

Taung Skills Training Centre

The days of poverty are numbered in Taung

'Me 'Manovember is passionate about her work at the Taung Skills Training Centre, a rurally-based community pre-vocational school of which she is the principal. She is proud of the centre's contribution to the development of the Taung community:

"Our centre contributes a lot in the fight against poverty. It admits students from the level of primary school graduate and provides courses in agriculture, solar technology, building construction, metal work and carpentry. After two years of training, our students can start their own enterprises. We also provide training for the Taung community – 200 people have learned sewing and tailoring. We have trained our people in trench watering, food production and fruit production. We work very hard – we have to generate our own funds to pay the instructors, buy teaching materials and training equipment. Through the DW we have already acquired some machinery – we have a generator, welding equipment and a solar oven. He is also helping to develop a curriculum that will be approved by the Ministry of Education and Training. He is also helping us to raise funds to build a girls' dormitory. There are many out of school youth who need skills to start their own businesses. This school is helping many of them."

"Peter (the DW) is a source of support to me. I like him because he does not do for us- we all do together. He asks for our opinions and does not provide us with answers every time there is a problem. He welcomes it when we disagree with him."

"I wish the Government could give us more support because rural areas are the worst hit with unemployment and poverty because of retrenchments in the South African mines and HIV/AIDS. Our school is already seeing positive results from the training we provide to our students: they helped somebody who lost his house by rebuilding it; they built a coffin for a baby of a destitute family. We are addressing the needs of the community in very practical ways and we are also equipping the community with skills to do it themselves."

"Skillshare has helped us with Peter because we are producing better quality products; we are harvesting water and farming with chickens and pigs. Once we are able to stand on our feet, we will be able to pay our instructors and provide more courses and make Taung a model school for rural development."