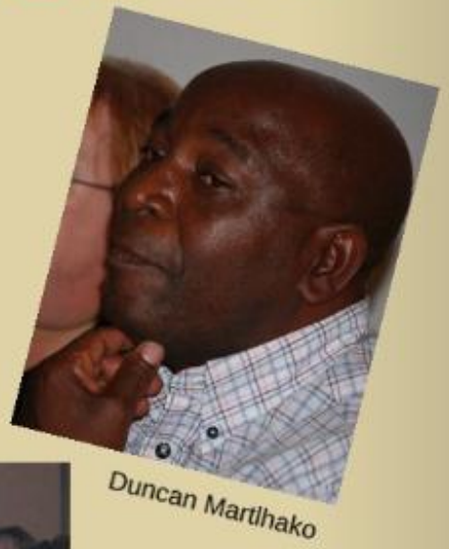
2010 Dean Mminele visits Hildesheim with Duncan Martlhako, a representative of the Mathebela Church.

2011 The Martin Luther Kantorei visits the "Join hands" project choir in the Hildesheim area for concerts and meetings. They also participate in and perform at the Kirchentag in Dresden.

Dean Mminele and the Aktion Bundesschluss group



Dean Mminele



Duncan Martlhako

Pastor Harms, Dean Mminele and Duncan Marthako

Martin Luther Kantorei, Join hands and Gospelchoir Holtenau on stage of the Kirchentag in Dresden

The Martin Luther Kantorei visiting the Mayor in Hildesheim City Hall.

GOSPEL SPIRIT
Join hands

The Martin Luther Kantorei and Join hands give a joint concert.

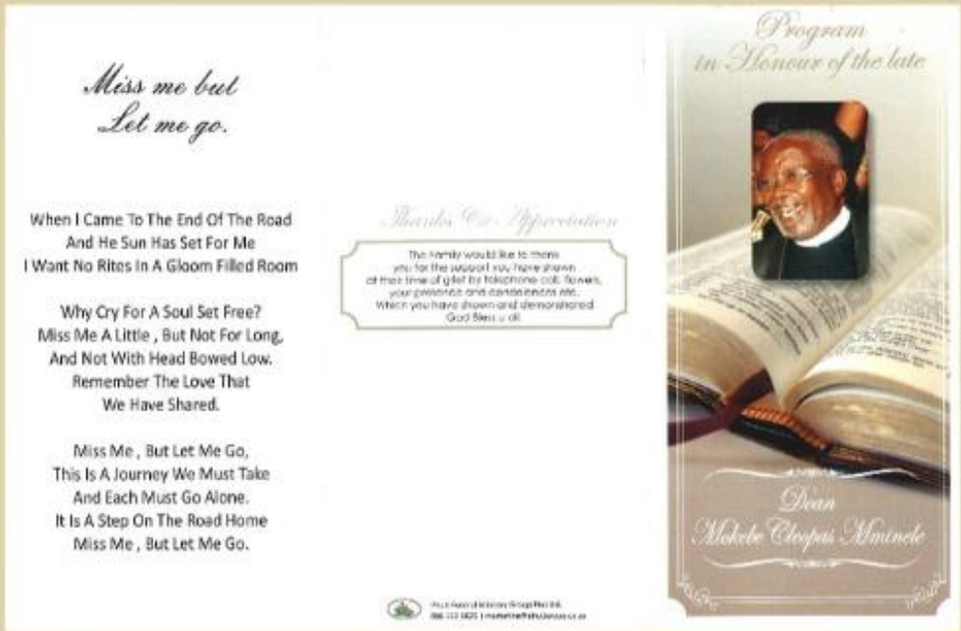
Dean Mminele and Katja Ruppel

2011 The "Join hands" project choir traveled to South Africa for an exchange with the Martin Luther Kantorei

Members of Join hands

Join hands visits the Boomplaats Farm.

2013 The partnership is mourning the loss of its "father," **Dean Mokebe Cleopas Mminele**.
A delegation from the Aktion Bundesschluss and Representatives of the Dinkwanyane community attended his memorial service to pay their last respects.



Miss me but
Let me go.

When I Came To The End Of The Road
And He Sun Has Set For Me
I Want No Rites In A Gloom Filled Room

Why Cry For A Soul Set Free?
Miss Me A Little , But Not For Long,
And Not With Head Bowed Low.
Remember The Love That
We Have Shared.

Miss Me , But Let Me Go,
This Is A Journey We Must Take
And Each Must Go Alone.
It Is A Step On The Road Home
Miss Me , But Let Me Go.

Thanks & Appreciation

The family would like to thank
you for the support you have shown
at this time of grief for telephone calls, flowers,
your presence and condolences etc.
Which you have shown and demonstrated
God Bless u all.

Program
in Honour of the late

Dean
Mokebe Cleopas Mminele

Memorial service in Honour of the late Dean Mminele

Pastor Harms (Aktion Bundesschluss), Oupa Malaka (Dinkwanyane community) and Sejanamane Mashilo (former fieldworker) attend the memorial service.

A final farewell from Aktion Bundesschluss.

2013 A delegation from **Join hands** and **Aktion Bundesschluss** visited for the **Martin Luther Kantorei's** 30th anniversary. They took part in the jubilee celebrations and visited the **Boomplaats Farm** and the **Pelepele kindergarten**.

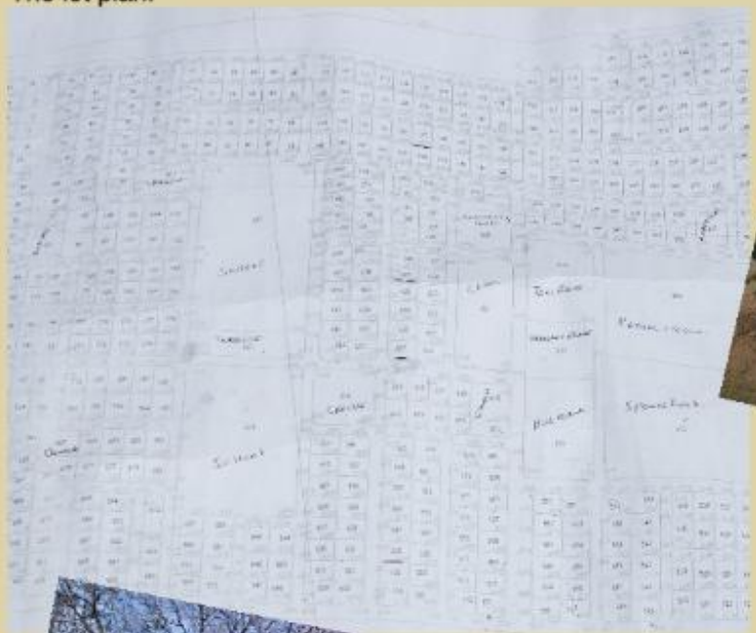
The Martin Luther Kantorei celebrates its 30th anniversary.

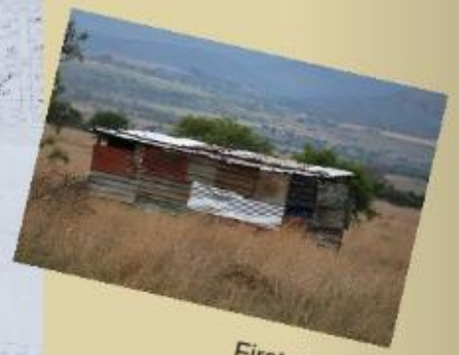
The delegation from Aktion Bundesschluss and Join hands visits the Boomplaats farm.

Martin Luther Kantorei

The children from PelePele Kindergarten welcome the German guests.

The lot plan.





First shaks

Livestock farming and agriculture have begun.

Starting in 2013 Land was surveyed and divided into plots, construction began on the first shaks and houses, and livestock farming was initiated.

2014 A delegation from **Aktion Bundesschluss** visited for the inauguration of the new Mathebela Church building.

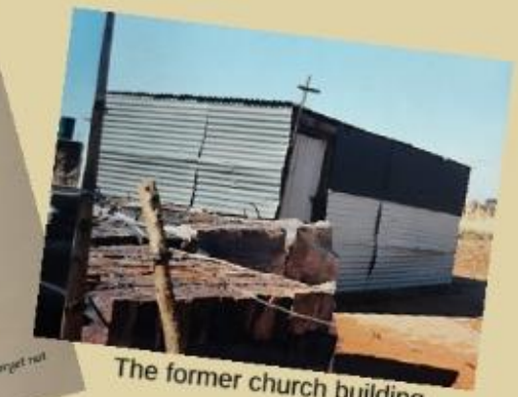
Request the pleasure of your company
at the celebration of their
GOLDEN WEDDING
and
45TH ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

Date : 28th September 2009
Venue : Lebowakgomo
Time : 10:00 (The celebration will be preceded by a divine Service)

"Moya wa ka yota Morena; o se lebale tlhe di fetse tlhe a go diratlege tlhofa

"Leka den Herrn meine Seele; und vergiss nicht was er dir gutes getan hat."

"Bless the Lord, Oh my soul and forget not all his benefits"



The former church building

The Mathebela Church was inaugurated just a few months ago.
The delegation from Aktion Bundesschluss brings an inaugural gift.

2016 A delegation from the Boomplaats Farm visited Hildesheim. They articipated in a joint partnership conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Mission in Hermansburg and Wittenberg.

The Aktion Bundesschluss group welcomes the South African partners.

Pastor Harms, Oupa Malaka, Katja Ruppel, Sejanamane Mashilo and Elias Makua

Partners don't leave each other out in the rain.

The Gospelvoices Hildesheim sing South African songs together with the partners.

A visit to a German vocational school.

A warm welcome for the South African guests.

2017 The Martin Luther Kantorei participated in the Kirchentag in Berlin and then visited Hildesheim for joint concerts and activities with the Gospelvoices Hildesheim.

2017 As a representative of Aktion Bundesschluss, Katja Ruppel visits the Boomplaats Farm.

2017 The Mokebe Cleopas Mminele Trust (MCM Trust) is founded.

The two choirs are enjoying their time together and singing together.

Members of the Dinkwanyane community committee welcome Katja Ruppel from Aktion Bundesschluss.

2018 A delegation from Aktion Bundesschluss visits South Africa, including the Boomplaats Farm, the Mathebela Church, and the Martin Luther Kantorei.

On the Boomplaats Farm: "Proper" houses are being built on individual plots. There is still no water or electricity supply.

The joy of reunion between members of Aktion Bundesschluss and the Dinkwanyane community and the Martin Luther Kantorei

The members of Aktion Bundesschluss are guests of the family of former fieldworker Sejanamane Mashilo.

A tour of the Boomplaats Farm.

The first houses are built.

Palm Sunday service in the Mathebela Church.

Katja Ruppel receives the Praise name "Rakgadi."

The Aktion Bundesschluss group delivers a gift to the Mathebela church community.

To: Aktion Bundesschluss with Love!

'kgadi'

Y2k, the new millennium brought about new life.
The baby was born and is named Mathibela.
She was the brain child of the late Mokebe.
The baby was well looked after and nourished.

Marriage was established between Mathibela
And Aktion Bundesschluss in Germany .
The mutual relationship yielded sweet fruits.
Rev.Harms and Rev.Mminele co-initiators.

Cross pollination of ideas took place.
Reinforcing and cementing the relationship.
Both sides singing from the same hymn book.
For both are ardent lovers of music.

Katja dutifully played the role of 'Kgadi'
Kgadi is the go-between in marriage negotiations.
Kgadi is like a priest who co-ordinates,
And the success of the marriage rests on her

In African culture Rakgadi is responsible for libation.
The ritual cannot be performed if Rakgadi is not there.
She is the most senior and important role player.
She is responsible for blessing the marriage.

'Nololesse Oblige.' Seniority is Responsibility.
Rakgadi mediates between family and the gods.
Katja too is effectively playing the role
Of being the mediator between the two families.

'Rakgadi ga a na bosehlana.'
Rakgadi always enjoys respect from everyone.
Rich or poor, Rakgadi's value is unconditional.
So you are to us Katja;you are our Rakgadi.

Our common song is none but ululations!
Harmoniously screaming in the same tone.
Like singing a common song in a choir.
Iiiuuu!Pula!Pula!Let this marriage last forever.

Glossary :;L
Kgadi/Rakgadi=Father's sister
Noblesse Oblige= Latin Expression
" Rakgadi ga a na bosehlana." Sepedi
" Pula=Rain implying God's blessings.

By: L.D Matlhako
19/02/2018@2h42
Lebowakgomo

Mahlako 19/02/2018 @ 2h42

2019 A delegation from Aktion Bundesschluss visits South Africa, including the Boomplaats Farm, the Mathebela Church, and the Martin Luther Kantorei.

More and more houses are being built, and agricultural projects are being planned and implemented. The issue of water and energy supply is still unresolved.

Maruti Madetsi with the German guests

Cattle on the farm.

Representatives of the Dinkwanyane community show the farm.

Pig farming

More houses have been built.

2020 COVID-19 makes conditions difficult.
MLK: Choir rehearsals and concerts cannot take place.
Mathebela Church: Church services cannot take place.
Boomplaats Farm: The difficult conditions cause some projects to stall.

2022 A delegation from Aktion Bundesschluss visits South Africa, including the Boomplaats Farm, the Mathebela Church, the MCM Trust and the Martin Luther Kantorei.
On the Boomplaats Farm: In addition to agricultural projects, small businesses have also been established, for example, a brick factory. The bricks are used to build their own houses and are also sold outside the cooperative.

Brick factory

Katja Ruppel visits the family of the late Mr. Malaka to pay her respects.

After the church service in the Mathebela Church.

2024 A delegation from Aktion Bundesschluss visited South Africa, including the Boomplaats Farm, the Mathebela Church, and the Martin Luther Kantorei.

The agricultural projects on the Fram are taking shape, with various crops like corn and beans being grown. Livestock farming, including cattle and pigs, is increasing. For instance, a pig house for 500 pigs was built on the pig farm.

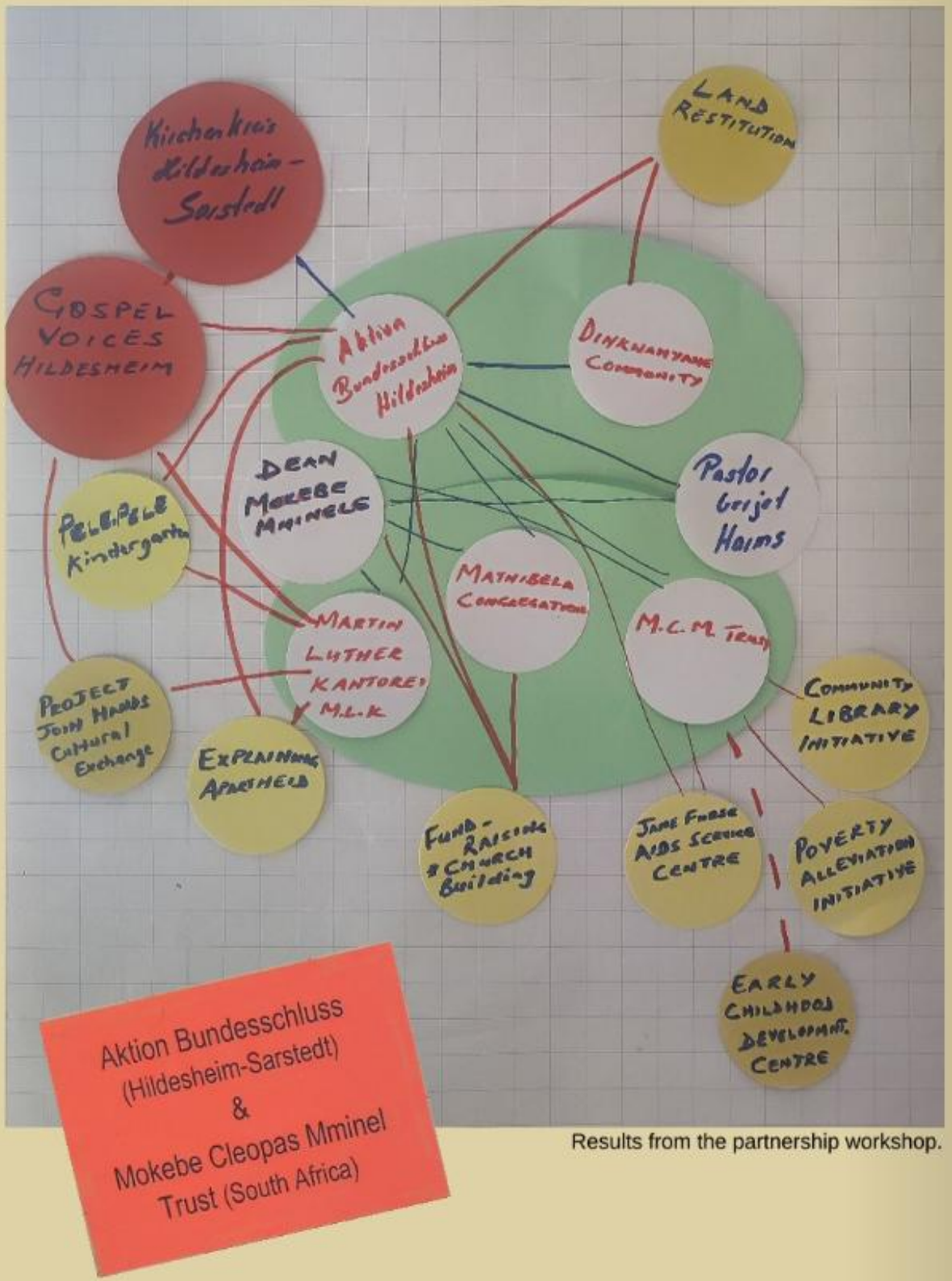
Even more houses have been built. Some have electricity from the power provider, while others use solar power. The water supply is still managed via tanks.

The viewing of the new building of the pig farm

Together with MLK members in Kruger Park

A visit to Dean Mminele's widow, Winnie

A warm reunion with the Mathebela church community



Results from the partnership workshop.

2025 Representatives from the MCM Trust visit Aktion Bundesschluss for the Kirchentag in Hanover. They jointly participate in a partnership workshop organized by the Evangelical Lutheran Mission, Hermansburg.

The partnership between the Aktion Bundesschluss group of the Hildesheim-Sarstedt church district and the Dinkwanyane community/ Sekhukhune celebrates its **40th anniversary.**

Katja Ruppel and her husband Jürgen are happy about the visit from Hloki and Moseamo Sebola.

Joy of reunion with Pastor Harms and his wife, Luise.

"A partner is someone who walks a part of the way with you.
A true partner is someone who walks the whole way with you."

This quote perfectly expresses what we have experienced together over the last 40 years. We have hoped and prayed together, we have witnessed progress, and we have shared so much with one another. We look back on a time full of challenges and successes.

It is a great joy to see how our partnership has grown. The progress on the Boomplaats Farm, the newly built houses, and the hope you are creating with your projects are all proof of our bond.

We know that our journey is far from over. But we are grateful for every step we have taken together so far. We look forward to continuing the rest of the way together.

With heartfelt greetings,

Rakgadi (Katja Ruppel)
Chairperson Aktion Bundesschluss

The anniversary cake celebrating 40 years of partnership

2025 Visit by a delegation from Aktion Bundesschluss to South Africa, visit to Boomplaats Farm, Mathebela Church and Martin Luther Kantorei.
Progress continues at Boomplaats Farm.
Mathibela Church celebrates the 11th anniversary of the inauguration of its sturdy church building.
The Aktion Bundesschluss delegation hands over 300 pairs of used glasses to the MCM Trust. The glasses enable students at the University of Limpopo to carry out eye tests in poorer areas and provide immediate practical help.

The Dinkwanyane Community shows the progress made at Boomplaats Farm

The 11th anniversary is being celebrated in Mathibela Church

Katja Ruppel from Aktion Bundesschluss hands over the glasses to Moseamo Sebola from the MCM Trust

Together with MLK members in Krüger Park

A visit to Winnie Mminele shortly before her 90th birthday