

### **A South African journey**

*Margery Povall, chair of Thatu writes:* I was driving through a parched flatland near the sea heavily populated by people living in shacks. Winding between their homes along narrow sandy paths, I suddenly came upon a small oasis of green – it was the only green I had seen for miles. Four months ago it was like its surroundings: just a patch of sea sand, but now it is a flourishing vegetable garden.



### **Paul succeeds with the help of Thatu – and his scarecrow**

The small green triangle protected by a scarecrow made of scraps of polystyrene is the garden of Paul, an unemployed man who can now feed his two small children. And, by transforming his neighbour's patch, he hopes to earn some cash from sales and help his neighbour. This is what Paul has achieved in four months by joining the Soil for Life's home gardening scheme funded by Thatu.

Paul's garden is just one of the many flourishing home, school and community food gardens I saw on my recent family holiday in South Africa. I met and talked to many people whose lives have been transformed through Thatu's funding of their basic training and materials. They now grow what they thought was impossible.



### **Charles beautifies the community toilet**

Charles also has a flourishing vegetable garden on the small patch in front of his home, and he has also created three flower beds on the sandy pavement outside. One of the flower beds surrounds the communal toilet used by Charles and his neighbours. His pride is obvious. He has done up his shack, and proudly showed me a head of garlic, the first of a planned income-

generating crop.

## **Not everything goes to plan**

Not everything has developed in line with Thatu's plans and hopes. Community development in any society is difficult and here in South Africa petty politics, jealousies and cultural misunderstandings have endangered a few projects. This is a reality that Thatu cannot avoid! We cannot expect complete success, but when everyone learns there is a chance of moving forward.

I came away both heartened and proud of how all of us are helping very needy people better their lives.

**Please help Thatu** and low income communities in South Africa by passing this newsletter on to a friend or colleague.

And talk to people about our work, and the huge needs that we can actually start to do something about. We are making a difference.

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**Read more about Thatu and its projects on our new website [www.thatu.org](http://www.thatu.org)**

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