

2020/21

ANNUAL REPORT



SOUTHERN CAPE
EDUCATIONAL TRUST
t/a Knysna Education Trust



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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

HUGH BOSMAN

Every year we report that KET has had another busy and productive year, and the year ending March 2021 has been no different. What has been different is the Covid-19 pandemic, and thus, KET's focus had to shift fundamentally to one of ensuring food security among the most vulnerable of our children and teachers. In light of the comprehensive operational report, I wish to focus on just a few issues.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

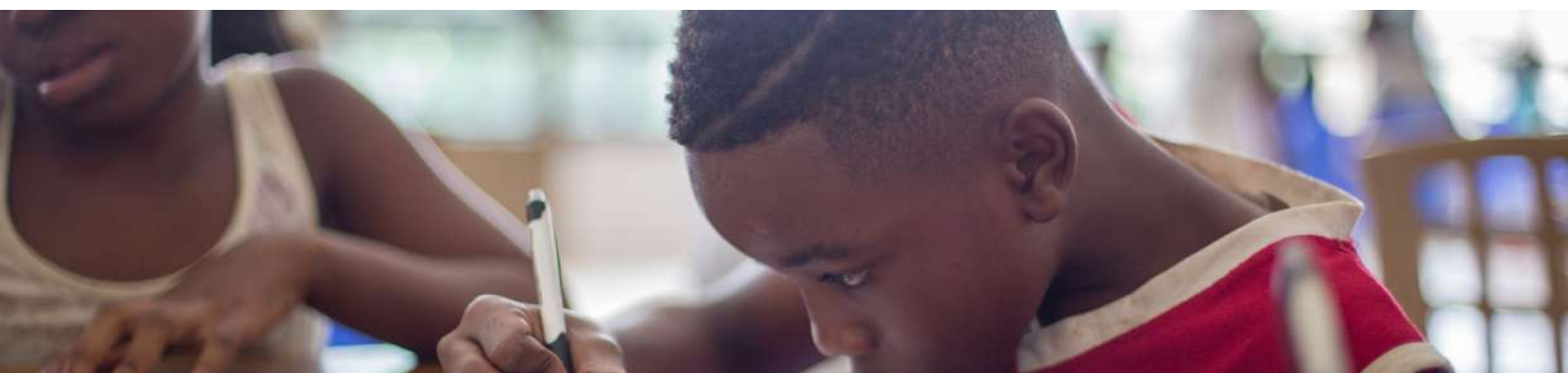
Late in 2020 we appointed Annesta Hofer as General Manager. With a solid background managing large NGOs, and practical experience as a psychologist, she has brought a calm determination and strong leadership to a KET Management team and staff that have again showed dedication and hard work. The team showed incredible adaptability as the focus shifted, as normal work patterns were disrupted, and as everyone had to cope with the anxiety of working in a pandemic.

I wish to record the Trustees immense appreciation for our team's unstinting commitment and determination to make a difference.

FUNDING

Worldwide there is a growing fatigue among donors and even national governments have reduced or withdrawn financial support for the NGO sector. This is a huge challenge for us, particularly as we have had to divert significant funding to provide much needed food to the most vulnerable of our children and teachers. Reserves are now depleted and KET is increasingly facing rejections as we present requests for funding to potential donors, both local and international. This represents a major challenge going forward.

It is clear that donors want to see tangible results and 'bang for their buck'. KET will need to do a great deal more monitoring and evaluation, quantitative and qualitative, in its quest for financial support even as we tell the heart warming stories of our numerous successes. This notwithstanding, we have a massive debt of gratitude to those donors, large and small, who have supported KET over many years. These range from individuals who contribute to our Adopt-a-Child programme to large trusts and foundations. Thank you all so very much.



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Government support for Early Childhood Development (ECD) in South Africa falls under the auspices of the Department of Social Development (DSD). While KET has a sound working relationship with the DSD, and they fund 2 of our major programmes, the sector remains massively under-funded and under-supported by Government. Most individual ECD centres struggle to break even as households are unable to pay sustainable fees. Compounding this are late payments and an overly bureaucratic regulatory system, plus poor policy decisions. This is a national embarrassment and leaves the ECD sector largely reliant on NGO's and donors.



THE FUTURE

As we look to the future there are a few matters worth commenting on.

1. The responsibility for ECD will be transferred from the DSD to the Department of Basic Education (DBE) as from April 2022. For all concerned, this will be a challenge and with it, comes a degree of uncertainty. KET is determined to develop a particularly good relationship with the DBE, and it is our hope that ECD will receive greater national focus.
2. In November this year, KET will move to its new premises at Melrose House in Queen Street. Here we will share the site with the Knysna Initiative for Learning and Teaching and with Hero. We are tremendously excited about this move and the collaboration with these two organisations.
3. Our team has been remarkably stable over the past few years and we are well placed to resume 'normal service' in a post-pandemic world. Numerous children have suffered during this crisis, resulting in many not being school-ready and many behind in their development. This will be a crisis which will test all ECD practitioners, but one we will tackle head on. At no time will our tag line "Leave No Child Behind" be more pertinent and important.

THANKS

Running an organisation as successful as KET requires committed teamwork, and in our management and staff and our volunteers, we have an outstanding team. I must also mention the trustees who so willingly give up their time and spend many hours on KET business. KET would not be able to support ECD in our area were it not for all these people. Thank you all.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

ANNESTA HOFER

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic forced a major change in focus for KET during 2020. We realised early on that we needed to support parents, children and teachers threatened by hunger and struggling for survival. In these circumstances, we knew there would be a need to expand our focus beyond our 108 preschools to the 'COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE' and address base issues beyond our chosen mission. Survival of these preschools and their staff presented a crisis. 4900 children were threatened by suspension of key support structures, including daily feeding and education stimulation, with the possibility of being left alone during the day or cared for by older siblings while parents worked or looked for casual work in the lockdown aftermath.

From the start of lockdown in March until April, KET collaborated with Knysna Rotary, other NPOs and municipal stakeholders to assist with community feeding schemes through soup kitchens, provisioning of food hampers or grocery vouchers. KET's staff spent many hours within the first month verifying and gathering data for the feeding initiative driven by Rotary Knysna. Local job losses in a predominantly tourist industry led to 434 preschool parents being identified as requiring emergency food security support, which was secured through our collaboration with Rotary Knysna during the first three lockdown months.

KET oversaw government funded preschools that were required to continue paying teachers and providing daily meals to children.

This left 31 unfunded KET member preschools that were converted into soup kitchens, providing food security for the 980 children, their parents and 126 teachers. The KET Board had considered that the Covid lockdown could extend beyond the predicted 8 weeks.

The impact of extended closure on the member unfunded Early Childhood Development (ECD) facilities would be catastrophic for principals, teachers and the young children. The KET Board could not accept that young children would go hungry under these conditions. They committed to continue alleviating hunger by providing food security assistance to these vulnerable preschools (along with age appropriate education stimulations packs) once the Rotary support ended in mid-May. It was agreed to use R600,000 of reserves for food and a monthly teacher stipend of R250. Many parents could not pay schools fees during and following lockdown, which meant that 126 principals and teachers were at risk of not earning any income and being permanently lost to the ECD sector. The teacher stipend was therefore paid until December 2020. These funds were reserves, carefully built up over the years for infrastructure upgrades and developing our education programmes.

The Trust's planned infrastructure upgrades for 2020, to accommodate growing projects, expanded training programmes and beneficiary access to IT infrastructure to complete online applications, had to be suspended.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

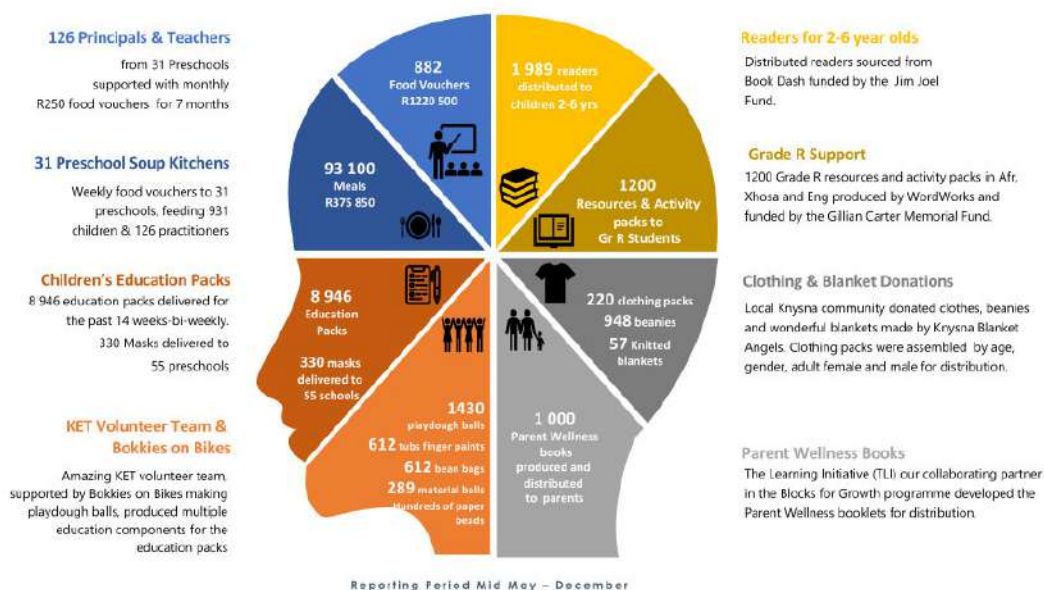
During this time teacher training, programme implementation and site visits were halted. To support the children's ongoing development in the home, over 8500 education packs, and more than 2000 readers were distributed to affected children for 3 months from mid-May. Children aged 4-5 years entering Grade R in 2021 especially required ongoing education development support to ensure they started with no development delays.

KET also had to ensure availability of at least 12 months funding reserves to keep paying our own staff during lockdown, while normal programmes and services were suspended. All staff normal goals and work activities were redeveloped and realigned to respond effectively to the crisis. We implemented a 90-day rolling review of strategic priorities to drive focus and prioritisation. Strategic priorities were translated into output-driven team and individual goals.

Out of budget expenses were incurred to comply with Covid-19 protocols and accommodate remote working and online skills development for employees. Our innovations and adaptations to the crisis were possible because of pre-existing management, financial and governance disciplines and competencies. KET is fortunate to have a team of trustees that ensure governance and accountability. Operational consistency and staff that are trusted by the community and all stakeholders provided KET with a strength and reputation to continue building and supporting the ECD sector during this unpredictable year.

The following infographic tells a wonderful tale of donor, local community and volunteer support coming together to provide hope and practical assistance to one of the key socio-economic micro enterprises in our local communities, the ECD facilities.

KET'S RESPONSE TO COVID PANDEMIC REPORTING PERIOD MID MAY TO END DECEMBER 2020



GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

By Feb 2021, 106 preschools re-opened, however we anticipate some closures over the coming months, due to financial constraints and preschools unable to become Covid compliant. To address future risks and create pervasive access to ECD services irrespective of where a child lives, KET is currently implementing a multi-model ECD programme delivery plan to ensure 'no child is left behind'. This plan will also assist out of job trained teachers thereby ensuring they are not lost to the ECD sector in the foreseeable future.

We remain future focused at KET and continue to be inspired daily by the resilience and determination of the many incredible people that provide an invaluable service to our community as a whole and in particular the young children of the Garden Route.



DONOR RELATIONS AND FUNDING

Covid19 regulations and lockdowns prevented planned fundraising events from taking place, which strained revenue streams. Despite these challenges, KET was able to meet our budget. This was mainly as a result of the ongoing and valuable support from local, national and international individuals, corporations, foundations, trusts and provincial government. The support for our cause in the face of great adversity was humbling.

All donations large and small ensured the steady progress and sustainability of KET during 2020. While the world, South Africa and the Garden Route, in particular, experienced a severe economic downturn, our funders remained committed to our vision. A very big and special thanks to each and every one of you.

Appreciation and thanks to the Department of Social Development that funds the ECD Registration Team and the Blocks for Growth Programme. A special acknowledgement of the local DSD representatives that are super responsive

to information and support requests from our ECD Registration Manager.

Donations in kind were received from local and international donors for ECD centres which included beanies, clothes, blankets and groceries. New digital funding platforms are being developed along with a refreshed brand and website which launches in August 2021.

The challenge to secure long-term funding is ongoing. KET is constantly looking for new and regular funding to sustain and expand its programme reach to meet the growing demands for ECD services in a mainly impoverished community.

Thank you to each donor for making a difference to the education of young children in the Garden Route. This is the most important contribution one can make to the community and society as a whole.

DONORS THAT PLAYED A PROMINENT ROLE DURING 2020 INCLUDE:

- The Oppenheimer Memorial Trust
- The Zoe Carrs Trust
- The Le Creuset Fund
- CAF (Canadian Aid Fund) - Collette Vacations
- Jim Joel Foundation
- Rotary Clubs: Knysna, Tarporley, Northampton
- Mergon Foundation
- Robberg Quarries
- PG Bison
- John Bell Trust
- Home Choice Development Trust
- Colin Carter Legacy Fund
- St Boniface Church Bunbury
- The MacDaibhidh Charitable Trust
- The Beverly Mackay Fund

OUR ECD NETWORK

This network influences our work and supports us in pursuit of our vision. Entities that form part of our network include project partners, local NGOs, regulatory bodies such as local and provincial government and suppliers. During Covid-19, regular Zoom meetings ensured we remained in close contact and conversation with each of the network partners which enabled KET to proactively and rapidly respond to changing needs in the ECD sector.

Our town's supportive ethos has been forged by the 2017 fires and during the 2020 initial Covid-19 lockdown. We trust that this mutual community respect and support will see us through these challenging times and help us to emerge stronger and more determined to keep building a better Knysna for all.

PROGRAMME REPORTS



FET TRAINING COLLEGE

Considering the incomparable circumstances that we have faced this year, we feel particularly proud of these students. With the onset of Covid-19 and the consequences of limited direct training and face to face support, they persevered. Lecturers went out of their way to connect with the students on a personal level as well as support them academically.

Only 2 students dropped off the course and unfortunately, 1 student passed away. This past year 13 students received distinctions, 8 received merits (over 70%), 14 passed, (above 50%) and 3 students were unable to complete the course requirements and were awarded referral status until such a time that they are able to.

In the Basic Child Care Course we had 18 students, in the Preschool Teacher Course there were 11 students and in the Preschool Management Course, there were 9 students. The 11 students who completed their Preschool Teacher's Course and / or Level 5 ECD Management Course, can register with the South African Council of Educators (SACE).

A special mention goes to Debbie Macdonald, the coordinator and lecturer of the Preschool Teacher Programme. During this challenging year, she put so much effort, love and care into encouraging and supporting her students. The Preschool Teacher Course is exceptionally demanding of students, and Debbie never failed to answer questions or go the extra mile.

Basic Childcare
Course

18

Preschool
Teacher
Course

11

Preschool
Management
Course

9

ECD REGISTRATION

During the period from 01 March 2020 to 28 Feb 2021, the Knysna Education Trust Registration Team was very busy in the Garden Route, Knysna and Bitou municipalities. We extended our services and support to 120 ECD Facilities. The Department of Social Development mandated Child Welfare Bitou and Knysna branches to take total responsibility for 12 of their preschool facilities' ECD registration and all other related services which reduced the active preschools we service to 108.

Over the years KET has developed strong relationships with members of the ECD community. This was vital when having to communicate constantly changing essential and

tough legal operating requirements for the ECD sector during the pandemic.

During a very anxious and unpredictable time, this good relationship helped us provide much needed emotional and practical support to preschools via available social media platforms.

The impact of Covid-19 on the ECD sector and the local community in particular was extensive. Many of the parents were left jobless resulting in their inability to pay school fees. This meant many ECD facilities could not operate at full capacity. Sadly, one ECD facility closed its doors due to the financial strain caused by the economic downturn.

PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

Responding effectively to support our preschools, principals, teachers, children and parents was made possible through active and regular stakeholder engagement, collaboration with local NPOs and provincial and local municipal structures. We would like to thank the following organisations for their support and responsiveness in providing timely access to information and material support:

- ePap
- Rotary Knysna
- Knysna Initiative for Learning and Teaching (KILT)
- Ikamva Labantu
- National Development Agency
- Department of Social Development
- Knysna Municipality Fire and Health Departments
- Child welfare Bitou and Knysna.





COVID 19 OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES FOR ECD FACILITIES

It came as a great shock when a media release informed us that all ECD facilities had to close on 18 March 2020. The Department mandated the funded facilities to hand out food parcels or meals. This presented a challenge whilst navigating the Covid-19 related regulations in lockdown level 5.

There was a lack of communication between Government and the ECD Sector regarding re-opening. The Department of Social Development also started the Vangasali campaign aiming to find every ECD in the country – registered or not. However, not all facilities had access to data and Wi-Fi and therefore could not register on the Vangasali database.

When ECD Facilities were able to reopen, they each had to complete a self-assessment. The sector received a very strict SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) to follow. Unfortunately, no-one was trained and principals were confused as they tried to adapt to the new normal.



Funding was only received in September for PPE, which had to be in place before preschools could open again. Despite these challenges, the ECD facilities persevered.

Unfortunately, the re-opened ECD centers experienced further sustainability challenges as a result of lower numbers of children returning. This was mostly due to parents being unemployed.

ECD REGISTRATION SUCCESS

Despite all the operational challenges KET and the ECD principals faced, we managed to provide key support and keep our preschools on track for re-opening and re-registering. We are happy to announce that we registered 5 new ECD Facilities and re-registered 12, under challenging circumstances. We have trained 103 teachers and 16 ECD field workers on Covid-19 Regulations and the Standard Operating Procedures, and successfully verified 45 Covid-19 compliant facilities.

During hard lockdown, we assisted 31 ECD facilities to function as soup kitchens. These soup kitchens meant that students were able to receive a warm meal at least once a day.

PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) is essential in assisting facilities to operate legally and prevent the spread of the virus. KET was able to provide PPE for 103 facilities. The funding for this was provided by the Department of Social Development.



HIGHLIGHT

KET took part in the Reform ECD Campaign, advocating for key changes within the ECD sector. Through this, the ECD voice was heard and recognised. The minister of Social Development announced that the Presidential fund released 53 million to the ECD sector, funding ECD practitioners. KET is assisting ECD Facilities in the Garden Route to apply for this relief funding.

ECD CHALLENGES IN GENERAL

Many ECD facilities in the Garden Route area have yet to achieve formal registration and access government funding due to ongoing key challenges, which include:

1. Achieving three different demanding registrations; as a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO), as an Early Childhood Development (ECD) facility, and implementing a registered ECD programme. Within each of these registrations are further conditions.
2. Registrations, certifications and building infrastructure compliance regulations, that are onerous, numerous and costly. These typically include, land rezoning for education, building plan submissions, and Health and Safety certifications.
3. Irregular payment of low fees by parents makes it difficult to feed the children daily and pay teachers a sustainable wage.
4. Small, inexpensive playgroups quickly growing from 5 children and exceeding legal numbers creating health and safety problems.



DIRECT BENEFICIARIES



4700 Children

380 Practitioners

106 Parents

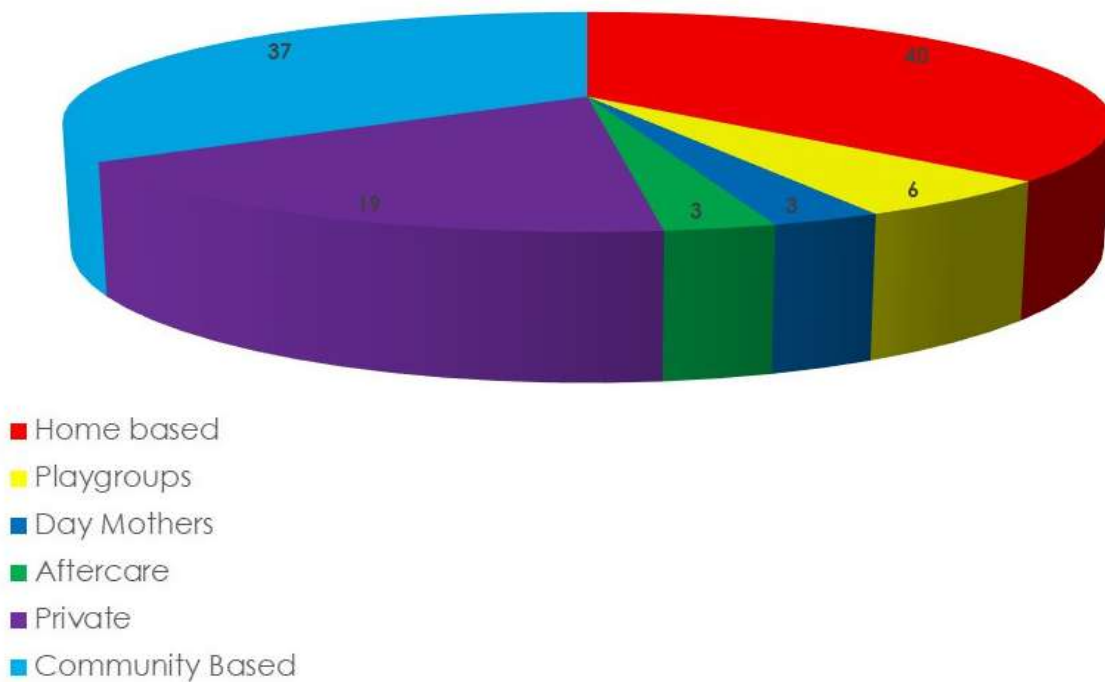


108 Principals

The ECD Registration team conducts capacity building workshops with Governing bodies and facilitates parent meetings at ECD Facilities. We reached 106 parents during this time.

108 ECD FACILITIES

TYPES OF FACILITIES



52 facilities registered with the Department of Social Development

8 of these are registered with the Department of Basic Education

20 of these are funded by the Department of Social Development

56 facilities are unfunded and unregistered

BLOCKS FOR GROWTH PROGRAMME

The Blocks for Growth (B4G) programme, that KET implements on behalf of The Learning Initiative (TLI) locally in 22 preschools, had a great start in 2020.

This year we planned to entrench the teacher training component of the programme. It was the first year that KET had 2 Occupational Therapists working full time on the programme as opposed to only 3 days a week, as in previous years.

January 2020, the 7 Blocks for Growth team members were geared up and excited about helping the 253 children in the 22 participating preschools that had been identified as requiring special support. Our plans came to a sudden halt when Covid-19 hit and national lockdown was enforced at the end of March 2020. However, this did not deter us from our goal to help, support, grow and develop the 4-5-year-olds in the programme.

As lockdown regulations eased, the team got to work and started preparing and distributing educational packs to the children via the soup kitchens operating at the 31 unfunded ECD facilities.

The joy and excitement was evident in the children and parents' eyes even though the compulsory masks hid their smiles. The 'toy bags' that the children delighted over were all specially designed learning activities that aimed to assist the children's ongoing development at home.



THE B4G METHODOLOGY

The programme begins with pre-screening 452 children born in 2015 (4–5-year olds) in the 22 participating preschools. A pre-screening tool created by TLI is used to determine the level of development of the pre-Grade R child. This tool includes ELOM components, a numeracy and an early literacy protocol. The numeracy and early literacy protocol was created by TLI. 3 different pre-screening tools are used to measure the development and skills of each 4–5-year-old and assists facilitators to identify children at risk of not being school-ready by the end of Grade R. According to the Standard Deviation (SD) scores, 253 of the 452 children pre-screened were at risk and therefore earmarked for inclusion in therapy groups.

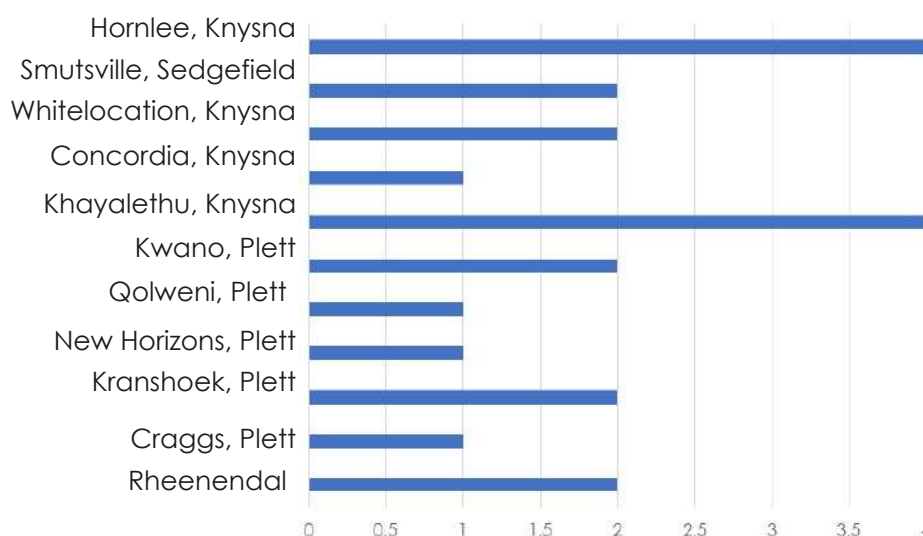
SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS WERE UTILIZED TO:

1. Provide additional support to the care givers and parents of the pre-screened children. 3 activities were communicated weekly to teachers which were then forwarded to parents. This evolved to groups being created for parents from each class which enabled facilitators and therapists to communicate directly with parents, saving teachers and principals data costs. Parents valued being able to ask questions and discuss challenges directly with the programme therapists and facilitators.
2. Support principals and teachers and provide regular ECD sector updates communicated by government.

Only 16 of the original 22 preschools in the programme re-opened in July 2020. These 16 schools were Covid-19 compliant. Unfortunately, 2 of the schools were unable to accommodate the therapy groups due to limited space and social distance requirements.

Access to mobile data was a challenge at times. Many parents in our programme either lost their entire source of income and had to rely solely on social grants or lost a portion of their monthly income due to a reduction in working hours.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS PER AREA INCLUDED IN THE B4G PROGRAMME



B4G EDUCATIONAL PACK DISTRIBUTION

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 lockdown regulations and strict ECD safety protocols and procedures prevented the team from following the standard programme procedure. Our focus quickly shifted from presenting therapy groups, to developing and distributing educational packs which provided appropriate stimulation and activities to assist in the development of the necessary skills required for Grade R.

The activity books were developed by our Occupational Therapists and covered a wide range of activities aimed at providing opportunities to develop essential skills and knowledge in the three main learning areas, namely - numeracy, literacy, and life skills.

Each pack consisted of an age-appropriate activity book with easy to follow instructions for parents to guide the activities at home. The packs included some materials, such as crayons, glue, paintbrushes, paint, playdough and storybooks.

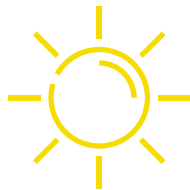
An indirect goal of the educational packs was to promote a healthy bond between parent and child while strengthening and growing the minds and bodies of the child. From the positive parent feedback received we believe this was achieved.

5152
Educational packs



51 schools

Donor support helped us extend the education packs to more schools.



302 December
Holiday packs

The educational packs included parenting wellness books. These books aimed to assist parents to practically deal with emotional strains, anxieties and concerns experienced during the pandemic.



The highlight of 2020 was the successful completion of 7 weeks of therapy groups presented to 138 children in the remaining 14 schools that could open successfully at the time. These children received an average of 10 x 45-minute small group sessions. A decision was made to include all the 4–5-year-old children present at the 14 schools in the therapy groups irrespective of their pre-screening scores.

The B4G programme wanted to reach as many children as possible with the educational packs and therefore included all 4-5 year olds that were present and back at their schools in the therapy groups in Sept/October 2020. We soon realized that these additional 71 children did not receive any teaching during the lockdown months.

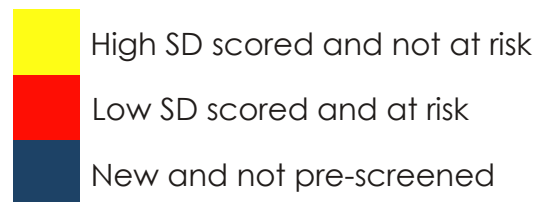
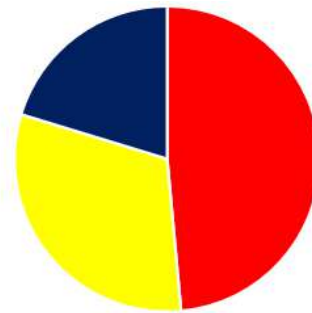


BLOCKS FOR GROWTH PROGRAMME RESULTS

Out of the 253 children, with low SD scores, that were earmarked for therapy groups, only 67 had returned to their respective schools by Sept/ Oct 2020. When therapy groups started, we decided the teaching, stimulation and development would be beneficial to all these children. In many schools the children were now either in a mixed age group class or with a new teacher, which in some cases was not helpful to our focus group.

While 2020 was filled with many difficulties and tragedies we still celebrate the difference we were able to make to the local young children's education and development and the support we could provide to the wider community as a whole.

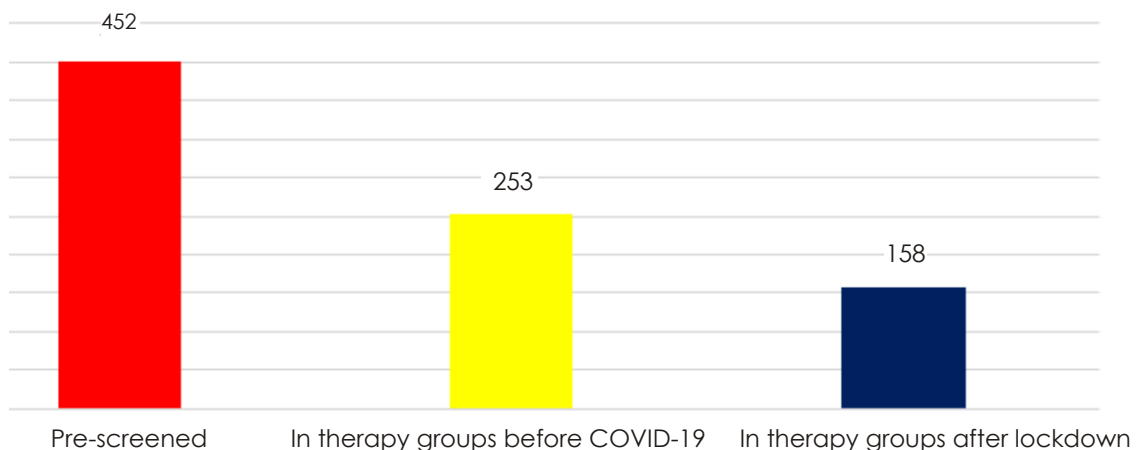
Ronald Reagan once said: "Helping one person might not change the world, but it could change the world for that one person."



Sadly many of the children that needed the therapy groups the most – those with the lowest scores - were the ones that did not return to school. The gap between the children falling most behind and those who passed the screening was not that big in many of the therapy groups.

All the children were at risk of not being Grade R ready because schools were closed for 3 months or more. It did not help that when schools opened, they had to focus on being Covid-19 compliant, were short-staffed and facing financial strain.

Each of the parents of the 138 children that completed the 7 week therapy sessions received a report which highlighted and explained the development areas that still required further practice and stimulation. This was to ensure their child would be better prepared for the challenges of Grade R.





NUMBA MATHEMATICS PROGRAMME

During 2020, we focused on revamping and improving the Teacher Training Manual. Using feedback which we received from teachers in 2019, we used the lockdown time to improve the programme. Where we thought activities were not clearly explained we improved the clarity of the instruction and took better quality pictures. These amendments had a knock on effect, leading to amendments in the facilitators guides as well as all other supporting documentation. Once the changes were finalized, the isiXhosa and Afrikaans manuals were edited and checked.

Once preschools were allowed to operate, training continued onsite in classrooms where teachers received one-on-one training in their environment.

Follow-up visits to preschools continued, where Edu-facilitators supported implementation to ensure the teachers were comfortable using the programme on a daily basis. This allowed for monitoring the adherence to Covid-19 regulations such as sanitizing daily and discouraging the sharing pieces of equipment between learners.

2020 proved to be a challenging year for the implementation of the Numba Programme. This resource and programme is a highlight for many preschool teachers and children, especially when it is sometimes the only bright and colourful piece of equipment in the classroom. The teachers and the children voiced that they missed implementing the programme and look forward to using it more in 2021.

Number of teachers fully trained	9
Onsite training and support visits	15
Quality assurance visits	11

FONIX LITERACY PROGRAMME



11 teachers trained onsite
5 training workshops

Due to a specific donation of a Fonix kit to the Dorothy Broster Children's Home, KET trained an additional 9 Dorothy Broster staff members and 2 teenagers who would support the implementation of the programme with their children.



2000 books distributed

To preschool children in our community. Made possible through collaboration with Book-Dash and financed by the Jim Joel Fund.



300 home literacy packs distributed

These were bought from WordWorks to support the Grade R learners in our affiliated preschools. Each literacy pack contained four weeks' worth of mini-lessons and additional books and games.

20 kits distributed

While it was difficult to implement the programme during Covid-19, our Edu-facilitators sent links via our bulk-SMS system to teachers, who in turn forwarded communication, activities and stories to parents.



Number of teachers fully trained	4
Onsite training and support visits	37
Quality assurance visits	11

Whilst the Fonix programme was not fully implemented in preschools during 2020, KET ensured that we touched the lives of our youngest beneficiaries by assisting with the delivery of books and Grade R literacy resources. We also supported teachers and parents by providing ideas to encourage steady progress of literacy development.



FIRST 1000 DAYS PROGRAMME

While starting off the year with our usual parent information sessions, clinic and preschool visits, our Health Care Workers were unable to continue this front line intervention during most of 2020. The table below reflects the data for the months that the HCW were allowed to access preschools and clinics.

Intervention type	Amount of interventions	Number of direct beneficiaries
Preschool visits	23	115 babies/toddlers
Clinic visits	45	809 mothers/fathers/caregivers
Parent information sessions	2	63 mothers/fathers/caregivers

We have found from past experience that baby and toddler practitioners are often unskilled and do not follow a stimulation programme. Thus, while we were unable to support parents, teachers and carers as much as we would have liked to, our team took the opportunity to create a more colourful and user friendly baby and toddler programme.

The programme supervisor, supported by two occupational therapists, developed a stimulation programme which could be easily implemented in the baby and toddler classroom.

This highly qualified team created 10 easy to follow activities for specific age ranges namely; 3-6 months, 6-9 months, 9-12 months and 12-18 months. Our DSD registered ECD Teacher Capacity Building Programme provided activities for this programme. Once finalized in English they were translated into isiXhosa and Afrikaans.

We have also connected with the Grow Great Campaign. In particular, with the Flourish Programme - a social franchise network. Lindsay Arendse has completed the online exam and telephonic interviews and has been accepted into the programme for further training. We look forward to strengthening our collaboration with Flourish and bringing opportunities to childcare workers in our communities. Not only to support babies and toddlers but to start micro-enterprise social franchises to ensure sustainable earnings.



ADOPT A CHILD'S EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Adopt-a-Child's-Education (ACE) programme exists to provide disadvantaged children access to an Early Childhood Development facility in the Knysna and Plettenberg Bay municipal regions. A KET ECD services survey conducted in 2020 with 132 local principals highlighted child safety, abuse and neglect as three of the greatest concerns for local children. The ACE programme aims to address these concerns by supporting a child's right to access a safe and caring ECD facility.

During 2020, the programme supported an average of 208 children per month. The database waiting list is updated annually with new children's details - identified by principals as most in need of financial support.

Qualifying ECD facilities are located in the poorest socio-economic areas and must meet the following criteria:

1. Not yet registered for government funding.
2. Be a registered and paid up KET Member.
3. Have a bank account registered in the facility's name.

Qualifying households must meet the following criteria before children are admitted to the programme :

1. The combined household income must be below R4 000 per month for the child to qualify for ACE support.
2. Parents are required to complete an ACE application form which is submitted with proof of income or a sworn affidavit as confirmation thereof to the KET programme manager.

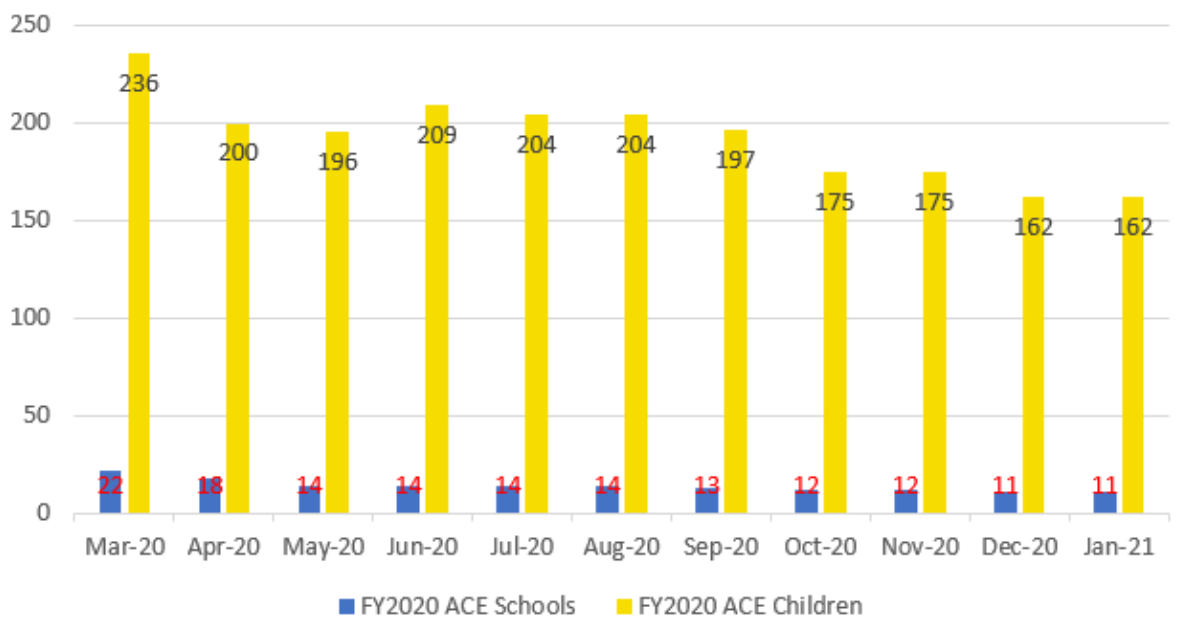
The ACE sponsorship fees for 2020 are R 2400 per child per annum or R200 per child per month and will remain for 2021.

January 2020, 22 schools were registered as beneficiaries of the ACE programme. Registration success achieved for 3 preschools previously on the ACE programme and 8 Child Welfare preschools mandated to only be serviced by Child Welfare reduced the preschools to 11. In order to improve the sustainability of the 11 yet to be funded preschools, it was decided to support more children from each preschool. To further assist these preschools with budgeting, we are working towards aligning all sponsorship renewals to run from January to December each year.

Throughout the national lockdown, ACE facilities continued to receive funding. For most of these ECD facilities, these school fees were the only income received during the lockdown. Many parents were laid off from work due to the impact of Covid19 restrictions, making it impossible to pay school fees. These unfunded member preschools also provided support to their community and children through operating soup kitchens.



ACE SPONSORED CHILDREN



Please follow our social media accounts to keep up to date with KETs progress throughout the year and watch your contributions in action.



Knysna Edu Trust



@knysnaeducationtrust



@KnysnaEduTrust

ACE SPONSORS

A big thank you to all our ACE sponsors that continued to support children and preschools during a challenging year. This incredible support sustained valuable micro enterprises that create jobs for many women and a safe place for children to learn and grow. While all our sponsors are very special to us, we would like to add a special thank you to the ACE sponsors supporting 8 children and more, that remained active during this period and agreed to sponsorship renewals despite the extensive economic downturn.

These sponsors includes:

- Roger and Stella Wainheapy
- Sean and Brenda Hurley Group from Ireland
- Noel Hedigan Group from Ireland
- Stefan Englund
- Van der Mey Charitable Trust (Susan and Paul Kotze)
- Johann and Gina Nel



THE LEARNING TREE MODEL PRESCHOOL

The Learning Tree (TLT) started as just a vision for KET. Now, it has grown from strength to strength and is a fully functional ECD centre. TLT now has four classrooms with qualified, caring, dedicated and experienced teachers, whose hard work make it a safe and enriching place to learn. TLT has a holistic approach to learning. The vision is to prepare children for life, giving them a solid foundation. We use KET's numeracy (NUMBA) and literacy (FONIX) programmes to ensure children are ready for school in these areas.

The school now boasts four outside play areas, with various activities and opportunities available for the children. Due to sponsorship from anonymous donors and the support of Knysna Municipality and Sanparks, we have rehabilitated a section of the adjoining Knysna Forest. Besides having a fun place to play and exercise, this garden provides an opportunity for the children to learn about the indigenous fauna and flora and the importance of caring for it.

Growing Upwards, a volunteer initiative, planted a wonderful veggie garden at the school so that the children can eat their own healthy, fresh produce. As with the rest of the world, the Covid19 pandemic has had a significant impact on our school. The most significant being that for over four months, the children were unable to attend school. We re-opened in July under stringent Covid19 protocol and have been running without incident since then. At TLT we understand the importance of children learning through play-based activities. It fosters a culture of healthy curiosity and a willingness to learn in preparation for the next stage of their school careers. TLT children spend a full and fun-filled day at school, where they are happy and learning.





FEEDING SCHEMES

As a result of the Covid-19 lockdowns, food security became the biggest threat to our community. For unfunded preschools, many located in the most vulnerable communities, income dried up and principals had nowhere to turn. They could not pay teacher salaries as parents didn't or couldn't pay monthly fees. The preschools could not provide their learners with a daily meal, which for many children is their only daily meal from Monday to Friday. Trustees, donors and managers agreed - educating malnourished children after lockdown was unthinkable. Allowing principals and teachers to go without even a meagre income was unacceptable.

Funds previously allocated to education were diverted to an emergency feeding and teacher support scheme. KET Board agreed to R600, 000 being set aside from much needed funds to enact the scheme. Le Creuset, a long and trustworthy supporter of KET, approved an additional R115 000 in support of the feeding and teacher support crisis.

Within the emergency Covid-19 feeding support scheme, the KET annual feeding scheme operated under the same Covid19 rules. The annual KET feeding scheme is funded by Le Creuset and Rotary Knoxville, Tennessee, USA (Townes Osborne).

FEEDING SCHEME QUALIFYING CRITERIA

ECD facilities must meet the following criteria:

1. Be unfunded facilities, i.e. not receiving any government subsidies.
2. Be in possession of a Health Certificate to prepare food.
3. Be a registered, paid up KET Member.

THE PROCESS

1. Benefiting facilities receive a monthly menu designed by a local dietician, Bev Wilkinson. The cost effective diet ensures children receive optimal nutrition within budget.
2. Principals and cooks are trained on how to plan, shop for and prepare these meals according to the provided menu plan. To ensure the integrity of the meal's nutritional value, ingredient substitutes are discussed and agreed as a replacement when necessary.
3. Covid-19 restrictions stopped food deliveries to preschools. Through working with Rotary Knysna, KET learnt of SMSing redeemable food vouchers as an alternative method for providing access to food security.
4. Voucher values are calculated on the average number of children that attended each ECD facility. Attendance registers and child admission registers confirm these numbers.
5. Principals receive weekly Pick n Pay food vouchers by SMS.
6. The vouchers were redeemed weekly. The teachers sent photographic evidence on a WhatsApp group and PnP receipts were delivered to the office for review.
7. During Covid-19, as part of the teacher support initiative, Le Creuset agreed to an additional R250 per teacher per month for 7 months - until the end of December 2020. 13 teachers from the Le Creuset preschool feeding scheme benefited from this.

ANNUAL KET FEEDING SCHEME BENEFICIARIES

The Rotary Knoxville Feeding Scheme supports 12 children from Jolly Kids based in Ruigtevlei and 19 children from Wielie Walie based in Sedgfield.

The fortunate preschools benefitting from the Le Creuset Feeding Scheme included:

1. Happy Family
2. Happy Kids
3. Singatha
4. Little Hearts
5. Microtec

A total of 13 teachers and 123 children were supported.

VALUABLE LESSONS:

1. Principals shopped together to leverage savings through bulk buying.
2. Preschools operating as soup kitchens during lockdown strengthen the community goodwill between the preschool, child and parent.
3. The food relief provided by principals to their community and children was a great source of pride and personal joy during an anxious time.





KET VOLUNTEERS

KET's valuable volunteers usually assist us with the quality assurance process by monitoring KET's preschool literacy and numeracy programmes in our affiliated preschools. This past year, even though they could not visit the preschools, they went above and beyond the norm - assisting with creating learning resources that went into age appropriate educational packs that would ensure our preschool children were still learning.

During lockdown the volunteers spent their time making toys, mixing playdough, making homemade paint,

rolling paper beads, sewing and stuffing material balls and bean bags. They also knitted beanies and warm blankets during the colder months.

We have many volunteers but a strong core group of 16 volunteers who never seem to tire.

KET would love to grow our volunteer group. If you feel you have a skill or some time to give to the community, kindly contact us on 044 382 4638. We would love to hear from you.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial year started off with Knysna and the entire country facing the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic - a situation that has continued far longer than anyone predicted. This has brought many challenges to the funding environment. Together with their project partners, KET has managed to fulfill its programmes and services to the ECD's, albeit under very difficult and challenging conditions.

One of the biggest challenges in the Knysna area is food scarcity. For some children the only proper meal they have each day is received at school. With the schools being closed some children go without basic daily nutritional needs. KET could not allow this to happen. It was decided by the trustees and management that KET will continue feeding the most vulnerable children, and provide support to the principals and teachers from the organisation's own reserves.

An amount of R 556 377 was spent during the period April 2020 to Feb 2021. KET's budget was adjusted to take this expenditure into account.

KET was aware that this would deplete the organisation's accumulated reserves, and that the following years would present a challenge in building up these reserves again.

Despite the trying conditions, KET has continued to grow. The current office building has proved too small and the Board has secured larger premises.

The trust is a non-profit public benefit organisation and is audited on an annual basis. The full details of the financial position of the Trust as at 28 February 2021 can be found in the Annual Financial Statements. The audited financial statements are available electronically or from KET's office on request.



TOTAL INCOME

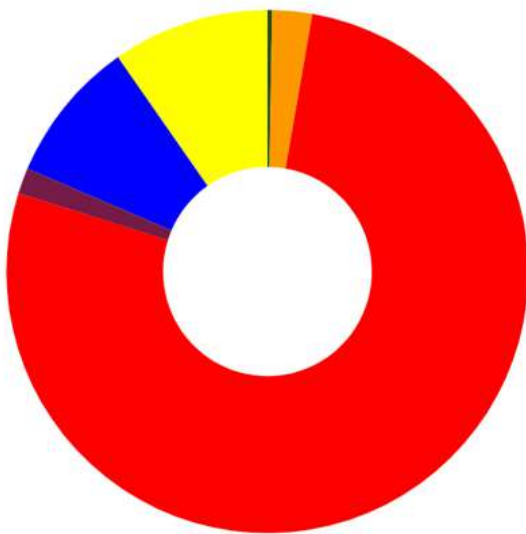
R4 964 925

TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING

R 4 364 794

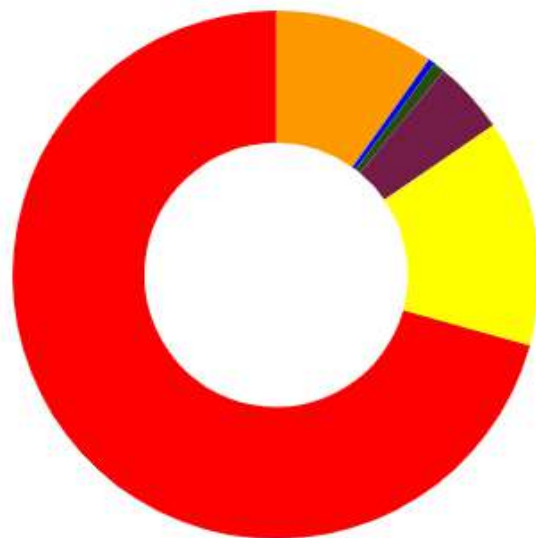
90% of this was distributed to beneficiaries.

Administration and project expenses remained in line with budgets, which resulted in an operating surplus of R 424 686 for the year. However, after expenditure on Covid-19 feeding and school support amounting to R 556 377, the net result for this financial year is a deficit of R131 691.



2021 INCOME

- Fundraising, sales of resources and other income
- Covid19 relief donations
- Grants and donations
- Investment income
- Rentals, workshops and project management fees
- The Learning Tree Preschool donations, grants and fees



2021 EXPENDITURE

- Covid-19 feeding and school support
- Finance costs
- Fundraising and marketing
- Office costs
- The Learning Tree
- Training and capacity building



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