

## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **12 December 2016**

#### **Thembelihle Scoops Most Integrated Community Award in South Africa**

Johannesburg - Thembelihle Crisis Committee (TCC) has been awarded the most integrated community award at the Mkhaya Migrant Awards, an initiative of the Department of Home Affairs, on December 11<sup>th</sup> 2016. TCC was nominated for its commitment in promoting social cohesion between South Africans and foreign nationals living and trading in Thembelihle informal settlement, in the South of Johannesburg. The crisis committee is a leadership structure in Thembelihle.

The most integrated community category honoured individuals / communities who spearhead the demonstration of the spirit of Ubuntu towards migrants and foreign nationals by promoting tolerance, integration, unity and social cohesion. The annual Mkhaya Migrants Awards celebrate the benefit of migration by honouring communities who contribute to South Africa and Africa's development.

The award was presented by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Veronica Modey-ebi and South Africa's Sophie Ndaba. The accolade was accepted by Sphiwe Segodi, the spokesperson of the Thembelihle Crisis Committee on their behalf.

Thembelihle's unique experience was documented, in June 2016, by Planact, a non-profit organisation based in Johannesburg. As part of its Integrated Human Settlement Programme - supported by Miserior, Open Society Foundation and the Raith Foundation, Planact documented the short film detailing an unheard of perspective of a community coming together to defend the rights and safety of foreign nationals in the township as told by the community members themselves. Subsequent to the call for Mkhaya Awards nominations, the short film was submitted.

#### **Planact's role in Thembelihle**

Planact has been involved in the community development of Thembelihle Informal Settlement since 2003. Planact is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that was established in 1985 and over the years, has evolved to promote social justice through establishing community structures, capacity building and mentoring of community leadership.

Watch the short film on Planact's Youtube channel > <http://bit.ly/2gQdqvL>

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