

A LETTER TO MAKOTI

MAKOTI INDABA 3 EVENT REPORT



“Making My Home the Warmest Place”

28 October 2023

Empowering Women • Strengthening Homes • Building Communities



Organised by: A Letter to Makoti	Event: 3rd Makoti Indaba
Venue: S&B Restaurant, Matsapha	Date: 28 October 2023
Attendance: Approximately 150 women	Keynote Speaker: Ms. Khanyile
Facilitators: Ms. Vuyo Khumalo, Ms. Londiwe Dlamini & Ms. Wendy Dlamini	

1. Executive Summary

Makoti Indaba 3, organised by A Letter to Makoti under the theme “*Making My Home the Warmest Place,*” brought together approximately 150 women for open and honest discussions on women’s health, self-care, mental and emotional wellbeing, personal growth, healthy relationships, and financial empowerment. Through interactive conversations and anonymous question-and-answer sessions, participants actively shared experiences and gained practical knowledge in a safe, non-judgemental environment. The strong engagement highlighted the growing need for trusted spaces that support women’s wellbeing and empowerment. With strategic partnerships and investment, Makoti Indaba has the potential to expand its reach and impact, equipping more women across Eswatini with the knowledge, support, and networks needed to build stronger families and communities.

2. Participation

Approximately 150 women attended Makoti Indaba 3, reflecting a strong demand for safe, relevant and accessible platforms where women can engage on issues that affect their everyday lives. The vibrant gathering brought together participants from diverse backgrounds and stages of life, creating an environment that encouraged learning, reflection, participation and meaningful connection.

Beyond the formal sessions, the Indaba created opportunities for networking, peer support and shared learning. Through open conversations and interactions, participants exchanged experiences, built new connections and recognised the value of learning from one another. The strong attendance and engagement demonstrated the growing potential of Makoti Indaba as a platform for building a supportive community of women who are informed, connected and empowered to thrive in their homes and communities.



Participants listening attentively

Mrs. Makama following the sessions

3. Key Sessions

3.1 Keynote Address

The keynote address was delivered by Mrs. Khanyile of Glory of the Last Days. The keynote session centred on the importance of intentionally cultivating healthy homes and recognising the influence women have within families and communities. The conversation encouraged participants to reflect on their values, relationships and the kind of environment they are building within their homes.

3.2 Financial Empowerment

Facilitator: Ms. Vuyo Khumalo, a Certified Money Coach, contributed a financial empowerment perspective to the Indaba. Financial wellbeing is an important component of individual and family stability. Bringing financial conversations into Makoti Indaba helped broaden the discussion beyond relationships and household responsibilities to include women's relationship with money, financial decision-making and economic empowerment. The inclusion of financial education reinforced an important message: an empowered woman should have the knowledge and confidence to participate meaningfully in decisions affecting personal and household finances.

3.3 Warm and Healthy Homes

Facilitators: Ms. Londiwe Dlamini, Founder, A Letter to Makoti & Ms. Wendy Dlamini, Chairperson of A letter to Makoti

Ms. Londiwe Dlamini & Ms. Wendy cofacilitated a session on “Warm and Healthy Homes,” focusing on the importance of women prioritising their own wellbeing as they care for their



homes and families. The session emphasised that creating a warm and healthy home begins with recognising that the wellbeing of the people within the home matters. Women often carry significant responsibilities for their families, relationships, children and households. In the midst of these responsibilities, their own personal needs can easily be neglected. Participants were therefore encouraged to view self-care not as selfishness, but as an important part of sustaining their ability to care for themselves and others.

The session explored three key dimensions of personal wellbeing:

- **Physical health and healthcare:** Participants were encouraged to prioritise their health, seek timely healthcare services, attend regular health checks and pay attention to their bodies rather than continually placing the needs of others ahead of their own health.
- **Mental and emotional wellbeing:** The discussion highlighted the importance of acknowledging mental and emotional strain, making time for rest, establishing healthy boundaries, building supportive relationships and seeking appropriate support when needed.
- **Personal growth and development:** Participants were encouraged to continue investing in their education, careers, businesses, talents, interests and personal aspirations. The discussion reinforced that caring for a family and building a home should not mean abandoning one's identity, dreams or opportunities for growth.

The key message from the session was that healthy homes are built by healthy individuals. Women were encouraged to intentionally care for their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing while continuing to nurture their families and relationships.

3.4 Anonymous Question-and-Answer Session

An important component of the session was an anonymous question-and-answer segment, which created an opportunity for participants to raise questions that they may not have felt comfortable asking publicly. Participants were able to submit their questions anonymously, creating a safer environment for honest conversations around personal, family and relationship experiences.

The anonymous format was particularly valuable because it allowed sensitive issues to be brought into the conversation without requiring participants to identify themselves or disclose



personal circumstances publicly. Questions were addressed respectfully, with the intention of providing encouragement, perspective and practical guidance. The session also demonstrated an important principle behind A Letter to Makoti: women need spaces where difficult questions can be asked without fear of judgement.

3.5 Open Discussion and Shared Learning

In addition to the anonymous questions, the session incorporated open discussions, allowing participants to contribute their perspectives, reflections and lived experiences. Rather than positioning participants only as recipients of information, the open discussion recognised that women bring valuable knowledge and experiences from their own lives. Participants were able to respond to issues raised, offer different perspectives and learn from one another.

This interactive approach created a strong element of peer learning and shared reflection, transforming the session from a traditional presentation into a participatory conversation. The combination of facilitated learning, anonymous questions and open discussion reflected the broader purpose of Makoti Indaba: to create a safe, non-judgemental and supportive space where women can speak, listen, learn, reflect and grow together.

4. Key Outcomes of Makoti Indaba 3

Makoti Indaba 3 achieved several important outcomes that reflect the growing role of the platform in promoting women's holistic wellbeing, empowerment and connection.

4.1 Creating a Safe and Participatory Space for Women

The Indaba provided a supportive and non-judgemental environment where participants could engage openly with issues affecting their lives, homes and relationships. Open discussions and an anonymous question-and-answer session enabled participants to raise sensitive questions, share experiences and contribute to conversations without the pressure of publicly identifying themselves.

4.2 Promoting Warm, Healthy and Stronger Homes

Participants were encouraged to reflect on practical ways of building homes characterised by healthy communication, respect, emotional safety, intentionality and mutual support. The



discussions reinforced the understanding that stronger homes are built through the wellbeing and positive participation of the people within them.

4.3 Promoting Women's Health, Self-Care and Personal Growth

The Indaba broadened the conversation on healthy homes to include the wellbeing of women themselves. Participants were encouraged to prioritise physical healthcare, mental and emotional wellbeing, self-care and continued personal development, recognising that caring for others should not come at the expense of their own health, identity and aspirations.

4.4 Advancing Financial Awareness and Empowerment

The financial empowerment session strengthened conversations around financial literacy, responsible money management and women's participation in financial decision-making. Participants were encouraged to develop greater confidence in managing personal and household finances as an important component of individual and family wellbeing.

4.5 Strengthening Networks, Peer Learning and Support

With approximately 150 women in attendance, Makoti Indaba created valuable opportunities for participants to build new connections, exchange experiences and learn from one another. The open discussions demonstrated the value of peer-to-peer learning, where women's lived experiences became an important source of knowledge, encouragement and support.

4.6 Strengthening the A Letter to Makoti Community and Potential for Scale

The strong participation in the third Makoti Indaba demonstrated the continued relevance of the platform and the demand for spaces that respond holistically to women's needs. The Indaba strengthened the A Letter to Makoti community while demonstrating the potential for the initiative to expand its reach and develop into a sustainable women's empowerment platform reaching more women across Eswatini.

5. Participants Testimonials

"Makoti Indaba reminded me that I matter too. As I care for my home and family, I also need to prioritise my health, wellbeing and personal growth." *Ms. Nomsa Dlamini*



“The financial session challenged me to become more intentional about money. I left understanding that financial knowledge and planning are important not only for my home, but also for my own future.” *Ms. Sibongile Ngwenya*

“I wish I had access to conversations like these earlier in my journey. Makoti Indaba created a safe space to talk about the things women often carry silently and reminded me that I am not alone.” *Ms. Nolwazi Sibandze*

“My biggest takeaway was that a warm home is not only about what I do for everyone else. It is also about creating a home filled with communication, respect, support and wellbeing for everyone, including myself.” *Ms. Noma Thwala*

“I left Makoti Indaba encouraged, connected and inspired to grow. I met people I had never met before, yet the open discussions showed how powerful it can be when women have a safe space to share and learn from one another.” *Ms. Ivy Dlamini*

6. Lessons Learned

The attendance and engagement at Makoti Indaba 3 highlighted the importance of continuing to create platforms dedicated to women's holistic wellbeing. A formal post-event evaluation could also be introduced to measure changes in knowledge, confidence and intended behaviour among participants.

7. Conclusion

Makoti Indaba 3 demonstrated the growing demand for spaces that empower women through learning, connection, and honest conversation. The event provided participants with practical knowledge, encouragement, and a sense of community, reinforcing the value of investing in women's wellbeing and development. As A Letter to Makoti continues to grow, it remains committed to creating opportunities that inspire, equip, and empower women to thrive in their homes, workplaces, and communities.