OPENING DOORS

To a safe space & new opportunities

NPO 306-824

October 2025 - March 2026

Hello friends, sponsors, and followers!

We missed our December quarterly newsletter... and for good reason! The past few months have been incredibly busy. December and January were taken over by our Back to School Programme, followed by a couple of catch-up months in February and March.

This edition shares highlights and impact from October through to the end of March, and what a six months it's been.

You can always find out more about what we do and our story at:
www.openingdoors.co.za

Impact to Date

354	46	8	14	92
Children with school supplies	Young Mums Enrolled for Support	Birth Certificates Obtained	Grants Successfully Issued	Food Parcels Distributed

COMMUNITY SUPPORT – MEETING NEEDS AS THEY ARISE

No two home visits are ever the same and that's exactly why this work matters.

In recent weeks, our team has been out doing a mix of home visits: delivering baby boxes, school shoes, food parcels, a pair of crutches and even roof sheets and windows where they were needed most.

One Grandmother (Gogo), recovering from a stroke, is caring for nine grandchildren in a mud house. Another has built the shell of her home but needs help to complete it.

Every situation is different, but our approach stays the same: show up, listen, and do what we can.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAMME – OUR BIGGEST YET

In December, we hosted our first major event at scale... and what a success it was! We didn't know what to expect, but we showed up, delivered, and made it happen. We couldn't be prouder of the team.

One of our key objectives, has always been to ensure every child has access to education. Without the correct uniform, many children simply can't attend, and that's where we step in.

REGISTRATION DAY – WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

Over 300 people came through our doors to be qualified and register for support. Alongside uniform sign-ups, we also helped families with SASSA paperwork and registered young mums for additional support. The demand was so high, we had to run a second day, between Christmas and New Year, just to keep up.

It was busy, overwhelming at times, but also incredibly special. A chance to meet families, hear their stories, and understand exactly where help was needed most.

THE PREP!

We collected all the information and then came the big task... shopping and sorting! We covered 22 different schools, each with their own uniform requirements. We headed to Pinetown for a full day of shopping, lists checked (about 10 times each!!). A huge thanks to Nu-Shop and Gem Schoolwear for their incredible support. Then it was straight back home to unpack, sort, and repack everything, making sure every child received the correct sizes, neatly packed and ready to go. It was a huge team effort, powered by determination, a lot of heart... and organisation!!

THE BEST PART...DISTRIBUTION DAY

Finally, it was time. One by one, families arrived. Bags were checked, signed for, and handed over. 248 uniforms later, and countless smiles, it was a day we'll never forget. In 2025, we distributed 104 uniforms. In January 2026 alone, we planned for 198... then 208... and ended up at 248!!

THIS IS MORE THAN JUST A UNIFORM

These uniforms went to children from youth-headed households, neighbours caring for orphaned children, Grandmothers (GoGos) raising grandchildren alone and and families struggling with day-to-day living where putting food on the table meant uniforms simply weren't possible.

Now, these children can go to school with uniforms that fit properly, no rips or tears, shoes with solid soles, no holes, and no worn-through bottoms. For many children who walk long distances to school, this means dignity, comfort, and confidence from day one.

Thank you to every donor, partner, and volunteer who helped make this possible.

Would you consider sponsoring a child's school uniform, with a donation of R650 (approx. £30)?

YOUNG MUMS PROGRAM

Following our Registration Day, we identified 25 more young mums and babies/young children who needed support. We prepared and delivered baby boxes with clothing, nappies, formula, blankets, and essentials tailored to each child.

We've also been working with a local clinic who are referring cases directly to us, helping us reach those most in need. This has included some young mums, who've been welcomed into our Mum and Baby programme.

SUPPORTING CHILD HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

Our food parcel programme continues to grow, with a number of referrals now coming directly from schools.

Many of these are youth-headed households, where the eldest child is under 18. In some cases, their mum has passed away or just left, and there are no relatives to step in. Without access to grants, these children rely on neighbours and community support just to get by.

Balancing school, often caring for younger siblings, and simply trying to be a child, while also finding food, is an immense challenge. This is where we can step in, and where your support makes a real difference.

Our food parcels cost between R400 (£18) and R800 (£35) depending on household size, and include essentials like maize meal, rice, flour, vegetables, oil, beans, bread, and basic hygiene items. Each parcel can sustain a household for 2–3 weeks.

Could you help sponsor a food parcel?

BIRTH CERTIFICATES & GRANTS

A large portion of February and March has been spent at Home Affairs supporting birth certificate applications for both children and adults.

Sadly, this is a widespread issue. Many parents don't have IDs, which creates a knock-on effect across generations, impacting access to grants, education, and healthcare.

Each case is different. Some are straightforward, but many are complex, requiring social workers and additional documentation. This work is time-consuming, but essential in helping families access their basic rights.

We striving to break generational barriers, and patience is a critical part of this process!!

CHRISTMAS IN THE COMMUNITY

On Christmas Eve Eve, we were able to gift over 100 Christmas presents to children in our community.

Thank you to everyone who donated pre-loved items and sent new gifts via TakeALot, we are so incredibly grateful.

Each child received an outfit and/or a toy. For many, this was all they received, as food is of course the priority when household funds are limited.

Putting smiles on little faces was the most special way to celebrate.

VISITS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We've been so lucky to have friends and family visit over the past few months. In November, Claire's best friend, Lucy, and fiancé Arren came from the UK and brought cricket equipment as a donation for the children. They loved trying something new, and we will continue playing cricket alongside football.

Then in January, our son and his girlfriend spent 3 weeks with us, helping out and joining in.

We also went to the beach, watched a Rugby game, went quadding fed Elephants and of course a Safari!

If you're inspired and want to get involved, we'd love your help! Check out volunteer opportunities on our website.

MEET THE NEW FAMILY MEMBERS!

We've welcomed donkeys and goats to the Opening Doors family! Once the baby home opens, the animals will be right next door, providing opportunities for the children to interact with and learn from them.

Having animals nearby isn't just about having company, they bring practical and developmental benefits: helping children develop responsibility, nurturing empathy, and supporting wellbeing. We're excited to see the positive impact on both the children and the young mums in our care.

THANDO – OUR YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR

Thando is 16. She's raising her 10-month-old daughter, has been caring for her younger brother, and still managing to be named "Overall Achiever" at school. She is determined to build a better future for herself and her little girl, and we're more than happy to support a young woman who is clearly working hard to help herself.

Recently, she had an idea to earn some money to help support her family. Because she doesn't yet have her ID, she can't claim the child grant, so she decided to create her own opportunity. She came up with the idea of making Valentine's hampers to school friends. She took deposits from those who wanted to buy, we took her shopping, and she created beautiful hampers for both girls and boys.

She is an inspiration and young entrepreneur for sure!

As part of our Young Mum & Baby Program, we support Thando so she can stay in school and continue her education. This includes helping with school uniform, food parcels when needed, nappies, porridge, hygiene essentials, and paying for creche so her daughter is cared for while she's in class.

There are so many incredible young women like Thando in our Young Mum & Baby Program, but today feels like the perfect day to celebrate her determination to provide for her family and be the best mum she can be.

ELIHLE – GROWING, LEARNING, THRIVING

Many of you will know Elihle from following our journey. He's now been part of our family for 16 months and turned 4 in March. He started a new school in January, and he absolutely loves it!

Previously underweight, Elihle is now growing, thriving, and full of life. He's getting taller by the day, a healthy weight, and confidently speaking both Zulu and English.

It's been amazing to watch the impact of nutrition, stability, and love on his development. He's learning new skills every day: cooking with Baba Jay, riding his bike, and exploring the world with curiosity, confidence, and a lot of chatter!!

Elihle's progress is a wonderful reminder of what a safe, nurturing environment can do for a child, and why the work we do at Opening Doors matters so much.

LOOKING AHEAD – GROWING OUR IMPACT

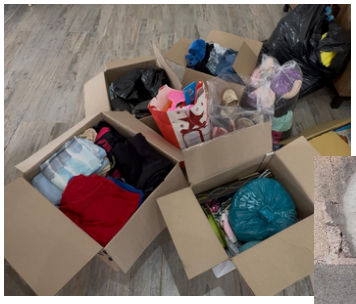
We are currently working on funding applications, and reaching out to businesses, to support the next phase of Opening Doors: a baby home. For those following our journey, and for those who are new, here's a quick recap.

The property we purchased includes former stables, which we are converting into a registered baby home and temporary safe care facility. This space will provide day and night care for infants of young mums in our programme, as well as emergency placements.

The goal is simple but powerful: to ensure young mums don't have to choose between their education and their child. Mums can visit anytime, with babies returning home on weekends and holidays where possible, keeping that vital bond strong while creating opportunities for education and stability.

This next phase will allow us to expand our reach and deepen the support we provide.

We'll keep you posted!!



HOW YOU CAN HELP...??

Firstly, thank you again for your donations and support this past six months. We did a shout out in November for breast pumps and in a few days some arrived! It's so important for our Young mums to be able to pump before school, so thank you.

We're often asked how people can support, from near or far, and there are so many ways to get involved:

- **Donate** via our website - https://www.openingdoors.co.za/donate
- **Order** directly from our Takealot wishlist (accessible worldwide) and delivered straight to our door!
  - Visit - https://tinyurl.com/Opening-Doors-NPO
  - Deliver to 21 Duiker Drive, Drummond. Outer West Durban. KZN. 3626
- **Share** our work with others, awareness is key to our success

Every bit of support helps us continue this work and reach more families.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL @OPENINGDOORSAFRICA
WE'LL KEEP YOU UPDATED WITH REGULAR SOCIAL POSTS AND QUARTERLY NEWSLETTERS

TO ALL OF YOU...THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT
LOVE CLAIRE, JAY, AARON, ELIHLE AND THE OPENING DOORS TEAM XX