




# ANNUAL REPORT 2018



A group of young Black people, including a man and a woman in the foreground, are smiling and looking at a document together. The woman is wearing a blue and pink striped headband. The background shows a brick building and a clear sky.

“ One of the sayings in our country is *Ubuntu* - the essence of being human. *Ubuntu* speaks particularly about the fact that you can't exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness. You can't be human all by yourself, and when you have this quality - *Ubuntu* - you are known for your generosity. We think of ourselves far too frequently as just individuals, separated from one another, whereas you are connected and what you do affects the whole world. When you do well, it spreads out; it is for the whole of humanity.”

--Bishop Desmond Tutu



## MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

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Dearest Morafe<sup>1</sup>,

We did it! Together, we graduated our first cohort of Ambassadors. With your support 18 ambassadors celebrated this momentous milestone with a four day trip to Cape Town in October of 2018.

One ambassador expressed to me her original disbelief that the Ambassadors would be able to raise their contribution of the Cape Town trip expenses. At the onset, she thought I was heartless for making kids raise money instead of simply taking them. I was pleased to hear her share her realization of how much she learned from the experience. She stated she boarded the plane with pride knowing that she, and her fellow ambassadors worked hard and earned the trip. She said she felt “empowered” and understood the value of the lessons learned during the fundraising.

For me, the curiosity, wonder, joy and amazement displayed by the Ambassadors and Facilitators throughout the trip made every sacrifice worthwhile. Upon our return, I saw in their eyes a steadfast determination to succeed, anchored in a solid belief in their own abilities. Their convictions reflected and rejuvenated my own desires to push forward to bring my vision for IAWA fully to life.

I thank you not just for investing in IAWA, but also for investing in our youth. We commonly agree that the youth are our future but we must also remember that they are our present. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that every child has the opportunity to learn, grow and dream in a healthy, supportive, and nurturing environment.

With your support, I look forward to continuing what we started in 2015. Thank you for accompanying me on this journey.

In Gratitude,

Meisha Robinson  
Founder and Chief Executive of Hope  
I Am, We Are

[1] Setswana: community

# **WE ARE DEDICATED TO CREATING A WORLD WHERE ALL YOUTH ARE SOCIALLY ENGAGED, GLOBALLY AWARE, AND ECONOMICALLY FREE.**

We strive to empower youth with the tools to confidently own their futures. We employ an experiential approach to give youth knowledge of self, stretch their understanding of who they can be, and help them develop an entrepreneurial mindset so that they can create their own pathways to realize their goals.



# BOKGONI EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME

Starting as a cohort in 8th grade, over four years our Ambassadors attend three annual Bokgoni Empowerment Camps during school holidays.



- Goes beyond just academic learning and **encourages the development of the whole child**—one who is knowledgeable, healthy, motivated, and engaged
- **Creates a support network** for youth that includes caring, nurturing adults, peer mentors, advocates, role models, and a cohort of positive peers
- **Enables youth to have a voice** and creates a learning culture that is uniquely relevant to them
- **Teaches life skills** and work related values
- **Exposes youth to diverse life options**, career paths, and postsecondary educational and training opportunities
- **Creates opportunities for youth** to assume leadership roles, develop responsibility, self-reliance, and initiative, and acquire marketable skills





## MEET IAWA FACILITATOR SUCCESS

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*The program has had a positive impact in my life. The ambassadors and the other facilitators too. Within the program, I have learned how to be a brother to the ambassadors. I have learned how to think without limits because of the fun and corporate activities we do.*

*Many of the ambassadors come from disadvantaged or abusive backgrounds. When they are all at the camps though, you would swear that they have a great second home with Meisha as the mother, us the facilitators as their big bros and sisters, and them as equal siblings. The camps build love amongst us and teach us how to help other, in order to help ourselves, so that we could all be one.*

*I am emotionally stronger and it is all because of the ambassadors, their stories, and teachings they give and share every day at the camps. I am mentally strong with the help of the program's founder who teaches us how to be self-sufficient and that nothing in the world is impossible."*



## MEET IAWA FACILITATOR AMMELIA

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*IAWA creates a platform for young and shy adults to showcase their talent, get out of their cocoon/comfort zones, become their best, see the world in many ways, and change the perspective of what they thought they knew.*

*I've learnt to be strong willed, to enjoy life, to help where I can, to actually care for other people, to be a better person (and mom too), to consider other people's feelings, to find my place in life and the world, to ask for help (still a process), to not be walked over, to communicate better about everything, and be kind.*

*To sum it all up I have had a great experience in the programme and it is so amazing to see people who care about the wellbeing and future of our young South Africans. I hope the ambassadors will take whatever they have learnt in the programme and apply it in every situation they come across in life whether personal or school-wise."*



# OUR JOURNEY

2015



2016



## JULY/AUG

Conducted fundraisers in Washington, DC to launch IAWA and support inaugural camp.

## SEPTEMBER

Recruited 21 grade 8 learners to participate in pilot. Learners submitted an application, an interest statement, and school marks to be considered.

## OCTOBER

Hosted inaugural Bokgoni Camp. Provided the learners an understanding of self. There was a closing ceremony to certify the participants as IAWA ambassadors.

## NOVEMBER

Ambassadors met with Kgosi Leruo Molotlegi<sup>[1]</sup> at Legota<sup>[2]</sup> to discuss letters they wrote him outlining community issues from a social advocacy and root cause analysis project.

I Am, We Are officially becomes a tax-exempt entity in the United States of America.

## APRIL

Ambassadors explored the power of words at the 2nd Bokgoni Camp, while enriching their understanding of self in terms of what they uniquely contribute to a team.

Ambassadors celebrated their exemplary behavior, display of leadership, and teamwork at the camp, as measured by Bothu/Ubuntu<sup>[3]</sup> points, with an outing to Rustenburg Municipal Pool.

## JUNE

Hosted Moonlit Soul, a fundraiser on the rooftop of a Washington, DC hotel, that intersected visual art, live music, and poetry to provide a unique entertaining experience.

## JULY

In preparation for Grade 10 class selection, Ambassadors researched careers paths and a Royal Bafokeng Institute representative explained how class selection effects university entrance.

## AUGUST

Ambassadors toured Constitution Hill in Johannesburg, with youth visiting South Africa from Washington, DC through Global Kids.

## SEPTEMBER

Bokgoni Empowerment Programme, IAWA's South Africa subsidiary, registered as a NPO in South Africa.

## OCTOBER

IAWA hosted a career symposium. More than 25 professionals and six tertiary students spoke to Ambassadors and guests. Mmemogolo Molotlegi<sup>[4]</sup> was also a keynote speaker.

Ambassadors attend a Platinum Stars Game and met with Platinum Stars' coach and two of the players. SuperSport captured and aired the experience for their program I Love PSL.

<sup>[1]</sup> Setswana: the King's office  
<sup>[2]</sup> King of the Royal Bafokeng Nation

<sup>[3]</sup> Setswana: humanity, human kindness, humanity to others, I am what I am because of who we all are  
<sup>[4]</sup> Queen Mother of the Royal Bafokeng Nation



2017

2018

## FEBRUARY

IAWA hosted a fundraiser at Reed Smith LLP, in Washington, DC. Dr. Kebalepile Mokgethi, Royal Bafokeng Nation Department of Health and Social Development Services, spoke.

## APRIL

Entrepreneurship is introduced at 5th Bokgoni camp. Ambassadors researched locations, created a budget, and brainstormed fundraisers for their capstone trip. Cape Town is selected. Mathematics tutoring is integrated.

## JUNE

At this camp, ambassadors learned about marketing, financial management, and business management and applied learnings by pitching, strategizing and planning their fundraisers.

American Youth from Jelani Girls and Ambassadors went on a game drive in Pilanesburg Park, volunteered at a home for Orphans and Vulnerable Children, toured Soweto, and visited the Apartheid Museum.

## OCTOBER

Ambassadors continued planning fundraisers and sought support from organizations and individuals to execute plans. For seed money they collected donations from community.

Louisiana based Brothers Empowered to Teach partnered with IAWA to host a conference for boys called I Am Man. Young males from both programs led the conference.

Ambassadors volunteer at RBS Jr NBA Finals to raise funds to travel to Cape Town.

## APRIL

Ambassadors planned and conducted a car wash fundraiser, while continuing to prepare to host a talent show and concert fundraisers to raise funds to travel to Cape Town.

IAWA hosted a youth film festival. Films created by IAWA, with support from Pennsylvania based Poppyn, Kitsong, Bafokeng Youth Centre, and Poppyn were screened alongside a documentary about IAWA, I Am Because We Are.

## JULY

Another car wash and a talent show was held and the Ambassadors cleaned yards to raise funds for Cape Town. Ambassadors also launched a crowdfunding campaign.

Ambassadors attended a career day at Wits University and toured UNISA Florida Campus. IAWA hosted a workshop for Ambassadors on how to complete university and financial aid applications.

## AUGUST

United States Tour of *I Am Because We Are* documentary kicks off in Washington, DC.

## SEPTEMBER

Ambassadors organized a Battle of the DJs as their last fundraiser—a visiting American and South African DJs competed. The Ambassadors surpassed their goal and raised R44 417 total to travel to Cape Town.

## OCTOBER

Ambassadors traveled to Cape Town for their capstone project.

IAWA celebrated the completion of its pilot cohort with a graduation ceremony at the Royal Marang Hotel hosted by Kgosi Leruo Molotlegi.

# BOKGONI PILOT HIGHLIGHTS

Because of the contributions that we have received from individual donors, organizations, corporations and the generous support of the Royal Bafokeng Nation we have been able to implement 10 camps over the past 3.5 years. These resources have given us the opportunity to provide our ambassadors, youth facilitators and volunteers with experiences that shaped them personally and professionally. Expanding their capacity to collaborate, adapt, and problem-solve while also building their confidence, self-efficacy and motivation.



3.5 YEARS



10 CAMPS



21 AMBASSADORS

Youth participants are called Ambassadors. They are encouraged to represent IAWA's principals and values in their communities.

6 YOUTH FACILITATORS

Unemployed or underemployed youth from the community. All received a stipend.

13 AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS

Self-funded volunteers attended camps as facilitators/mentors.

86% RETENTION OF AMBASSADORS



5

CROSS CULTURAL  
IMMERSIONS



10

SERVICE & LEARNING  
EXCURSIONS



# OUR IMPACT

IAWA is focused on empowering youth with the mindset and skill set necessary to become self-sufficient adults. We apply a holistic approach to youth development that supports the social, emotional, psychological, and spiritual well-being of our participants. We believe that possessing the drive to establish and achieve goals and aspirations is rooted in how one views themselves (I Am) and their place in the world (We Are).

## FROM GRADE 8 TO 11

### Goals & Aspirations



**+14%**

### Empathy

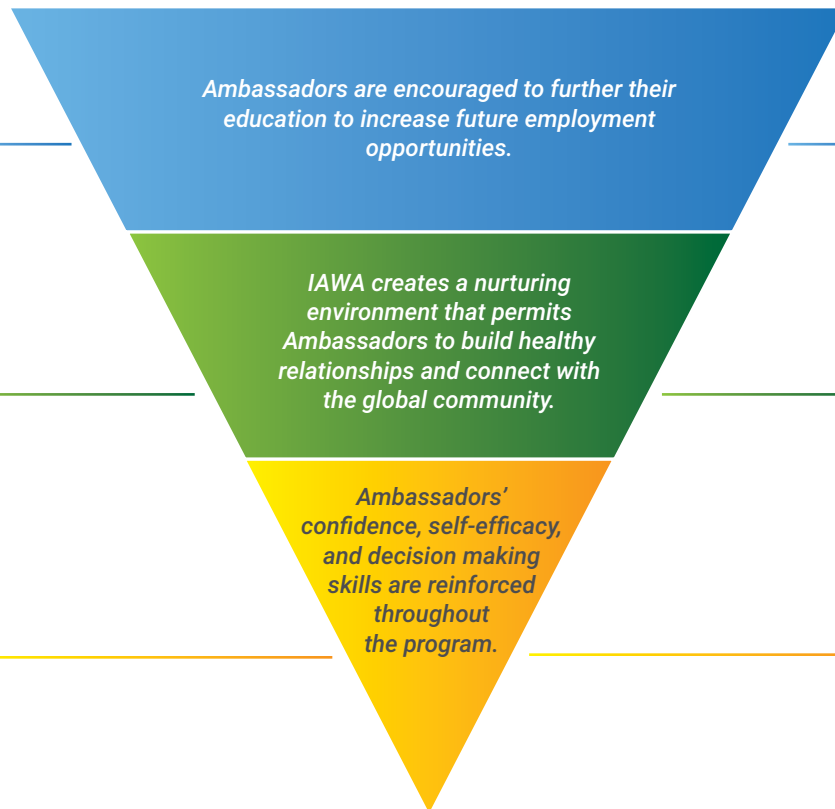


**+40%**

### Self-Efficacy



**+36%**



### Because of their participation in IAWA, Ambassadors...

**73%** Became more interested in going to school.

**93%** Feel better prepared than peers to pursue post-matric goals.

**93%** Are more motivated to pursue tertiary education.

**93%** Feel they get along better with other people their age

**100%** Feel more comfortable saying "no" to things they know are wrong

**80%** Feel more confident

**93%** Feel more empowered to make better decisions

For evaluation, IAWA uses a quantitative and qualitative assessment tool that includes a survey and six long response questions. The survey questions were taken from the 2007/2008 California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS 2007/2008). An exit survey based on the Colorado Trust's After-School Initiative's Toolkit for Evaluating Positive Youth Development was also administered.



## MEET IAWA AMBASSADOR MILISI

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*I have always been a really bright student from primary but I didn't have confidence and didn't believe in myself. I was surrounded by people who always brought my spirit down and made me sad. Through IAWA, I was introduced to something called "personal consciousness", which is mainly about knowing who you are and embracing the kind of person you are and never try to be anything else but being true to yourself. Ever since I have kept this quote to my heart "To thine own self be true."*

*When we were taught about entrepreneurship I had to apply a new technique called habits of mind which was aimed in making my mind more powerful and positive because entrepreneurship is a really hard thing to do. We did practical entrepreneurship this year when we were raising funds to get ourselves to Cape Town as our closing camp for the year of 2018.*

*That journey was really difficult because we did car washes, asked for donations and organized a concert. This was not easy because we had to get ourselves out there and deal with rejection and sometimes you would be rejected in a really rude way, but you had to not give up. This taught me about the importance of teamwork and spirit and not giving up at what you want that is why the habits of mind were important for me.*

*Additionally, I am proud of myself and other ambassadors for being able to organize, plan, conduct and delegate a concert, talent show and car wash. For me personally it taught me independence and taught me that if you put your mind in something you want and put in hard work it is possible nothing is impossible.*

*My journey with IAWA has been a really good, amazing, challenging, awesome and an inspirational journey. I have grown so much and traveled a lot through it and learnt about different leaders from SA and the world. Truly IAWA will forever be in my heart."*



# 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

## I AM MAN

*I Am Man* was a one-day conference focused on empowering boys and young men, of the Royal Bafokeng Nation. Conference participants explored what does it mean to be a man, within the context of Steve Biko's words, "Black man, you are on your own." IAWA partnered with Brothers Empowered to Teach (BE2T), a New Orleans, Louisiana based organization, to host the conference. BE2T traveled with seven of their fellows, college-aged young adults whom all but one it was their first time outside of the US. IAWA youth facilitators and BET2 fellows co-facilitated the sessions.

Through this cross-cultural experience all of the men in attendance, young and old, saw they shared more similarities than differences growing up as black men. The forum allowed the young men in attendance to truly open up and share some of the obstacles and challenges they were currently facing. They were able to see they were not alone and there were others around them they could lean on.



# 2018 HIGHLIGHTS



## YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL

In 2017, POPPIN Coordinator, Nuala Cabral, worked with youth from IAWA and Bafokeng Youth Centre to create short films. Film subjects included Nyaope, getting tested for HIV/AIDS, and the importance of parents talking to their children. Twilight Ebb Productions shot and edited a documentary sharing the stories of youth affected by unemployment and IAWA's work to empower them.

Twilight Ebb Producer, James Williams, along with Nuala and three POPPIN student filmmakers from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania returned to Bafokeng in 2018 to screen the films. Students from Kitsong also submitted a film for screening.

All cast and crew were invited to the Rustenburg Ster-Kinekor to view their films on the big screen. A community screening of all films followed, at the Bafokeng Conference Centre, with panel discussions after each film. Six films in total were screened. IAWA Ambassadors were the MCs.





# 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

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## UNIVERSITY PREP

Ambassadors visited three universities--University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), UNISA Florida Campus (a Science Campus Regional Service Centre), and the University of Cape Town (UCT). Ambassadors attended a career day at Wits, while they had a hands on day of learning about robotics, chemistry, astrophysics and other science and engineering fields as they toured labs and conducted experiments at UNISA. At UCT Ambassadors met with an admissions counselor to learn more about the application process.

Ambassadors also participated in a daylong workshop to learn how to complete university and financial aid applications. Young professional volunteers from Johannesburg and the local community walked Ambassadors step-by-step through the process.



# 2018 HIGHLIGHTS



## CAPE TOWN

The Ambassadors worked the RBS NBA Jr. finals and organized car washes, yard cleanings, talent shows, and a Battle of the DJs to raise funds to travel to Cape Town.

After raising more than R44 000, eighteen Ambassadors and two Facilitators took their first trip to Cape Town. They spent four days visiting Cape Town sites including Robben Island, Table Mountain, Penguin Beach, and Cape of Good Hope. Ambassadors also visited community projects Gangstar Café, ikhaya le Langa, and Makukhanye Art Room and Shack Theater.





# 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

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## CLOSING CEREMONY AND GRADUATION

Our inaugural Ambassadors celebrated the end of the pilot with a breakfast graduation ceremony hosted by Kgosi Leruo Molotlegi at the Royal Marang Hotel. Parents and community members were on hand to hear presentations from the Ambassadors.





## MEET IAWA FACILITATOR LERATO



2015 was the year I realised that I was broken and needed healing and fast. Sometimes in life we give up and block every little thing that hurt us. We bury them so deep in our souls but when they come out lashing you won't have control over the rage. Ever since I was young, say the age of 5, I lost myself to pain and I grew up with it.

Through this programme (IAWA), I have taken a step to take over my life and also discover myself; it really has been a bumpy road. With the tools that IAWA offered, it made the healing and self-discovery quite easy. We had a psychologist come and speak to us in the circle of trust, which this was my very first step to healing. Other steps were the books that we had the chance to read (my step to self-discovery), the camps we had with the kids and as I got to know them I saw that some were the younger version of me.

IAWA has made me strong, a warrior. It has made me believe in myself and given me courage. It has helped me to realize that I have more potential than I think.

IAWA gives us the opportunity to find ourselves, discover new things, learn new cultures, travel to new places, and learn to love one another. It gave us the opportunity to grow and be comfortable in our own way. Most of all it provided a safe place for us."



# FINANCIALS

INCOME STATEMENT	USD		ZAR	
	FY2017	FY2018	FY2017	FY2018
Revenue	\$44,627	\$40,706	607,054 ZAR	523,819 ZAR
Program Costs	\$16,347	\$44,569	222,368 ZAR	573,528 ZAR
Net surplus/(deficit)	\$28,280	(\$3,863)	384,686 ZAR	(49,709) ZAR

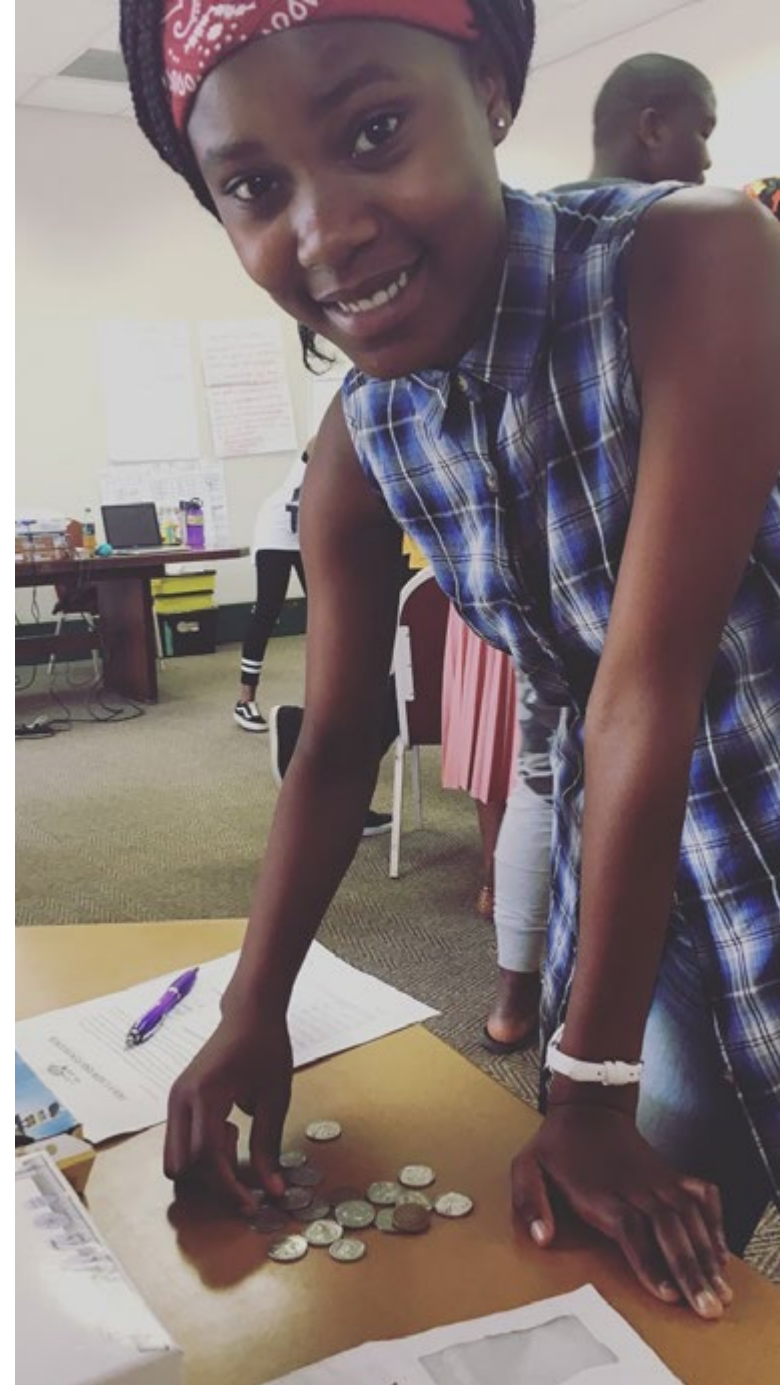
BALANCE SHEET	USD		ZAR	
	FY2017	FY2018	FY2017	FY2018
Assets	\$342	-	4,451 ZAR	4,451 ZAR
Cash in Bank	\$30,269	\$25,438	394,325 ZAR	394,325 ZAR
Total Assets	\$30,611	\$25,438	398,776 ZAR	398,776 ZAR
Retained Earnings	\$29,435	\$25,572	401,419 ZAR	351,709 ZAR
Currency Translation Reserve	\$1,175	(\$134)	(2,643) ZAR	(2,881) ZAR
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$30,611</b>	<b>\$25,438</b>	<b>398,776 ZAR</b>	<b>348,829 ZAR</b>

## Notes

IAWA's fiscal year end is June 30.

Financials are compiled and unaudited

Revenue includes support from Royal Bafokeng Nation, individual contributors and in-kind support



We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who helped us bring our vision to life. Our work would not be possible without the contributions of these generous individuals, organizations, corporations, and partners since our inception in 2015 (July 2015-June 2018).

## STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Brothers Empowered 2 Teach  
Buck Lodge Middle School  
Common Truce  
Generate Abundance

Global Kids  
Jelani Girls  
Just Act Strategy  
Kurian Consulting

POPPYN  
Royal Bafokeng Institute  
Royal Bafokeng Administration, Department of  
Health and Social Development Services

The Respect Alliance  
Twilight Ebb Productions  
Uphold  
World of Money

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Royal Bafokeng Nation

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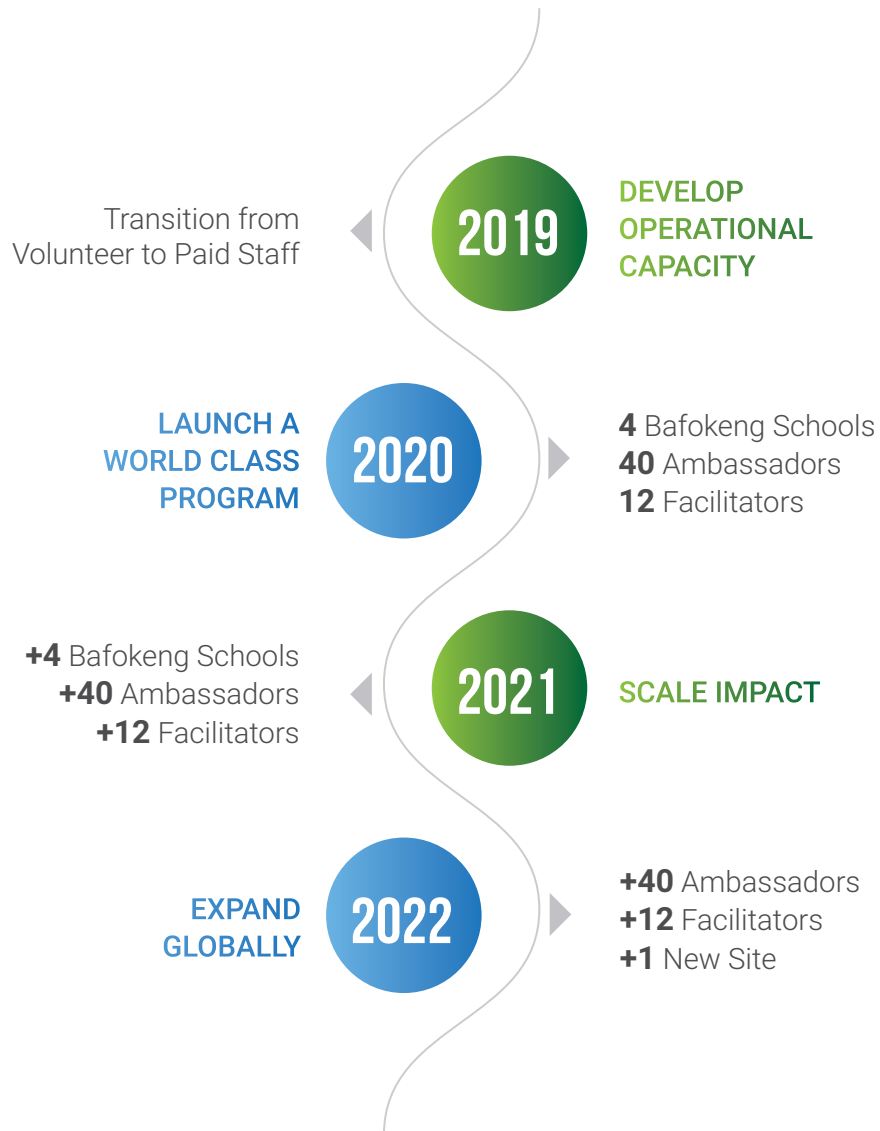
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# OUR VISION



Our journey is just beginning. The pilot gave us an in-depth and practical understanding of the desires of youth, the challenges youth face, and the resources youth need to succeed. Over the next year, we will be applying what we learned to reshape our curriculum and programming, while building the infrastructure to support our long term vision for sustainable growth across the African Diaspora.

Our biggest lesson learned is that we need to engage parents, schools, and the community to create an integrated empowerment structure. We want to ensure that the places where the Ambassadors spend the majority of their time--home, school, and community--are positive, safe spaces that support their social, emotional, psychological, and spiritual well-being. To do so, we are evolving our model to include community-centered outreach and training that will enhance parents and teachers' social and emotional intelligence.

Moreover, in the pilot we witnessed the significant positive impact the program had on the youth facilitators. Moving forward, we are increasing our direct support services and programming for youth facilitators to enhance their employability and get them on the path to achieving their career goals.

By building the foundation of our organizational structure and approach on the insights and data analytics gleaned from the pilot, IAWA will be poised to launch across the eight high schools in the Royal Bafokeng Nation starting in 2020. We will continue to employ design thinking and a community-centric approach that respects the voice of youth to ensure our programming is relevant, responsive, and impactful.



**CREATING A WORLD  
WHERE ALL YOUTH  
ARE SOCIALLY ENGAGED,  
GLOBALLY AWARE,  
AND ECONOMICALLY FREE**

[iamweareyouth.org](http://iamweareyouth.org)



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