

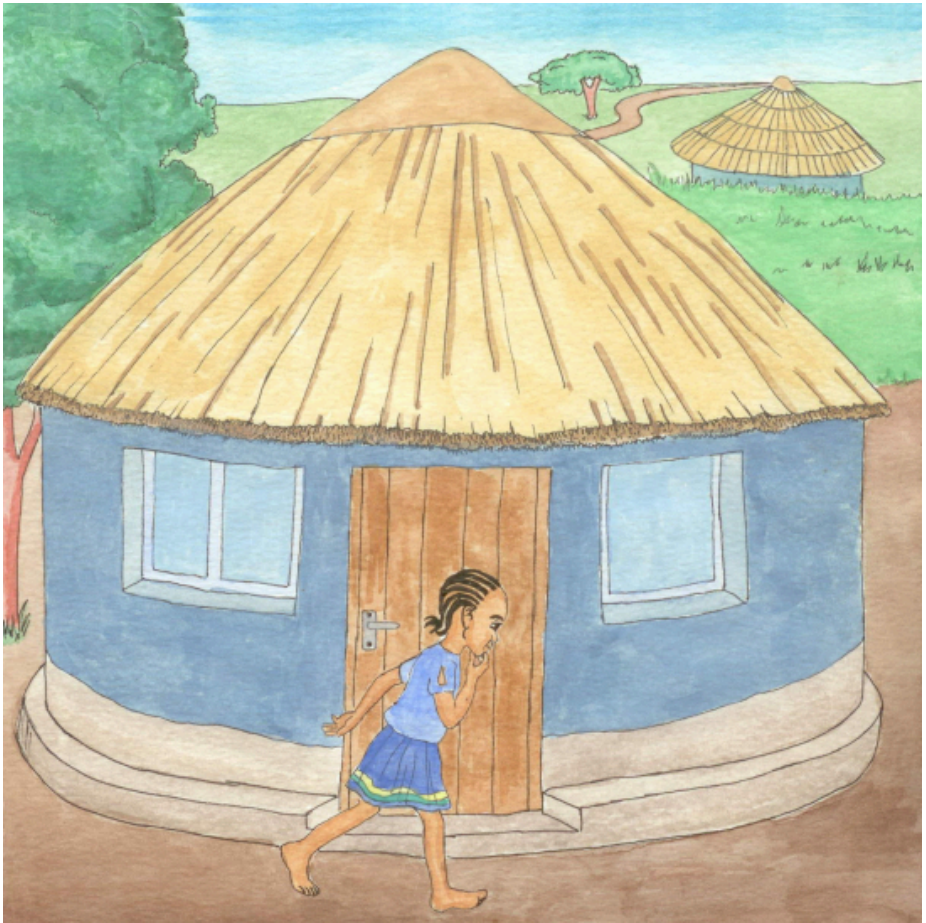


Mama Sophie, the brave one

Thandiwe Dlodlo

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On one hot summer day, Khosi was pacing to and fro, wondering what to do.

Her mother had gone to the fields leaving Khosi behind.

“What shall I do with myself?” said Khosi to herself.



An idea flashed into Khosi's mind.

"I am going to swim at the river, but who will go with me?" thought Khosi.

At that moment Mama Sophie passed by on her way to the river. She was carrying a big basket full of clothes.



"I am going to follow Mama Sophie to the river!" said Khosi to herself.

"May I please go with you to the river?" asked Khosi. Mama Sophie smiled and nodded.

Along the way, Nozipho joined them. Nozipho never liked swimming but enjoyed watching others swim.



At the river Khosi said to herself, "Today, I am finished with swimming in shallow waters, like a baby! I am going to show everyone that I can swim in deep waters too."

She plunged into the river. Splash!

Nozipho watched from a safe distance.



As Nozipho watched, all the children were having fun in the river.

They were swimming noisily.

They shouted at each other happily in the water.



Nozipho looked again carefully, something looked different. Khosi was swimming far away from the other children. Nozipho went closer and looked again.

Terrified by what she saw, she ran towards the women doing their washing by the river.

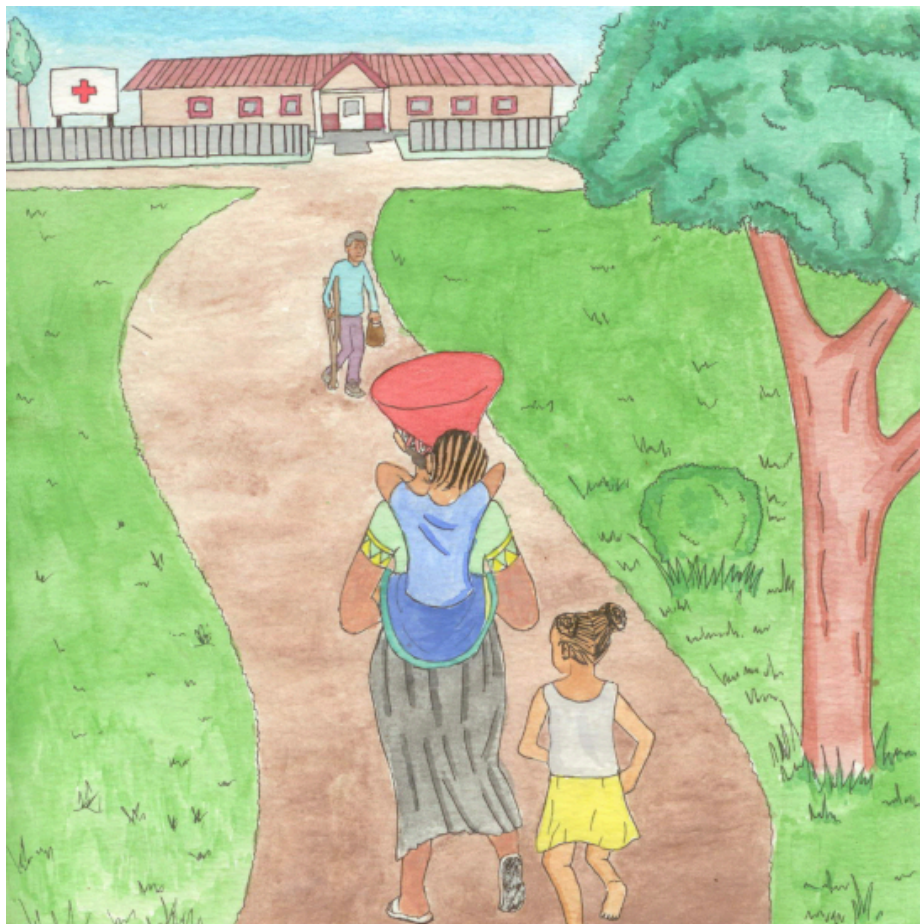
“Help! Khosi is drowning,” screamed Nozipho.



In a split second, Mama Sophie jumped into the water. Down the river she swam.

She dived under the water, then up, then under again, looking for Khosi.

She grabbed Khosi by the arm and swam to shallow water. Then, Mama Sophia carried Khosi out of the river.



Mama Sophie hurried past the group of children and women who were wailing and shouting.

Nozipho ran behind her as she hurried to the village clinic, holding Khosi on her back.



At the clinic Mama was met by nurse Noxolo who ran to help.

Nurse Noxolo quickly took Khosi into a room and other nurses hurried to assist.

"She is ok! We are lucky that she was not under water for a second longer!" said Nurse Noxolo.



Mama Sophie sighed a huge sigh of relief.

Everyone at the clinic congratulated her for her bravery and skill with swimming.

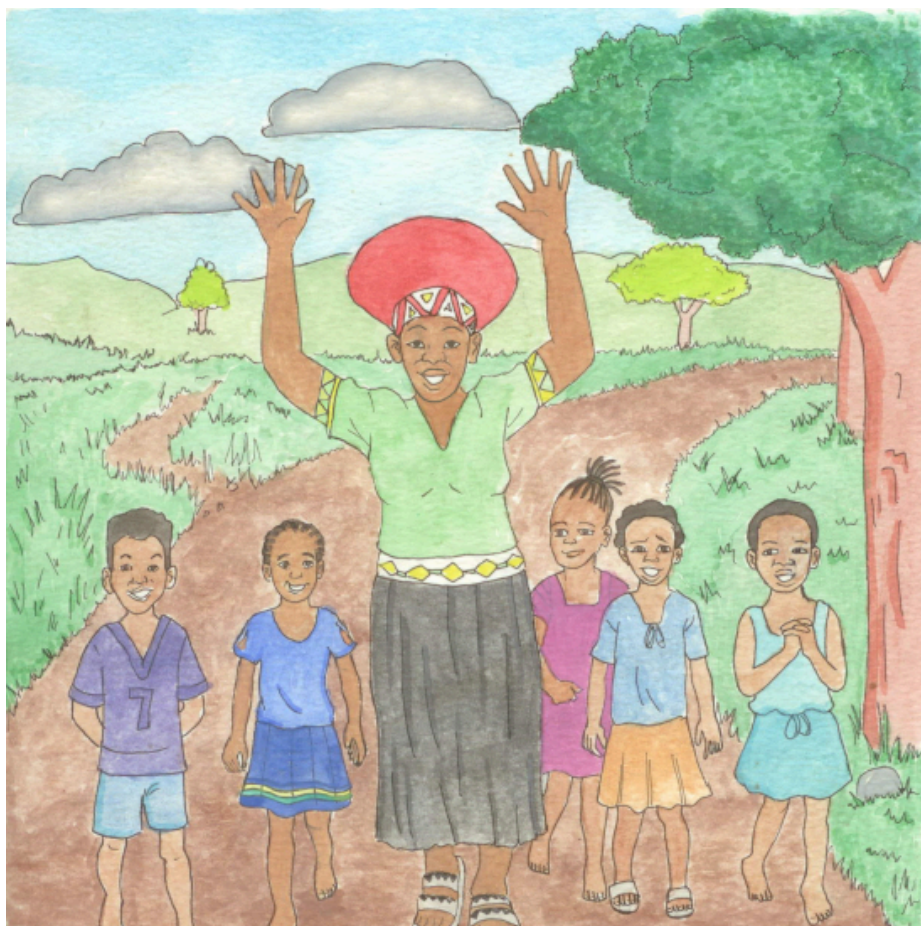
"I am grateful I could save a life," said Mama Sophie humbly.



News reached the local chief. She sent a messenger to call Mama Sophie.

Mama Sophie explained to the chief how she became a good swimmer.

“As a child, my friend lived across the river. Water was part of our everyday lives. We had to learn to swim!” she said.



The chief called a meeting and announced that she would give a reward to Mama Sophie for her brave deed.

Women ululated, men whistled, the children shouted in excitement. From that day, children liked to follow Mama Sophie, singing, "Nothing can touch me, with Mama Sophie, the courageous one, by my side!"



Ulwazi Lwethu is a Zenex Foundation funded and initiated project to develop a series of graded and leisure African language readers and teacher support materials. This project is targeted at teaching and supporting learners in the Foundation Phase to improve their home language reading and understanding. The readers have been originated in nine African languages in collaboration with Molteno Institute for Language and Literacies, Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development, Room to Read South Africa, and Saide. All resources are developed as Open Education Resources (OER).

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*The Ulwazi Lwethu readers and storybooks have
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