

The
LifeMatters
Foundation

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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PURPOSE

The LifeMatters Foundation believes that every life matters and deserves our help to build strong foundations to discover their worth and to reach their full potential.

MISSION

Our mission is to provide holistic support in the form of academic and life skills intervention, so that all children are equipped to reach their full potential and become active citizens.

VALUES

- We believe:
- That God has a plan and a purpose for each person's life
 - That hope drives purpose
 - That it is our responsibility to advocate for children's rights
 - That active citizenship transforms communities
 - That all people deserve respect
 - That diversity should be celebrated
 - That equity is the first step towards restoration
 - That integrity and honesty are the foundation of all relationships



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As 2022 unfolded and it seemed like the pandemic was finally releasing its grip on us, it felt like we could at last, come up for air.

Our schools went back to normal timetabling, volunteers were able to come back to the centres, we could host in-person training, our Teenage Awareness Programmes could run again, our centres could operate at full capacity and we could even participate in some fundraising events! But best of all, LMF celebrated our 20th birthday!! It has been so rewarding looking back on how far our organisation has come and how many lives we have been able to impact with our various programmes.

There has been a definite spring in our step and an enthusiasm to get back into the swing of things but the reality of the impact that the pandemic has had on our learners cannot be ignored. There have been an enormous amount of learning losses and by all accounts, we will feel the effects of this deficit for many years to come.

So where does this leave us? We have learnt some very valuable lessons over the course of the last two years. We have adapted our programmes, fine-tuned our delivery and increased our offerings to respond to the needs of our beneficiaries. This has enabled us to see some incredible growth, favourable results and encouraging progress.

As you read through this report, I hope you are as encouraged as I am about the impact we have had in the lives of so many children, parents and educators last year. We are so aware that we cannot do this without our incredible donors, supporters, volunteers, interns and staff.

Our thanks go to all who have ensured that our centres stay open and that we are able to make a difference in the lives of at-risk learners, tired educators, and desperate parents.

We look forward to 2023. We know that the task is huge but we are grateful that we do not do it alone!

Thank you!

Alnerié Turck

MEET ALEX*:

Alex came onto our LifeMatters Numeracy programme as his teacher said that he was struggling with Maths in class. After spending a few months having some "Fun with Numbers" intervention, Alex's result jumped from 60% (end of Gr 1 LifeMatters assessment) to an awesome 97.5% (Gr 2 June LifeMatters assessment). What is more exciting is that in September, his school assessments saw him achieve 81%! He caught up to the curriculum requirements ... and then some! It was a joy to see his dedication and enthusiasm and we're so proud of his improvement.



2022 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As the Covid-19 Pandemic has abated during 2022 we have been able to move back to a more 'normal' operating environment for LMF to serve our beneficiary community.

As part of that process, we have looked to draw on our experiences over the last 2 years to bring creative adaptations to our programmes in order to better service our beneficiaries. The impact of the Pandemic on education outcomes has been stark and further highlighted the educational divide between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'.

The good news though is that we have seen rapid improvement in outcomes for our beneficiaries as we have been able to provide more direct service to them again. I continue to be grateful to our staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication to deliver the very best to the school communities we serve. I honour them for this. I also want to acknowledge our generous donors for standing with us through these challenging times and enabling us to both deliver our services to the schools we support and to remain financially stable.

As we move forward into 2023 we continue to thank the God we serve for the work of LMF and the impact we are able to have on young lives.

Peter Withey
Chairman of the Board





**LIFESKILLS
PORTFOLIO**

COUNSELLING

2022 was a year of learning for the LifeSkills team.

We kicked off the year by growing our counselling team and adding an amazing new counsellor to the Steenberg Primary School family, Natalie. Natalie joined the team and hit the ground running. She has been such an asset to the school and counselling team and has already received a counselling appreciation award from the school!

The counselling team continued to meet on a monthly basis for supervision which has proven time and again how beneficial it is for our counsellors. This space we created has allowed our counsellors the opportunity to feel part of a community, discuss and assist each other with cases and brainstorm ideas for workshops to continue to help the schools in which we work.

We've found that at one of our beneficiary schools, drug use and substance abuse continues to be a problem that is starting to affect more and more of our learners. Tsidi, the counsellor at that school is inundated with cases where learners are abusing drugs. We, therefore, chose to take the approach of preventative work rather than a reactive approach as we have found that those abusing drugs were trying to recruit the learners that were not. We have also aimed to inspire parents to work collaboratively with us and the school to address these issues in a holistic manner and to ensure a good quality of life for the child and their families.

Since the pandemic, our counselling team has seen a rise in emergency cases. Cases of abuse, substance abuse and

neglect have been at the top of our counsellors' radars. Cases like these mean that the counsellor can no longer see to any other cases as this type of case typically takes the whole school day and more to get sorted out. We truly applaud our counsellors for their hard work and continuous dedication to their schools. The presence of the counsellors in the schools has made a huge difference as it has meant that so many learners are able to report to the counsellor what is going on and many more learners are able to get the help they so desperately need.



MEET TRISTAN:

A qualified LifeMatters counsellor was able to provide support to both Tristan and his mother after it came to light she was abusing alcohol, and the stress of the home living situation resulted in Tristan turning to substance abuse as a coping mechanism. Through support from the LifeMatters counsellor Tristan is now living with his older sister and is making excellent progress to overcome his addiction.



WORKSHOPS

We launched our first ever Anti-Bullying workshop which we piloted with the Grade 3 learners at iThemba Primary School as there was a huge need at this particular school to tackle bullying.

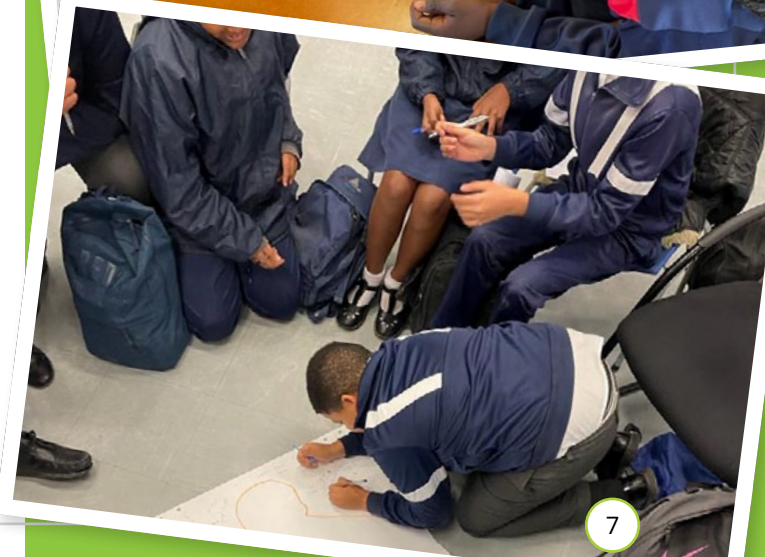
Something we found quite interesting was that as part of the workshop we had required the learners to sit and work in groups. What we did not initially consider was the fact that for the first two formative years of schooling due to Covid-19, these learners were never before required to work in groups which is why they struggled doing so much during the workshop. They were specifically required not to share, not to get in close contact or proximity with their classmates because of the pandemic and for the workshop we required them to do the opposite. This was definitely a learning curve for us, however, in the end the workshop was a success and we were asked to return to the school and conduct more of these workshops with the different grades.

We created and subsequently launched a Sex Education workshop for teachers and the first workshop was held at Lourier Primary School. This workshop was aimed at getting teachers comfortable with firstly, talking about sex according to what the curriculum requires, and secondly, comfortable with educating their learners accurately and appropriately while providing a safe space in their classrooms for learners to feel comfortable to share and ask questions. This workshop was a huge success because the teachers at Lourier Primary School were honest about their discomfort, they were open

to our suggestions on how they could approach teaching this topic and they were engaged in a number of discussions to further their understanding throughout this workshop.

The LifeSkills team also attended several workshops in order to help us improve and grow as professionals. Our counselling team was given the opportunity to attend a Gender Diverse workshop hosted at Edgemoor High School by their psychosocial team. Our counsellors learnt new terminology, effective counselling tools to make use of with clients who identify in any way as gender diverse and how to help our schools handle these cases effectively and with care.

Dr Jo Schlesinger did a workshop on ADD with the entire LifeMatters team (counsellors, interns, centre managers and management staff). This workshop aimed to help us identify learners we suspect are living with ADD but may not yet have been diagnosed and are also not medicated. Dr Jo did a wonderful job explaining how a neurodiverse brain works and what steps we can put in place to best assist neurodiverse learners in the schools we work in. It was so informative that the counselling team decided to create a workshop geared towards the teachers and staff in schools to equip them to best support learners who may fall in this category.



TEENAGE AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

Over the course of the year we conducted programmes at Western Province Preparatory School (Grade 6s and 7s), Westcott Primary School, Oakley House High School, Steenberg Primary School (Grade 6s and 7s), Lourier Primary School and Sullivan Primary School.

We continue to have an amazing time conducting these programmes and working with children and staff from different walks of life. The schools help to inform our programme topics, which assist us in creating a programme well suited for their student body and all the issues that come with being a teenager (or a pre-teen).

With the programmes we conducted at Lourier Primary, Steenberg Primary and Sullivan Primary School, we noticed such a difference between each of the student populations albeit all these schools are in close proximity to one another.

The areas in which these learners come from are faced with similar – if not the same – issues, and yet the programmes at each of the schools brought about different things that the learner population at each school was going through. For example, one of the schools where we did a sex education session, it was more of a preventative talk whereas at another school it was a protective talk – we were really just coming in to teach the learners different ways that they could protect themselves when they engage in sexual activities, as many of them had already admitted to engaging in sexual activity at their stage of life.

Another example is that at one school there were a lot of bullying and friendship issues that we picked up

on and dealt with, whereas at another school there were many questions (during our panel discussion) around how to deal with feelings for the same and opposite sex. These programmes are so necessary, and due to the fact that they are a short term intervention, we always encourage the learners to make an appointment with their counsellor if they feel they need to discuss any issues that come up through the course of the programme. Generally, after the programmes the counsellors report an increase of self-referrals from the grade 6s and 7s.



LOOKING AHEAD

Our counselling team had their final supervision meeting in December and for the first time ever, a counselling team admin day. This admin day took place over two days where the counselling team came together to prepare for the year ahead. We took our time to invest in processes we would like to put in place for the new year as well as discussing what we would like to accomplish in 2023.

Kayla-Tess Pattenden from the Connect Group will be running our Teenage Awareness Programmes (TAP) this year. KT has a wealth of experience when it comes to working with teens and pre-teens. She was instrumental in the design of our TAP and is constantly ensuring that the programme stays relevant and accurate. We will continue to run this programme at our beneficiary schools at no cost. The programmes we run at more affluent schools help us cover the cost of the programme at our beneficiary schools.

We are also wanting to make sure that our educators are given the resources they need to deal with some of the bigger issues they are faced with and continue to add new workshops as our teachers request them.

We are looking forward to the opportunities that 2023 will bring and can't wait to be of service to our learners, educators and parents.



ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO

LITERACY REPORT

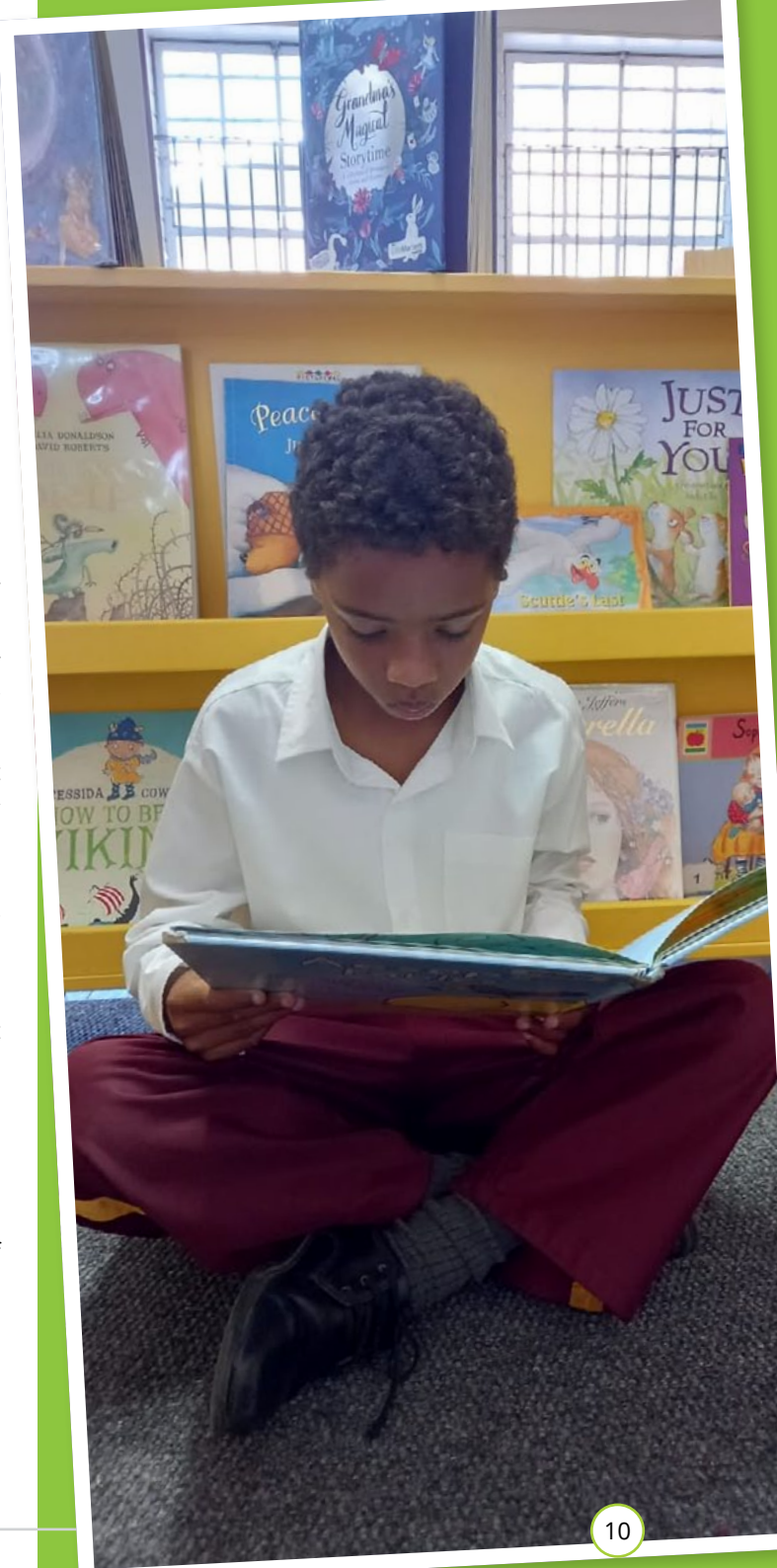
2022 was the year where we began to feel a sense of normality in our programming and with all fingers (and toes) crossed one where we began to feel like we were really in a post-Covid phase.

A sobering Reading Panel Report just released states that “If the learning losses seen in the Western Cape are experienced by South Africa as a whole (a conservative assumption) then the percentage of Grade 4 children that cannot read for meaning will increase from 78% pre-pandemic to an estimated 82%.” (Spaull 2023). The generally low level of literacy has been a challenge, but we have been hard at work playing our part in Cape Town to address this and are so proud to have reached 1674 beneficiaries through our literacy programmes this year, doing over 10 000 hours of intervention.

At the coal face of the work that we do are incredible teams at each of our six literacy centres – our centre managers, interns and volunteers. It was so encouraging to see how our volunteer numbers increased this year. We had seen a slow return in 2021 but in 2022 we had a large number of volunteers join our literacy centres. In total we welcomed 55 new volunteers and had a total of 81 active volunteers when we closed our centres at the end of last year.

At 5 of our 6 beneficiary schools we are running the Shine Literacy Hour, a 4 step programme specifically designed to assist struggling foundation phase learners (who are often learning in a language other than their home language) to keep up with the demands of the CAPS curriculum. The elements of Paired Reading, Shared Reading, a Phonics based game and the Have-a-go writing exercise all blend to

support learners on their journey to becoming literate. We work with a selected group of Grade 2 and 3 learners twice a week to provide individualised support. We are proud to have seen an average of 48 learners at each centre this year doing over 8000 hours of Shine Literacy Hour intervention across our schools. Our mid-year assessments yielded very pleasing results as we saw an average increase of 41% for the learners on our programme between the end of Grade 1 and the assessments we did at the end of Term 2. What is equally rewarding is to see that their increase is notably higher (approximately 20%) than those who are not on our programme. Our hope is to see as many learners as possible, but of course we are constrained by the number of volunteers and interns at each centre, as well as by time. In 2021 we began a pilot project at Capricorn, doing an adapted Shine Literacy Model doing only the paired reading element of the program. Doing a shorter (10 – 15 minute) session we were able to see all the learners in Grade 2 and 3 rather than the average of about 25 to 30 learners we would be able to see using the 4 step Shine Literacy Hour Programme. We had an extremely productive year at Capricorn and we managed to see on average 176 learners each term, and did a total of 8128 reading sessions over the year. This equates to 2032 hours of intervention through this programme. The results were very encouraging to see. Our hope is that through this ‘lighter touch’ model – doing shorter sessions and running a very productive library – we can make an impact across the whole Foundation Phase.





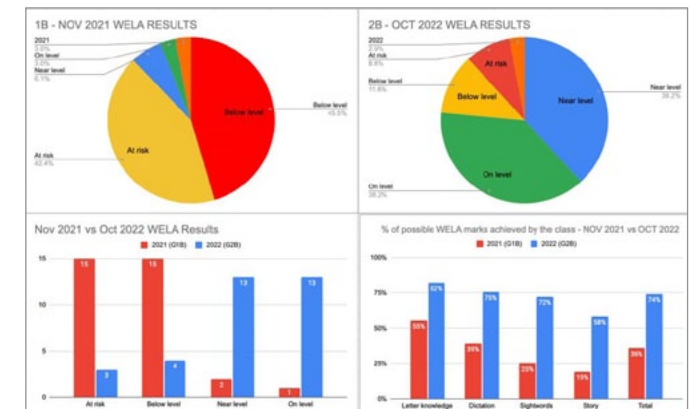
The Capricorn Project is one element of the work we are doing to align ourselves with the Creating a Culture of Reading (CCR) Programme that our partners at Shine are running. The aim being to promote a love of reading across each of our beneficiary schools. Another element of CCR is the lending libraries that we run at each of our centres. As most of our schools do not have functioning libraries accessible to the Foundation Phase learners, we run lending libraries from our centres to get books into the hands of learners for them to read and enjoy at home with their caregivers. Across our six centres we have over 500 learners coming through our libraries weekly and recorded an amazing 14 000 library visits by those learners over the year.

from Trinity Telecoms in celebration of Mandela Day, and of course ending our year with our class parties celebrating the hard work of our learners through the year.

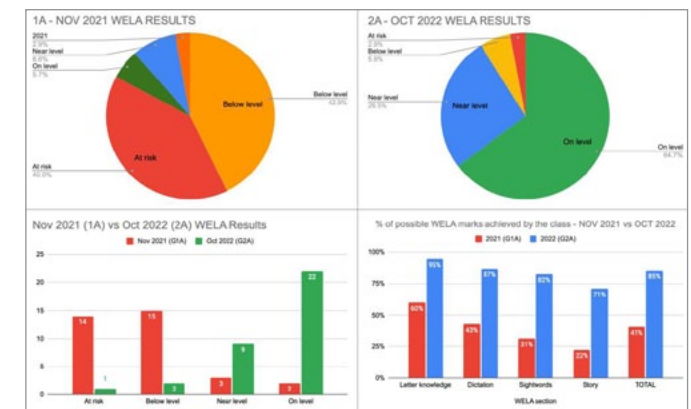
In 2023 the learners coming onto our programmes will still be facing a myriad of challenges which directly impact their literacy journey – lack of access to reading resources, in many cases a lack of an attentive parent or caregiver to encourage and engage with reading at home, and extremely large class sizes at school where there is little space for individualised attention and support. But, we are confident that within our sphere of influence we will continue to grow each child's confidence in themselves and their ability to (learn to) read.



Another element of the 'CCR' Programme is our partnership with Shine and Wordworks to distribute resource packs to all our beneficiary schools. For Grade 1s we distributed termly Together in My Education (TIME) packs that provide supplementary work for learners to do at home with their caregivers. We gave these out each term with a total of 1991 packs going out in 2022.



We were also able to deliver Shine Resource packs to each Grade 2 and 3 learners at all our beneficiary schools each term totalling over 4000 packs. These packs contained a pencil and sharpener, Little Issue Magazines, Book Dash books and a work-at-home sheet from Shine. We are thankful for the support from Shine for these packs. Our learners just loved receiving these packs each term – they are fun and interactive and give each learner access to reading materials in their homes.



Throughout the year we have bursts of fun and excitement between our 'normal' programming. A few highlights were celebrating International Literacy Day, two visits from the Grade 7 learners from Sweet Valley Primary who did paired reading with Grade 3s at Westlake Primary, a stationery drop from M&G Investments and a reading session with staff

NUMERACY REPORT

It's difficult to believe that at the start of 2022 the learners at our beneficiary schools were still on a rotational timetable due to Covid!

We were beyond relieved when we were told a few weeks into the term that all learners would FINALLY be able to return to school full time as the government was doing away with rotational timetabling after almost two years!

This meant that more learners could be seen and more volunteers were willing to return to tutoring and to giving of their time, energy and expertise. We were able to give 117 learners one-on-one Numeracy intervention twice a week across our five beneficiary schools. And we managed to provide a total number of 3448 Numeracy sessions throughout the year! This was 2013 more sessions than we managed to have in 2021.

A group of sixteen interns from AVA were trained and divided up between our beneficiary schools, to help our Centre Managers and tutor our learners. Old volunteers returned and we sent online training videos to potential volunteers who expressed interest, realizing the dire impact that Covid has had on education, particularly on the underprivileged schools in our country. During Term 2, as Covid numbers diminished, we excitedly made the move from online volunteer training to in-person training, which felt a lot more personal and made us feel as though we were taking steps in the right direction to normality once again!

We implemented an experimental numeracy take-home library in 2022. The learners get to play Maths games at

the end of class and then take their games home to play with family members or friends to reinforce Grade 2 Maths concepts in a fun manner. We were excited to hear how some parents were investing time with their children playing these take-home games together and were equally encouraged by how eager the learners were to swop their games each week and how keen they were to learn! The library developed and grew each term as we added more games through the year.

In June, after two terms of tutoring, we did our mid-year assessments with the learners on our programme as well as with a control group of learners who got similar results at the end of the previous year but who, for various reasons, weren't on our programme. The results concluded that the average improvement of the learners on our programme was 37.8% compared to the average improvement of the learners in our control group which was only 23.5%. We are so proud of our learners who jumped to an average of 78.6% in the June 2022 assessments, from an average of 40.4% in the November 2021 assessments! The results on paper are encouraging, yet we're also aware that we aren't able to quantify the impact that one-on-one time has in building confidence and self-esteem for a child who realises that an adult shows up for them weekly and cares!



Our Numeracy Centre Managers, interns and volunteers worked hard throughout the year, to get our learners to the end of their manuals and then revised and reinforced important concepts so that we could graduate our learners from our programme.

At the end of the year our Numeracy prize-givings saw many delighted little children receiving certificates and having parties to celebrate the year that they had spent with us. They will be missed as they move up to Grade 3, but we're looking forward to welcoming new Grade 2's and having an impact on their education and growth.

Behind the scenes, we revamped the "Number Concept Development" aspect of our programme which is being implemented in 2023. Our programme includes oral counting activities and working with manipulatives to aid mathematical understanding. We love tweaking and bettering our programme to deliver the best possible sessions and outcomes for the learners who come to our Numeracy Centres.

We are so appreciative of all those who played a part in the implementation of our Numeracy programme to ensure that the year 2022 was a consistent and successful one!

iMATTER INTERNSHIP REPORT 2022

At the beginning of 2022 we bid farewell to the 2021 iMatter intern cohort after they shared a short hand-over period with the cohort of 2022. This year we had an eager group of 17 unemployed youth join our centres.

Having been trained in both the Shine Literacy Hour Programme and the Fun with Numbers Numeracy Programme the interns hit the ground running in term one. Our iMatter Internship programmes provide valuable work experience for unemployed youth in the areas of our beneficiary schools, at the same time providing us with consistent impact in our centers to complement the volunteer based model we run alongside the interns.

We continued to run the iMatter Internship Programme with our partners at Action Volunteers Africa (AVA) who provide support in terms of recruitment and general HR oversight, as well as offering supplementary training during the course of the year. This soft skill training includes professionalism in the workplace, CV building, career planning and time management to name but a few.

Although the year was not without the usual challenges of absenteeism and a small drop out (1 intern left the programme early on) we were very grateful for the hard work our interns put in to supporting our centres – implementing our literacy and numeracy programmes, supporting our lending libraries and assisting with general administrative management in the centres. 16 of the interns completed their internships, with 10 finding employment, 1 studying and 2 returning for another year of internship.

Our hope for 2023 is to expand the programme by leveraging funding for skills development as the win-win is clear – young people get to make a tangible difference in the broader communities in which they live, at the same time gaining valuable skills to make them employable in a country plagued by extremely high levels of unemployment.



FINANCE REPORT

Bretta Russell-Espin



WHERE THE MONEY CAME FROM:

The income for January to December 2022 of R3 419 082 was 25% higher than 2021. Fundraising income increased by 853% largely due to being able to host the annual fundraiser and other in person fundraising events, unlike 2020 and 2021 during Covid.

Donations from individuals, companies, and others passionate about the work of LMF continue to be the foundation stone of the organisation's income, making up 85% of the total income. R80 000 was received in 2022 for activities in 2023.

Two noteworthy fundraising efforts were firstly, our 10th Annual Auction Fundraiser at Kelvin Grove. We wanted to celebrate our 20th birthday and had a Great Gatsby themed event titled "Cheers to 20 years". After a two year break it was wonderful to be able to celebrate together and we managed to raise over R300 000!

Secondly, we were approached by Jan Tukker from Business Chain to be the beneficiary of their charity golf day. What an amazing day to be a part of and we were so privileged to be given the opportunity to showcase our organisation to the Business Chain community. They managed to raise a wonderful R30 000 for The LifeMatters Foundation.

WHERE THE MONEY WENT:

Organisational spending increased by 13% overall to R3 055 131. Marketing, Management and Operational costs remained similar to 2021, the Internship programme and Project Costs increased by 14% and 13% respectively. Despite the challenges of school closures, the team were able to continue providing input to the children through book and supply packs, lending libraries and online workshops. The interns provided additional support to the programme when it was not possible for volunteers to participate.

FUTURE

The budget for 2023 is a 22% increase on the 2021 budget. Personnel costs will increase by an inflationary amount; however, the Academic Portfolio will increase by 21% and LifeSkills Portfolio will decrease by 17% due to there only being 4 counsellors working across our 5 beneficiary schools. The Teenage Awareness programme will increase due to more programmes being booked. The budget is cautiously optimistic about the activities that will be possible in the 2023 year. It is expected that spending will be below budget during the course of the year. Broadening the fundraising efforts continues to be a focus as household incomes are affected by the economic decline in the country.



REVENUE:

R3,419,082

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Grants | 0% | |
| Donations - Corporates/Others | 85.15% | R2,911,303 |
| Donations in kind | 2.79% | R95,535 |
| Fundraising events | 9.75% | R333,520 |
| Fees | 1.60% | R54,831 |
| Interest received | 0.70% | R23,893 |



EXPENDITURE:

R3,055,131

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|------------|
| Marketing, PR & Fundraising | 5% | R166,504 |
| Management & Admin | 6% | R171,871 |
| Capital & Operation costs | 11% | R331,321 |
| Internship Programme | 7% | R224,868 |
| Project Costs | 71% | R2,160,567 |



SURPLUS:

R363,951



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