

## **Khanya's Community Health Project**

Karibu! Community Health

September 2023 Edition

Khanya College's vision for quality public healthcare began in 1995 and our support for the SA Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU) campaign to oppose the Gauteng government's privatisation of the Emergency Medical Services (ambulance). At the time the SA government and civil society were discussing the importance of primary healthcare, to keep people well and prevent illness.

While this struggle was lost, our health work was renewed with the community health workers (CHWs) since 2009. This continued the struggle for quality public health *and* fair working conditions. At the time CHWs worked as volunteers earning a stipend. After a long peaceful struggle, the CHWs, (mostly women) became permanent employees of the Gauteng Health Department in 2020 and their salaries tripled to R8500. Since then, the Gauteng CHWs focus only on their own lives. However, Khanya is part of a national network to make all 60 000 CHWs in the country permanent, as part of a quality public health.

Since 2022 the college is rebuilding its health work with communities, organisations and local activists towards a progressive health movement.

Khanya chose to do a pilot project on health in Eldorado Park and Kliptown as we have worked with children and youth and PUSH for many years. (Push is an orphan and vulnerable centre.) The pilot focuses on the health needs of the communities, including children, youth and adults, and to understand the causes of their illnesses. The project will include a household health survey.

The project is designed to work in collaboration with local organisations, to raise awareness and empower the community, education and training, and to build a movement where local organisations share, network and organise together. The findings of the survey and all learnings will be shared with the community organisations to strengthen their advocacy work. A popular booklet on the findings will be published and shared with the community.

### **About Khanya College**

Khanya College is a social justice non-governmental organisation based in Johannesburg. It was established in 1986 to assist working-class communities to respond to the challenges they face. Khanya's slogan *Education for Liberation* runs through the provision of educational workshops, and skills development (reading, writing and computer skills etc). The college promotes self-education and self-organisation and provides support for Study Groups and educational publications. Khanya is committed to movements building.

*This article was submitted on 26 September 2023. You may republish this article, so long as you credit the authors and Karibu! Online ([www.Karibu.org.za](http://www.Karibu.org.za)), and do not change the text. Please include a link back to the original article.*