



# 2023

IMPACT REPORT

Charlize Theron  
AFRICA OUTREACH PROJECT

[CTAOP.ORG](http://CTAOP.ORG)

# 2023

A stylized sunburst logo with a red center, orange and yellow segments, and a white outer ring.

IMPACT REPORT

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Charlize Theron  
AFRICA OUTREACH PROJECT

# LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP



**ASHLEE GEORGE**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2023 saw many organizations in Southern Africa finding their feet after a rocky return to a post-COVID normal. Rolling power cuts in South Africa—the region’s largest economy—have negatively impacted growth in the entire area. This has disproportionately affected the health outcomes of the most marginalized populations, like the youth our Program Partners serve. This is where the community organizations we support come in. They play such a pivotal role in responding to local and global challenges while meeting the changing needs of youth.

**Supporting these organizations and their staff is the heartbeat of CTAOP’s work**, fueling our mission to advance and invest in the health and safety of youth in Southern Africa.

For me, this heartbeat was more palpable than ever while spending time with our Program Partners at one of CTAOP’s 2023 regional Swidler Summits. As one of the leaders put it, CTAOP is an “organization that has love and honest care for the carers”. Other Partners reiterated how unique and critical the Summits’ restorative time is for them as leaders on the front lines of complex work. It’s feedback like this that validates our approach—embodying our values and utilizing CTAOP’s resources, platform, and network to be the best partner we can be in service of young people.

In this year’s report, we share our approach and impact as a **grantmaker**, a **convener**, and a **storyteller**.

There were so many great highlights to share, so we aimed to curate stories and metrics that convey not only the impact that our Program Partners wanted to share but also insight into how we stay accountable to them. Over the years, one of the things continuously pointed out to us (in the best way) is that CTAOP differs from many funders in our approach. We work very hard to hold people and relationships above numbers alone. While this does not mean there is a lack of rigor in evaluation, we deeply believe that this relational approach will yield lasting results for communities and youth while also reaffirming our shared humanity along the way.

In other words, our **“how”** has always mattered to us.

It is evident in the ways we show up for our Program Partners as more than just a funder but as a true ally. It is in the trust-based philanthropic practices that we publicly advocate and push for. It is in the pilot of a new grantmaking initiative that shifts as much decision-making as possible to those closest to the challenges. And it is in our building up of the next generation of community leadership by investing in youth leaders today.

As we look forward, our sights are set on expanding support to more community organizations, continuing the model of grantmaking and care for existing Program Partners, and exploring new offerings for young leaders beyond scholarships.

Lastly, we will continue to grow our role as a convener, leaning hard into fostering spaces for our CTAOP community to connect, restore, learn, and mobilize. These spaces hold so much power. They remind us that we are interconnected parts of something bigger, something greater than any one leader, organization, or generation. We are bound together by a shared vision of a more equitable future for all of us.

Thank you for joining us in this mission.

# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT THE CHALLENGE

South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world. Safety, access, and lack of opportunity pose critical challenges, particularly affecting those who are already the most underserved. We believe community change happens from within and community-based organizations are ideally situated to lead and create lasting positive impact. We partner with community-based organizations that support young people and communities to thrive.



*100 rapes are reported in South Africa every day.<sup>1</sup> It is estimated that **only 1 in 9 are reported.**<sup>2</sup>*

SAPS CRIME STATISTICS, APR TO JUN 2023  
<sup>2</sup>SA MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL, 2002



*Of the 1.6 million adolescents living with HIV worldwide, **about 88% live in sub-Saharan Africa.***

UNICEF, WORLD AIDS DAY REPORT (2021)



*It is estimated that **only 5% of South African Schools** provide comprehensive sexual health education.*

SOUTH AFRICA'S NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN, 2017-2022

## ABOUT US

The Charlize Theron Africa Outreach Project (CTAOP) invests in and advances the health and safety of young people in Southern Africa to create a more equitable future for all. CTAOP is a **grantmaker, convener, and storyteller**. We envision a future where ALL youth are empowered to live healthy, productive lives. CTAOP's Program Partners (grantees) work at the intersection of youth and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and help prevent and protect against gender-based violence. In addition, CTAOP's **Youth Leaders Scholarship (YLS)** program aims to cultivate and strengthen young community leaders by providing comprehensive scholarships for tertiary education, psychosocial support, and leadership skills.

# GRANTMAKING

**\$1.47M**

IN GRANTS

**16**

ORGANIZATIONS  
SUPPORTED

**88%**

FLEXIBLE & MULTI-YEAR  
FUNDING

**~590k**

YOUTH REACHED



In 2023, CTAOP began relationships with and initiated support to new Program Partners working in the SRHR and GBV space and continued our long-term support for existing ones. All our Program Partners engage young people and communities—holistically supporting youth, providing physically and emotionally safe spaces—to ultimately support an environment where youth thrive.

**In 2023, CTAOP granted \$1.467M to 16 organizations in South Africa, Rwanda, and Zambia, reaching nearly 590,000 youth—88% of the funding was flexible and multi-year.**

# PROGRAM PARTNERS IN ACTION

## Program Partners are addressing gaps and integrating more health services into their work.

- **Community Healthcare Solutions** takes a holistic approach by supporting youth in Shiyase to enroll and stay in school (including those with learning disabilities), creating opportunities for income generation, teaching SRHR through soccer, and providing psychosocial support to youth and families. As a result of their ability to bring other entities within the community together, basic services in Shiyase have improved.
- In KwaZulu-Natal, **dlalanathi** is using menstrual health education to open up SRHR discussions, identify where period poverty exists, and create connection between caregivers and young women.
- **Drama for Life** is engaging younger age groups, using age-appropriate dramatic arts to provide SRHR education and open up discussions on healthy relationships and gender norms.

## Program Partners are creating safe spaces for young people, a vital resource for youth and other underresourced populations

- **HIVSA**'s digital safe space for young people and their well-being, called We Care, provides support for topics like mental health and wellness, bullying, social pressures, financial, stress, and relationships.
- **KZN Network on Violence Against Women** turned 2 GBV hotspots into violence-free zones by focusing on prevention work. In addition, their Rapid Response Teams are the first of their kind in the country.
- Due to a lack of safe spaces in Willowfontein, **dlalanathi** met youth where they were and successfully opened a youth center. By providing this community resource, the organization is able to engage youth and activate their participation in community change.
- **Amanda Development** created 4 new safe spaces in Mitchells Plain, Cape Town, serving between 3,500-4,000 youth per month. Every young person has a risk assessment, educational support, referrals to youth-friendly clinical and psychosocial support providers, workplace readiness, and financial literacy.

## Program Partners are de-siloing work to more effectively and holistically meet the needs of youth and the communities surrounding young people.

- **Small Projects Foundation** is integrating a case management approach to their youth work, combining SRHR, mental health, ocular health, malnutrition, and school dropout programs, and leadership potential to their health service interventions.
- **Life Choices** is experimenting with pulling together their 3 in-school programs (Health4Life, Family Affairs, and Leaders Quest) to tackle social determinants of health from multiple angles and change the ecosystem around young people.

## Program Partners are increasingly helping youth build skills to get involved with their own communities because unemployment and lack of economic opportunity are barriers to youth health.

- **Philisa Abafazi Bethu** runs a safe space for survivors of GBV, including services for the LGBTQI+ population, psychosocial support, linkages to healthcare services, food, and shelter. The organization started a support group focused on the healing of young men and boys and also provides youth formerly in gangs with skills and tools to gain meaningful employment and prevent a return to gang life.
- In partnership with Beulah Africa program, **Amanda Development** trained 1,500 young people, of which 40% successfully got employment during the program's implementation.
- Young people running MTV Shuga programming at **dlalanathi** are learning skills, reaching tens of thousands of youth online and in-person, and earning a stipend.
- **Small Projects Foundation** trained 5,500 Youth Ambassadors on HIV counseling, mental health, online learning, and COVID-19 and activated them in the community, reaching over 800,000 people in the community.

# PROGRAM PARTNERS IN ACTION

## AFRICAN PARKS, BANGWEULU

Bangweulu Wetlands is a game management area in Zambia that is part of the larger African Parks portfolio. With 5 Chiefdoms (2 of which are surrounded by water) and 60,000–80,000 people living in the wetlands, reaching young people is difficult. The team at **African Parks** in Bangweulu Wetlands has rolled out a youth-led approach to SRHR—Youth Clubs that engage other youth—and their mobilization of this key population is proving to be a powerful lever in making progress towards the organization’s conservation and development goals. Engaging young people in their sexual and reproductive health journey and teaching others is a priority for the area faced with challenges like poaching, lack of access to health clinics and schools, and gender-based violence.

*“The youth paid the transport money for a pregnant youth to get to the hospital with some of their profits. [They] help buy uniforms and books for other youth.”*



**Grenda, Community Health Facilitator**  
**African Parks,**  
**Bangweulu Wetlands**

Youth Club members received peer education training in areas like menstrual health, sex and sexuality, safe and unsafe sex, early marriages, HIV, contraception—all the pressing reproductive issues. After their training, the Youth Clubs assist their communities in many ways, including referring their peers and other community members to health facilities. Part of their training is also in entrepreneurship to help them see business opportunities within a wider landscape of unemployment. Youth are involved in a restaurant, chicken rearing, and gardening, and even generate profits. While the families of these youth benefit from the profits, the community does as well. Youth have taken it upon themselves to help the greater community with things like transport to healthcare facilities for patients in need of care and educational support materials.

Currently, there are Youth Clubs in all Chiefdoms, but with two chiefdoms completely surrounded by water, transport challenges continue to hamper efforts to reach young people in the most remote places. Views of youth as society’s trouble-makers are beginning to be replaced—with this changing mindset about youth and their ability to actively contribute to the well-being of their communities, demand for these Youth Clubs is on the rise.

# PROGRAM PARTNERS IN ACTION

## AGAHOZO-SHALOM YOUTH VILLAGE

The **Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village** (ASYV) empowers orphaned and vulnerable Rwandan youth to build lives of dignity and contribute to a better world. This youth village offers young people a family environment, formal education, health and wellness, and youth-led life enrichment applied programming throughout the 4 years of secondary schooling. CTAOP began our relationship with the ASYV in 2016, supporting the Village to establish sexual and reproductive health programming and youth clubs that focus on the empowerment of girls.

Back in 2022, ASYV launched a comprehensive strategy, led by students and alumni, to better integrate gender equity into every aspect of their programming. This past year saw an enormous amount of activities in this space—from the launch of the ASYV Women’s Network in support of female staff members to conversations and events to challenge gender stereotypes. ASYV held a STEM Fair for girls with representatives from TechWomen, hosted a Walk with Me art for healing event celebrating art made by women, attended events that encourage girls to break into traditionally male-dominated extracurricular activities and career paths, and ran a We For She game night that included basketball and karate.

Women’s History Month celebrations featured art, poetry, sports, and powerful conversations. ASYV’s Female Solidarity Legacy celebrated its 11th anniversary in June with a gender equity retreat, providing participants with skills to help build a sustainable culture of gender equity at ASYV. And the Girl Up gender equity club hosted its annual Lady Power Summit that included sessions with Rwandan women professionals and a session designed to build the leadership potential of women in East Africa run by Resonate.

To top off this extraordinary year, ASYV student Teta Deborah Butati was elected ASYV student body president, and Ishimwe Divine was elected vice president, marking the first time in the history of ASYV’s student government that both positions have been held by young women.

*“Because of this support since 2016, it has allowed us to put gender equity at the center of our strategy.”*



**JC, Executive Director**  
**Agahozo-Shalom**  
**Youth Village**

*“I wanted to be president because there had not been many girl presidents, and I thought, why not make it normal. We need to make a change.”*



**Teta Deborah Butati,**  
**Student Body President**  
**Agahozo-Shalom Youth**  
**Village**

# PROGRAM PARTNERS IN ACTION

## BRAVE ROCK GIRL

**BRAVE Rock Girl** enables six Senior Leaders (all young women) to inspire and empower 15 girls each in the Manenberg community, a neighborhood plagued with severe gang violence and high poverty levels outside of Cape Town, South Africa. This unique approach (depth vs breadth) means that girls are getting long-term, consistent support, and accessing opportunities they wouldn't have otherwise—Miché finished her Bachelor of Arts in TV & Film Studies at City Varsity in Cape Town; Ameera is in Indonesia for a ten-month-long cultural exchange; and Theslin is in Kentucky to study digital media communication as part of the Community College Initiative Program. While not all the BRAVE girls access tertiary opportunities, they are experiencing success in other ways too. Kelly, a Senior Leader, shares how proud she is to see so many girls committed. Parents frequently share their gratitude for the work that BRAVE Rock Girl is doing—“there is hope for their child by being part of this organization,” shared Lorna, BRAVE's Program Coordinator.

Their approach is bold—currently, three young women, all from Manenberg (Kelly, Audery, and Lee-Anne, BRAVE's Senior Leaders) are running programs and simultaneously learning to run the organization. Their intention is to be fully girl-led in the future. This is not an easy feat considering Manenburg's immense challenges.

Reflecting on their biggest success in 2023, Audery states, “Resilience—the girls are very resilient during this period... during the gang violence spreading like wildfire. For the girls to still continue to believe in themselves and where they are going is very powerful for us.”

*“Girls voice[s are] heard. They are becoming more confident and articulate in their self-expression. Not scared to share their opinion. They are open to being themselves.”*



**Audery, Senior Leader  
BRAVE Rock Girl**

*“When you have to go to school in machine gun fire, it's very easy to give up on life. The girls need a place that you can allow yourself to be vulnerable, and build that internal capacity to get through in one piece and receive consistent support.”*



**Lorna, Program  
Coordinator  
BRAVE Rock Girl**

# IN THEIR WORDS

**We released an anonymous survey on our grant work for 2023.  
Here's what some of our Program Partners had to say...**

## **On Funding**

*"The CTAOP funding is allowing us to grow faster. It is such an amplifier of the services we are offering in the community."*

*"CTAOP has helped us to provide services to youth but has also greatly contributed to our growth as an organization."*

*"[The core grant] has enabled young people to realise that they can achieve MORE."*

*"CTAOP has supported us in brainstorming challenges in our implementation as well as exploring alternative interventions that may enhance the delivery of our core CTAOP programme but that may also result in the development of new programme areas."*

*"These types of support have enabled us to closed existing gaps, explore areas that we would not otherwise have the funding and flexibility to pursue!"*

## **On Care & Accompaniment**

*"This initiative is extremely needed and helpful. CTAOP to my knowledge is the only funder who offers this level of support and really journeys with an organization and seeks to understand the organization. The willingness of CTAOP staff and heart of service is something is felt, what makes CTAOP stand out even more is there appears to be a strong sense to get to know all staff involved within the process of the areas which is funded. This allows people to feel like it is more of a partnership than a traditional funder to grantee relationship."*

*"We greatly appreciate your openness. It feels as if you are a true partner to our organisation."*

## **On Being in Relationship with CTAOP**

*"CTAOP stands out as one of the most collaborative and collegial funders we have."*

*"CTAOP has changed the way I have seen development and understood it in the past. [T]heir work is driven by genuine passion to change peoples lives and their is so much consideration of the priorities of the partner organisation such that you feel obligated to deliver because they are a friend available to journey and hold your hands during the implementation journey. They are one organisation that have love and honest care for the carers."*

*"The quality of staff you have is outstanding! The listening, understanding of the work we do and the context, insight, reflectiveness, creativity, commitment to relationship, respect and realness is unique and powerful. Your team take us seriously as partners, experts in the field and seek to enable us to be more effective is supporting and sustaining change. Serious, strategic, driven and open to mutual learning. Thank you."*

*"Amazing individuals with a grounded energy that is supportive and embraces the uniqueness of every individual, situation or context and meets them where they are."*

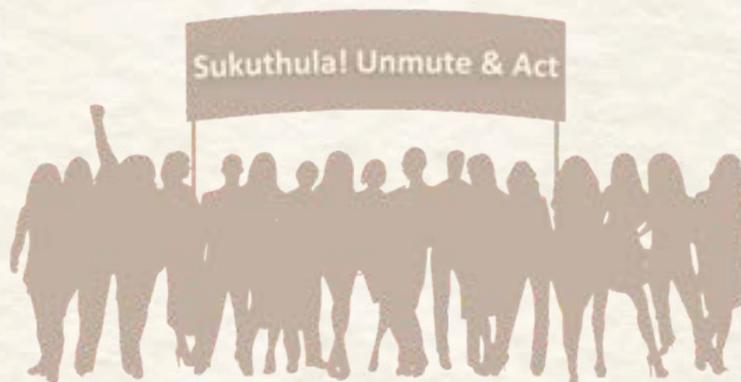
*"The CTAOP team is awesome! They have the ability to breakdown the power dynamic that exists in many donor/grantee relationships and acknowledge and value the contribution each of their grantee makes in the developmental sector."*

*"The relationship is exceptional in that CTAOP take keen interest in understanding a program partner challenges and are always open to new ideas that gives room for an organization to express themselves. My working with CTAOP has been a relief to a lot of pressure that was previously experienced because of funding."*

*"We have an excellent relationship, CTAOP. We feel completely comfortable in our communications and to approach you for anything. The CTAOP team is always respectful, warm and welcoming and open in their dealings with us which makes everything easy."*

# PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING

## SUKUTHULA! CO-FUNDING INITIATIVE



In partnership with South African foundation, DG Murray Trust (DGMT), and The Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation (ETAf) we launched **Sukuthula!**, meaning “do not keep quiet” in isiXhosa to respond to the high incidence of gender-based violence (GBV) and HIV/AIDS prevalence in South Africa. It was designed to fund small community-based organizations that typically do not readily have access to grant funding. This was achieved by applying the principles of participatory grantmaking, which encourages community-led decision-making to allocate funding.

A community representative panel made up of activists, youth, law enforcement, government, survivors, nonprofits, educators, and academics decided on the criteria for the initiative, including prioritizing two geographic areas that lack donor investments: the Eastern Cape and Limpopo. The panel also determined the types of organizations, grant amounts, and programmatic focus areas for the initiative and made all grant decisions through a review and deliberation process. The panel chose 37 community-based organizations to receive multi-year, flexible funding as well as capacity strengthening workshops starting in Q1 of 2024. We look forward to the community impact journey and learning over the next three years.



THE  
ELIZABETH TAYLOR  
AIDS FOUNDATION



PHOTO BY SHEN SCOTT



PHOTO BY SHEN SCOTT



PHOTO BY SHEN SCOTT

# CONVENING



PROGRAM PARTNERS CONVENE IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA FOR ONE OF THREE CTAOP REGIONAL SWIDLER SUMMITS IN 2023  
SWIDLER SUMMIT VIDEO (2023) FILMED AND PRODUCED BY ONEPASS PRODUCTIONS

Alongside multi-year funding, CTAOP's role as a community builder and convener emerged as a vital and unique service we provide. Our core convenings are called **Swidler Summits**—named after the late Alisa Swidler, a passionate philanthropist and CTAOP Ubuntu Council member. In 2023, we hosted 3 regional Swidler Summits for our Program Partners. These 4-day in-person gatherings gave the leaders we support a critical moment to rest, recharge, connect, and collaborate. The Summits also included skills building, sharing of program models, and tools for organizations to increase their effectiveness. In all three settings, we explored the obstacles youth face and the common challenges that organizations experience. The content also responded to the needs of the organizations attending, based on their pre-Summit inputs. These moments spent in relationship with one another bring joy, rejuvenation, healing, and creativity to all participants, and CTAOP is proud to be able to hold this space each year for self-care and collective power.



PHOTO BY NKOSI SIBINDI



PHOTO BY BULUMKO GANA



PHOTO BY SHEN SCOTT

## KwaZulu-Natal

We focused on monitoring & evaluation (M&E) and fundraising as those were the biggest needs identified by the participants.



PHOTO BY NKOSI SIBINDI

*“The Summit is a great gift to the team as it offers a space for respite and learning. The support that CTAOP provides has been extremely helpful for our team as it has often supported our work or aspects that we could not find other funding for.”*

*“I was so aware of how much I love and value the people in the room.....CTAOP has done something really special in supporting us to build relationship with each other.”*

*“Combining programmatic discussions with Care and Accompaniment sets CTAOP aside from many other donors. CTAOP is able to create safe spaces that allow for vulnerability, relaxation and free thinking that triggers creativity and innovation.”*

## Cape Town

We focused on programmatic resources for gender-based violence and LGBTQIA+ youth, as well as organizational development challenges like succession planning and board relationships.



PHOTO BY BULUMKO GANA

## Johannesburg

We held space for an HIV/SRHR-specific session around consent and reframed our work with the structure of individuals, family units, and communities to help (more developed) organizations see their role affecting change at many levels.



PHOTO BY SHEN SCOTT

# STORYTELLING



CHARLIZE THERON SPEAKING ABOUT SRHR & GENDER EQUITY AT THE 2023 GLOBAL CITIZEN FESTIVAL

Storytelling can inform, inspire, move, and connect people and resources. It is one of the most powerful ways to advocate for change. In 2023, CTAOP organized, hosted, authored, shared resources, and served as facilitators, panelists, interviewees, interviewers, and participants in over 40 activities related to allyship and advocacy in the spaces of youth health, GBV prevention, and trust-based philanthropy. Additionally, CTAOP hosted, co-hosted, or facilitated 15 in-person gatherings, workshops, and panels (10 with Program Partners). To support capacity strengthening, we connected Program Partners to funding and grant opportunities, fellowship and bursaries, and organizational and programmatic resources. In addition, CTAOP team members participated in 7 publications about trust-based philanthropy, 3 podcasts, and 14 speaking engagements.



PHOTO BY RYAN HARTFORD



PHOTO BY CTAOP



PHOTO BY BULUMKO GANA



IPASA article published in South Africa titled **"Journeying towards trust-based philanthropy"** >



CTAOP's Founder spoke at the Town & Country Philanthropy Summit and was featured in **Town & Country Magazine** >



CTAOP and Program Partner, KZN Network on Violence against Women featured on the **Systems Catalysts** podcast



Associate Program Director Jessie Chiliza discusses the philanthropic landscape in Africa on **Conversations on African Philanthropy for CAPSI**



CTAOP's Chief Program Director Lorrie Fair Allen spoke to FCAA on **Trust Based Philanthropy** >



CTAOP participated in a panel called, **"What Does Grantee Accountability Look Like in Trust-Based Philanthropy?"** as part of a series on Demystifying Trust-Based Philanthropy

# YOUTH LEADERS SCHOLARSHIP



PHOTO BY BULUMKO GANA; YOUTH LEADERS SCHOLARSHIP VIDEO (2023) FILMED AND PRODUCED BY ONEPASS PRODUCTIONS

CTAOP's Youth Leaders Scholarship (YLS) program aims to cultivate and strengthen community leaders in South Africa by providing comprehensive scholarships for tertiary education, including individually tailored academic counseling, psychosocial support, and leadership skills-building work.

In 2023, CTAOP continued to support our 22 YL Scholars as part of the Youth Leaders Scholarship program with wrap-around support including leadership training and mental health and wellness. To date, 6 Scholars have finished their Bachelor's degrees and are on to various endeavors, including pursuing Honours (an additional year of specialized education), training and internships, and full-time employment.



PHOTOS BY BULUMKO GANA



### **Miché**

Interning at Life Choices after finishing her Bachelor of Arts in TV & Film Studies; she will also have an opportunity to do an exchange program for a year in Germany.



### **Aya**

Working in the HIV/AIDS space as a Community Care Worker after securing her Bachelor of Science in Human Movement Science.



### **Luyanda**

Pursuing her Honours after completing her Bachelor of Arts in Humanities.



### **Siphesihle**

Pursuing her Honours after completing her Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting.



### **Allan**

Working as a teacher in his home province of Mpumalanga after completing his Bachelor's in Education for Senior Phase & FET.



### **Nokwanda**

Self-employed as a physiotherapist after securing her Bachelor's in Science in Physiotherapy.

# 2023

IMPACT REPORT

**We are so grateful for our CTAOP community.  
Join us in making an impact in 2024!**

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