



The
LifeMatters
Foundation

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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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 intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually 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 is the foundation of all relationships





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2020 has come and gone and we can safely say that no one came through it unscathed! It has been a year full of challenges we never expected or anticipated but we have RISEN ABOVE!

The year started like most others. We were excited about the start of our programmes and the thought of yet again impacting the lives of many young learners, and for the first term it was all systems go. Our Academic and LifeSkills programmes started off strong and with the help of our amazing volunteers we were able to see 895 learners.

Covid-19! We could never have anticipated what an impact this virus would have on our programme output and in the middle of March everything changed. Like everyone else we had to re-evaluate, adapt and adjust our approach to our service delivery. We took a long hard look at what our learners needed and how we could best serve them within the parameters of the Covid-19 restrictions, our staff came up with innovative ideas to keep providing programme resources to our learners and greater community. We instituted audio clip WhatsApp stories and math activities, distributed academic and life skills pamphlets at feeding schemes and put together and distributed our amazing 'School in a Bag' initiative. I am beyond proud of our team (staff, interns and volunteers) who never stopped believing that we can still make a difference in the communities we work in regardless of the obstacles and challenges placed in our way.

At the beginning of term 4 we slowly started re-integrating into school life and even though our volunteers were not able to go back into the schools, our Centre Managers, Interns

and Counsellors started the hard work of making sure that children were getting the support they needed. Again, we adapted and adjusted our programme delivery to best serve our schools and communities. Some of our Centre Managers ran lending libraries, reading circles and academic catch-up sessions, to name a few.

Notwithstanding the devastation the pandemic has brought on our country and indeed, the world, I am immensely encouraged by the resilience, innovation and generosity I have seen play out over the course of 2020. I am extremely grateful to our funders who have stood by us through this unprecedented time and trusted us to do the work we committed to doing even though it may have looked a bit different. We could not have done it without you!

One thing is sure, 2021 will bring new challenges but we are ready! 2020 has taught us some valuable lessons. We cannot hold on to anything too tightly. We must be ready to change and adapt quickly. We can never give up! There is just too much at stake.

Thank you for partnering with us! We trust that you will be encouraged by this report and that you too will commit to continuing to make an impact in this country, however you are led to do so.

Alnerié Turck

2020 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2020 has, without doubt, been one of the most tumultuous years ever.

The Covid-19 pandemic has severely impacted every aspect of our lives. LifeMatters Foundation has been no exception. Our beneficiaries' education has been severely impacted and all indications are that the disruption experienced has left learners behind where they should normally be.

The pandemic and resulting lockdowns has forced the team at LMF to respond in creative and novel ways, through stories on WhatsApp, the School in a Bag initiative, the creation of lending libraries and more. We believe that even though our efforts have been curtailed we have still been able to impact the lives of our beneficiaries and their families. This would not have been possible without the continuing faithful support of our donors who have continued to provide the finances to enable us to continue to do the work we have been called to.

Once again, I am grateful to our outstanding leadership team, our centre managers and others involved in LMF, to our faithful donors, and to the God we serve for their contribution in 2020. As we move into 2021 with the continued spectre of the Covid-19 crisis over us we look forward with expectation to what this year will bring.

Peter Withey
Chairman of the Board



LIFESKILLS PORTFOLIO



We began 2020 with high hopes and expectations.

We had five counsellors on staff ready to serve and had for the first time a Teenage Awareness Programme (TAP) and Volunteer Coordinator. None of us could have predicted where the year would take us. 2020, however, allowed us to be more flexible and far more creative than before. For the first time, we had to reimagine how our LifeSkills programmes could be run without meeting beneficiaries face-to-face!

CAMP

Unfortunately, due to the progression of Covid-19, we were not able to host our camps for the Grade 7 learners.



COUNSELLING

We were propelled to find alternative means to continue reaching our beneficiaries. 2020 required flexibility and crisis management to be implemented. Due to the growing need for mental health and counselling support during the beginning stages of the pandemic, an interim solution was put in place for all LMF school partners: educators, parents and learners; a 24-7 Hour Counselling Hotline.

Along with this hotline, we were able to develop and explore virtual LifeSkills and Counselling resources. One of these resources was the use of JamBOARDS, which enabled our counsellors to conduct counselling and play therapy virtually.

We also developed a LifeSkills pamphlet that provided children at different feeding schemes all across Cape Town with different activities that promoted mental health, resilience and coping mechanisms in the face of anxiety and crisis. The response to the pamphlets was so positive that we saw it necessary to develop a second set of pamphlets for distribution in mid-May. The second set of pamphlets included a competition for beneficiaries to enter at their feeding schemes. The competition asked primary school learners to identify a problem around them and draw or write out their solution. This task spoke to our

mission statement of 'active citizenship'. This competition and its entries also acted as an M&E tool that measured how many learners engaged with the pamphlets.

Before our beneficiary schools reopened, our counsellors underwent extensive upskilling in order to prepare them for the possibility of psychological, educational and family trauma that may have occurred during the lockdown period. Our counsellors also engaged in hygiene and sanitation training which ensured that their counselling rooms and therapy equipment were germ free. At the start of November, our counsellors were finally able to start seeing clients face-to-face (all Covid-19 procedures were in place).

There were a number of success stories from clients who were able to attend in-person counselling. One example was a client, who, while isolating after testing positive for Covid-19, got news that her husband had passed away at the hospital. Through counselling, she was able to get the support that she needed. We unfortunately had to say goodbye to one of our counsellors before the end of the year who was not able to return for health reasons. We were so sad to see her go but immensely grateful for her commitment to our team even when her health was a struggle.

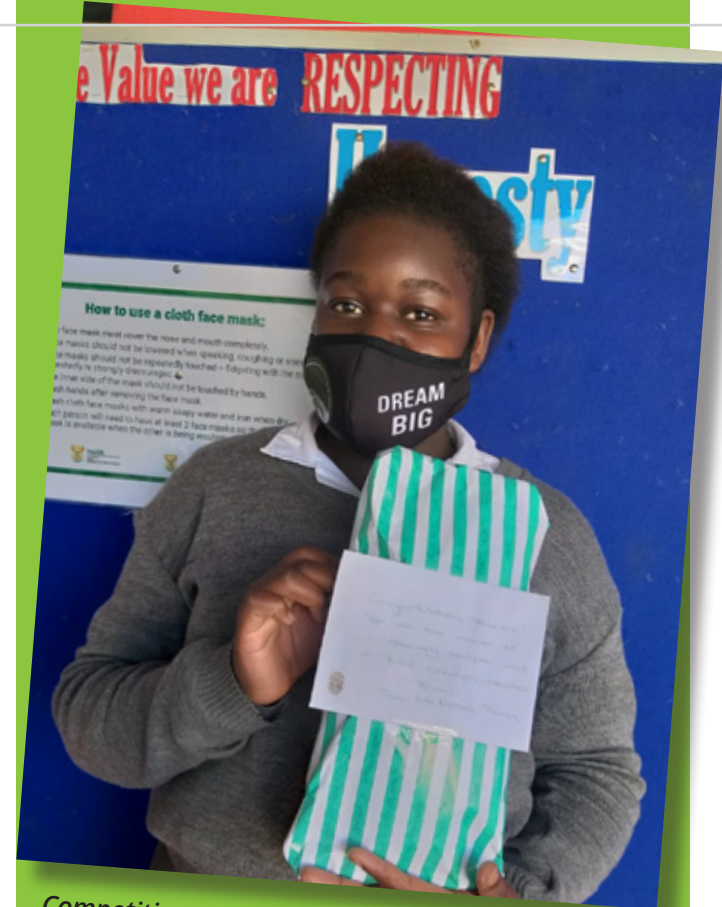


TEENAGE AWARENESS PROGRAMMES

The pandemic's impact on our work was initially viewed as something negative, however, as a team we started to see it as an opportunity to be innovative, creative and to pioneer new approaches to LifeSkills and Mental Health education. This shift in perspective led to the development of 2 virtual LifeSkills and Counselling resources.

The first being Courageous Conversations, a series of virtual workshops that addressed a range of LifeSkills content including Race, Gaming and Mental Health for teenagers amidst the pandemic. The second virtual resource developed were the Trauma-Sensitive Practice Workshops. These workshops acknowledged and normalized stress and anxiety and equipped attendees to manage these feelings, and others, in order to perform their daily duties effectively. These workshops were also well received and quite popular. We were able to conduct this workshop at a shelter for the homeless and it ended up being interactive and very effective.

In October, the LifeSkills team was able to conduct our first in-person Teenage Awareness Programme since the lockdown was enforced. We hosted 2 programmes which were both well received as evident through positive verbal feedback from the learners. We were then privileged to conduct 2 Teenage Awareness Programmes again in November at a different school. We were also able to conduct a programme with our interns on the 27th of November to conclude the year with them as well as a thank you to them for serving with us so well in the year. We recognise that we were not able to conduct the full number of programmes that we normally would in a year, however, we celebrate the fact that our team has been able to be flexible, adaptable and creative during this pandemic.



*Competition winner from Westlake Primary School
- Patricia C (Gr7)*

This pandemic, although undesired, allowed us to explore new avenues of presenting our programmes to our beneficiaries. We had space to be more flexible and more creative than ever before. With all that we have learnt in 2020 we are confident that we will be able to tackle the challenges of 2021 and provide the much needed support our beneficiaries require.

ACADEMIC PORTFOLIO



The word that comes to mind when thinking back on 2020 is flexibility.

TERM 1

The year started well enough with normal programme delivery in the (very short 6 week) Term 1. We managed to provide 2458 hours of literacy intervention to 482 Grade 2 and 3 learners and 785 hours of numeracy intervention to 140 Grade 2 learners, but then Covid-19!

The LifeMatters Foundation (LMF), like millions of other non-profit organizations and businesses, could not carry on with business as usual despite the irony of the increased need for academic support due to lock-down and Covid-19 restrictions. Sadly, the schools served by The LifeMatters Foundation were not able to use technology to continue teaching and learning during the pandemic.

In her article 'Covid-19 exposes South Africa's digital literacy divide' (Mail & Guardian 8 September 2020) Pauline Hanekom highlights the fact that learners from poorer communities have struggled not only with access to digital learning technologies but may also lack the skills to navigate and effectively use digital learning tools. The final nail in the coffin relates to the poor reading skills of South Africa's poorer learners. Hanekom explains that the Progress International Reading and Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2016 results showed that 78% of South African Grade 4 learners could not read for meaning in any language, but the reality is that the gap between richer and poorer schools is more pervasive.



"My colleague, Nic Spaull, in his South African Schooling and Inequality presentation, further analysed this data and found that in the richest 10% of schools, 71% of grade four children could read for meaning, while all the other schools came in below 25%. The effect of the national lockdown on primary school learners in poorer and rural schools has therefore been devastating, because these learners are not only digitally illiterate, but also functionally illiterate as a result of their poor basic reading skills."

- Hanekom

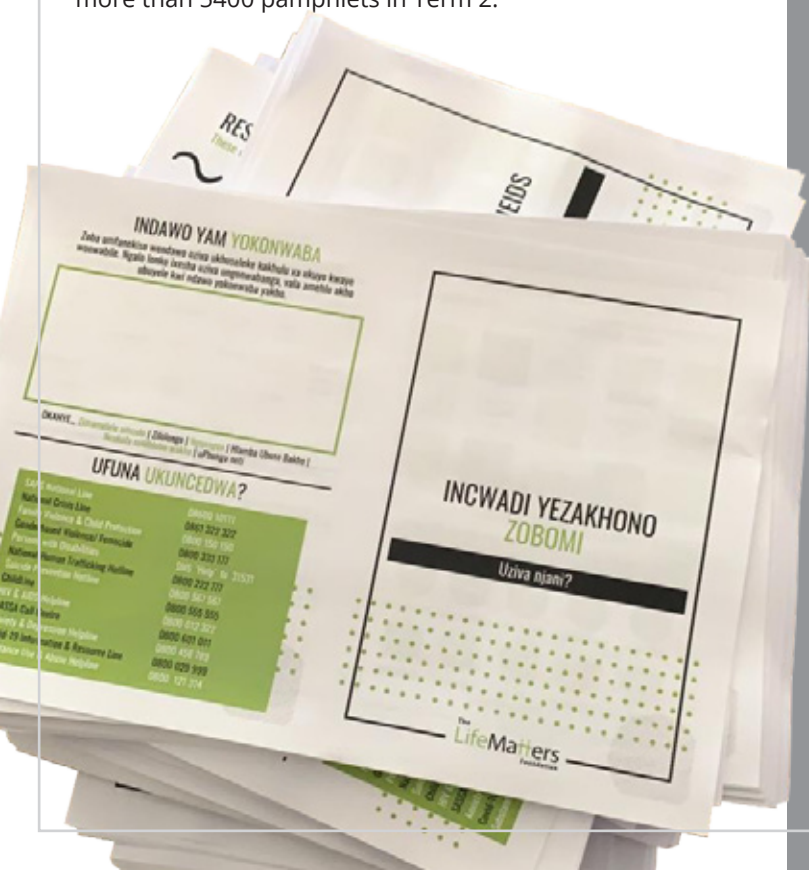
In short, Hanekom reminds us that the gap between the haves and the have nots in South Africa has widened due to Covid-19. Whilst we cannot say that this information comes as a surprise, The LifeMatters Foundation has adopted a "Can Do" attitude and found creative ways to support learners throughout the year and our Centre Managers need to be applauded for their creativity and dedication.



TERM 2

The first initiative to reach our beneficiaries during hard lock down in Term 2 was the lockdown pamphlet, which included academic and life skills/ mental health content in either English, Afrikaans or isiXhosa. The pamphlets were distributed at feeding schemes in the communities we serve as well as several other communities around the country since we shared the pamphlets with other organizations free of charge. The pamphlets provided parents and caregivers with ideas, activities and links to resources to support home learning and mental health.

Children could also engage with some of the content without parental support and the second edition of the pamphlets included a Bright Ideas Competition which enjoyed a surprising level of engagement. LMF printed and distributed more than 5400 pamphlets in Term 2.



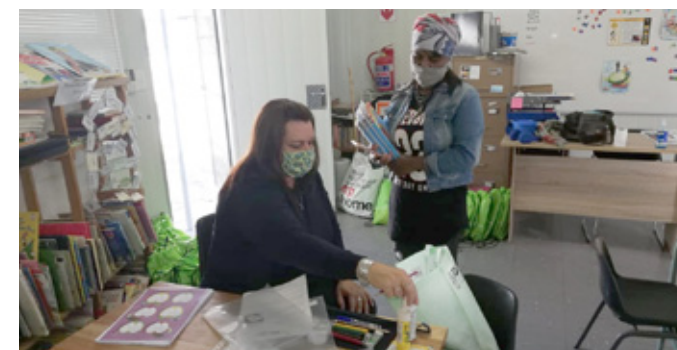
We also started sharing audio clip stories and numeracy lessons via WhatsApp which the class teachers shared with their class groups. The clips were shorter than 5 minutes and included stories read with great passion by our wonderful volunteers. The numeracy lessons took learners through activities such as counting, skip counting, grouping, adding, subtracting and a myriad of other activities they could do at home with everyday materials such as stones, matches or sticks. These audio clips were quite popular and we may consider using them again in the future.

TERM 3

The lockdown pamphlets were a catalyst for our next project, our 'School in a Bag' Initiative which was implemented in Term 3. We realised that financial and technological constraints combined with a lack of learning materials meant that learning at home was not going to happen for many of our beneficiaries. Our response was to develop 'School in a Bag' which included a myriad of reusable literacy, numeracy and mental health and well-being resources and stationery for 500 learners that need support at our beneficiary schools.



The bags were distributed once schools reopened in late July and early August and each recipient and parent (where possible) was given a short tutorial on the contents and how to use the materials. The materials were designed to be reusable and were laminated and included a plastic cover sheet and whiteboard koki as well as a beautiful bag of stationery donated by Green Design.



We conducted learner and parent surveys to determine the efficacy of the initiative and were very pleased by the results which are highlighted below.

Data from Learner Evaluations

96.3%

of learners have used the materials in the bags

50%

reporting using the materials more than 5 times

82.6%

of learners report that a parent or older sibling help them with the activities in the bags

57.1%

report that they share the materials with other children in their home

Data from Parent/Caregiver Evaluations

100%

of parents report their children use the materials with 82.1% reporting materials have been used many times (as opposed to 17.9% who report materials have been used only a few times)

64.3%

of parents report that the only learning resources they had at home before receiving School in a Bag were worksheets or books provided by the school. 10.7% of parents report they had no learning materials at all and 25% report that they had reading books at home

100%

of parents indicated that the materials have helped their child during the pandemic

100%

of parents agreed that they would use the materials to help their child with at home learning post pandemic

TERM 4

Term 4 was exciting for our Centre Managers and iMatter interns because all our beneficiary schools allowed our staff to resume some form of academic support whilst adhering to strict Covid-19 safety protocols. Activities varied from school to school but included: operating lending libraries, running shortened Shine Literacy and LifeMatters Foundation Numeracy Programme sessions using only Centre Managers and interns and providing small group tutoring for at risk learners using materials provided by the educators. We also managed to assess the incoming Grade 2 learners with benchmark assessments so we could identify those that need support in 2021.

Another project we completed in Term 4 was the completion of the revised 'Fun with Numbers' Numeracy Programme Manual which includes an additional unit and some updates and improvements. We have also gathered ideas from the internet to create 75 hands on games and activities which support our numeracy curriculum. The activities cover topics such as number concept, bonds, doubling and halving, greater than and less than, grouping and sharing and repeated addition.

We are looking forward to the 2021 school year despite the challenges it may bring. We hope to be able to resume the academic support we offered in Term 4 of last year and trust that eventually we will be able to welcome our amazing volunteers back again to help us.

We also plan to join Shine Literacy and the Western Cape Department of Education in their efforts to encourage learning at home through the distribution of WordWorks @Home Learning Packs for the Grade 1 learners at our schools. We remain optimistic that our dedication, flexibility and commitment will help us to provide academic support to the most vulnerable learners in the communities we serve. Thank you to our faithful funders, volunteers and friends for your ongoing support in these uncertain times.

iMATTER INTERNSHIP REPORT 2020

We started 2020 with 11 interns from our partners at Action Volunteers Africa (AVA) and hired one intern independently from the 2019 cohort to take on more responsibility and be a “floating” intern. This intern, Jade Langeveldt, has now become a Centre Manager and we couldn’t be prouder of his growth and achievements. Only one intern quit mid-way through the year, which is not bad statistically speaking!

Although it was a challenging year, the interns stepped up to the plate when intern job descriptions changed dramatically because of Covid-19. The programme is meant to provide interactive training from our partners at Action Volunteers Africa and daily work experience in LMF literacy and numeracy centres. The reality was a lot of online meetings and training, very little interaction with learners in the schools and a lot of time dedicated to cleaning, sanitizing and staying safe!

Nonetheless, we believe the 2020 interns learned and developed despite the circumstances. For example, we observed some interns had amazing organizational skills and a good eye for detail when they helped us cut, staple, collate and pack the ‘School in a Bag’ materials. Another intern started a feeding scheme in her community and handed out the LMF pamphlets to all the children receiving meals.

The most exciting development by far was when Litha Samsam (an intern from Capricorn Primary School) and some of his friends started a story time for young children in the community. They even built a bookshelf to display their books! This illustrates the power of teaching young people

the value and power of reading and the skills to engage young children to develop language skills, vocabulary and imagination!

The year ended with a fabulous lunch and celebration at the offices of Action Volunteers Africa where we acknowledged the efforts and growth of each intern. Our friends at AVA organized the celebration whilst adhering to Covid-19 safety protocols. It was a fitting end to a year that didn’t turn out quite as planned, but ultimately helped equip the interns to grow in ways they probably never imagined!



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2020

The LifeMatters Foundation was the proud recipient of three more mobile units donated by Truworths at Lourier Primary School. We were able to celebrate this wonderful occasion on the 21st of February with an opening ceremony attended by our friends at Truworths and other special guests. These units create safe learning and counselling spaces where young people are encouraged to overcome the obstacles they face and reach their potential. Thank you to Truworths for these amazing units and to Prudential, DGMT and a private donor for supporting the running costs of our literacy, numeracy and counselling programme at Lourier.

At the end of 2019 we were approached by a donor from Shine Literacy who was wanting us to start a literacy chapter at Constantia Primary School to provide support to their learners. She was happy to provide the start-up costs, but we didn't have a building to run the programme in and we also did not have money for the running costs of the programme. Once again, we were amazed at how God provided for all these costs. One of our faithful supporters offered to pay for a mobile classroom to be erected at Constantia Primary school and another UK based donor offered a lump sum to cover the running costs of the programme for the next three years! Covid-19 has meant that we have not been able to have an official grand opening, but we have finally been able to start literacy interventions with Gr 2 and 3 learners and are looking forward to seeing many young people receiving the help they need.



FINANCE REPORT

Michelle Davidson

WHERE THE MONEY CAME FROM:

The income for January to December 2020 of R3 064 057 was, not unexpectedly, 22% lower than 2019. Fundraising income decreased by 79% and fee income decreased by 44% as in person events were limited during the national lockdown. Donations from individuals, companies and others passionate about the work of The LifeMatters Foundation continue to be the foundation stone of the organisation's income, making up 84% of the total income. R869 184 was received in 2020 for activities in 2021.

WHERE THE MONEY WENT:

Organisational spending increased by 8% overall to R2 756 093. Marketing, Management and Operational costs decreased during the year, however, the Internship programme and Project Costs increased by 22% and 21% 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. Not included in the operational costs reflected is the purchase of a mobile learning centre for Constantia Primary. The organisation ended the year with a surplus of R 307 964.



FUTURE

The budget for 2021 is a conservative budget with only an 8% increase on the 2020 budget. Personnel costs will reduce as a result of staff movement; however, the Academic Portfolio and The LifeSkills Portfolio will increase by 39% and 35% respectively. The budget is cautiously optimistic about the activities that will be possible in the 2021 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.

We would once again like to express our deepest gratitude to our funders. It goes without saying that the work cannot be done without you. 2020 was a particularly difficult financial year for most people and we are cognisant of the fact that our donors still supported the work in the midst of great financial uncertainty. We are so grateful for your continued support and faith in us.



REVENUE:

R3,064,057

Grants	6%	R192,000
Donations - Corporates/Others	84%	R2,565,022
Donations in kind	3%	R90,000
Fundraising events	4%	R110,670
Fees	2%	R70,236
Interest received	1%	R36,129



EXPENDITURE:

R2,756,093

Marketing, PR & Fundraising	9%	R236,231
Management & Admin	7%	R181,373
Capital & Operation costs	9%	R254,443
Internship Programme	7%	R193,500
Project Costs	69%	R1,890,546



SURPLUS:

R307,964

OUR SPONSORS



APC
TRADING



CHRIST CHURCH
CONSTANTIA



DGMT
THE DG MURRAY TRUST

EG WOODS
WILL TRUST



KIRSTENHOF
PRIMARY SCHOOL



NEW CLICKS
FOUNDATION



SA FIVE
ENGINEERING

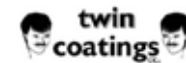
SNAPPER
DISPLAY



THE JOHN HERBERT
TRUST

THE MACFARLANE
FAMILY TRUST
(THE TAMBOUR
FOUNDATION)

ROLF-STEPHAN
NUSSBAUM FOUNDATION



WESTCOTT
PRIMARY SCHOOL



MEET THE TEAM

Back row: Vanessa Le Roux (Sullivan Primary Literacy Centre Manager), Jade Langeveldt (Intern), Lisa Kiggen (Constantia Primary Literacy and Westlake Primary Numeracy Centre Manager), Nicola Bowley (Capricorn Primary Numeracy Centre Manager).

Middle row: Qhamaninande Trom (Sullivan Primary Counsellor), Luyanda Masgo (Lourier Primary Counsellor), Sandra Van Wyk (Westlake Primary Literacy Centre Manager), Alneré Turck (Executive Director), Penny van Schaik (Steenberg Primary Literacy Centre Manager), Janine Van der Berg (Steenberg and Sullivan Primary Numeracy Centre Manager), Laura Andreas (iThemba Primary Counsellor), Joy Badham-Thornhill (Administrator), Sharleen Haupt (Academic Portfolio Manager).

Front row: Maureen Hardick (Lourier Primary Literacy Centre Manager), Nina Todd (Capricorn Primary Literacy Centre Manager), Xoli Samsam (TAP Facilitator and Volunteer Recruitment Coordinator), Motselisi Maphelle (Westlake Primary Counsellor), Kayla-Tess Pattenden (LifeSkills Portfolio Manager), James Mundell (Steenberg Primary Counsellor).
Jody Hardick (Lourier Primary Numeracy Centre Manager) – absent on the day.



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Banking details

The LifeMatters Foundation • Bank: Standard Bank • Branch: Blue Route • Branch Code: 025609 • Account Number: 072032405

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