EDUCATION AFRICA

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Making real change Happen

EDUCATE • EQUIP • EMPOWER

POVERTY alleviation THROUGH EDUCATION.

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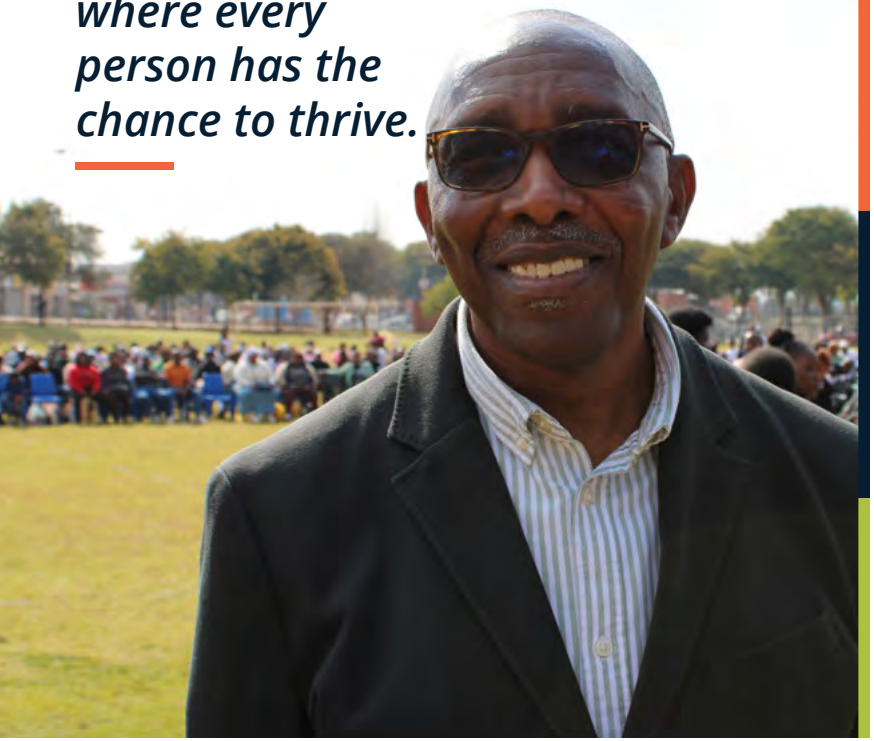
The work of Education Africa is about creating opportunities, restoring dignity, unlocking potential, and building a future where every person has the chance to thrive.



President's Report

As I turn the pages of this 2025 Annual Report, I am reminded that behind every statistic, every programme, and every achievement is a person whose life has been touched by education. A young learner discovering his or her potential; a teacher gaining new skills and confidence; a community finding opportunities to build a better future. These stories are the true measure of our success, and the reason Education Africa continues to do what it does.

The year 2025 has been one of both challenge and possibility. Across South Africa, many communities continue to face significant social and economic hardships. Amidst these realities, however, we have witnessed extraordinary resilience, determination, and hope. Time and again, we have seen the transformative power of education to open doors, break down barriers, and create pathways to opportunity.

At Education Africa, our vision remains clear: Making real change Happen through poverty alleviation and sustainable development driven by education. This vision is reflected in our enduring commitment to Educate • Equip • Empower. Through our work we have shown that when individuals are given access to knowledge, skills and opportunities, they become agents of change within their own lives and communities. Education does more than prepare people for the future; it enables them to shape it.

Throughout 2025, our programmes continued to reach thousands of learners, educators, young people, and community members. Beyond the achievements captured in this Annual Report I am inspired by the growing community of people committed to creating lasting change together.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the remarkable people who stand behind our mission. To the Education Africa staff, thank you for your unwavering dedication, professionalism, and passion. Your commitment to serving others is the foundation of our success. To our Board of Trustees and Directors, thank you for your leadership, guidance, and stewardship. To our partners and stakeholders, thank you for sharing our vision and walking this journey alongside us. And to our donors, thank you for your continued trust and generosity. Your support is an investment not only in programmes, but in human potential, dignity, and hope.

As I look to the future, I am filled with optimism. The challenges we face are significant, but so too is our collective capacity to address them. Every learner supported, every educator empowered, and every community strengthened brings us one step closer to a more equitable and prosperous society.

The work of Education Africa is about creating opportunities, restoring dignity, unlocking potential, and building a future where every person has the chance to thrive. Together, we are proving that meaningful, lasting change is possible.

Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping us continue to Make real change Happen.

Warm regards,

Kananelo Makhetha

President
Education Africa

"Our greatest strength lies in our people.

From the Desk of Our CEO

As I reflect on the year under review, I am encouraged by the momentum and positive change taking place across Education Africa. We continue to make meaningful progress on our Next Generation Ready NOW! strategy, strengthening our foundations while positioning the organisation for sustainable growth and greater impact.

Focus on strengthened leadership

One of the most significant developments during the year has been the strengthening of our leadership team with the appointment of Mbali Sebokedi as our Chief Operating Officer. Mbali previously held the position of Director, Partnerships & Communication and has taken on increasing responsibility with confidence and professionalism. I value our partnership immensely and have great confidence in Mbali's leadership as we continue to build the next generation of leaders at Education Africa.

Likewise, Rodney Selbst has brought much-needed stability and consistency to our financial management and governance. Following a full financial year and successful audit cycle, our accounting systems are running smoothly, and his thoughtful contributions to governance processes have further strengthened the organisation.

Over the past couple of years, we have intentionally focused on what I often refer to as "growing our own wood" – investing in and developing our people talent from within. This long-term approach has proven to be the right one, creating a strong foundation for sustainable scaling and supported by strong leadership. I am confident that we are now better positioned than ever to strengthen project delivery, maintain our high standards of quality and continue taking important steps towards scaling our work.

Bold steps towards scaling

Our vision extends far beyond South Africa's borders. During the year we took the first steps towards expanding our Early Childhood Development programme into Zambia, supported by our global partner in Germany, Shirika gGmbH. This pilot initiative represents the beginning of what we hope will become an Education Africa social franchise model for the continent, enabling us to share proven approaches and empower communities across Africa.

At the same time, the Education Africa Social Architecture Project continues to gain momentum. Together with Friends of Education Africa UK and in partnership with a number of global universities, we are working towards an ambitious vision of constructing 100 preschools over the next 15 years, creating spaces where young children can thrive and rural communities can flourish.

Detailed information on developments within all our Projects is featured on the relevant project pages as well as the highlights section of this annual report.

Nothing is impossible

Over the past two years, Education Africa has continued to benefit from the pro bono support of an international strategy consulting company whose contribution has been nothing short of transformative.

From the Desk of our CEO

continued...

Their expertise has helped sharpen our fundraising strategy, strengthen our long-term sustainability and ability to scale our project delivery. Their latest scope of work focuses on expanding our donor and stakeholder engagement efforts and creating new opportunities to deepen our impact on South Africa's human capital development.

An exciting aspect of this strategy has been the launch of my memoir, It Always Seems Impossible: My Fight to Build and Save Education Africa, which has been three years in the making. What began as a personal reflection on three decades of building and fighting for Education Africa, has become something much larger.

The book has opened doors, reconnected us with past supporters and introduced our work to new audiences. I have spent considerable time this year at book launches and signings, corporate and literary gatherings to promote the book and talk about Education Africa's story. Most importantly, it has already succeeded in generating substantial support for Education Africa's projects and reinforced the powerful truth that the impossible can indeed become possible when people come together around a shared vision.

Another aspect of the strategy has been the launch of the inaugural Education Africa Founders Day which took place in March this year. The topic of discussion by a distinguished panel of industry experts and key thought leaders was "Building a Strong Foundation – The Power of Quality ECD Programmes & their Role in Economic Empowerment". The event proved to be a resounding success, and a decision was made to make this an annual event addressing a key hot topic around education.

The year also brought moments of great pride. Education Africa has a long history of friendship and partnership with the people of Austria, and I was granted an audience with the State President of Austria, Dr Alexander Van der Bellen during his State Visit to South Africa. The Education Africa All Star Marimba Band also had the honour of performing for him. Such moments remind us that Education Africa's story has always been one of collaboration, shared purpose and enduring relationships.

Our international family continues to play an important role in sustaining and expanding our work. Shirika gGmbH in Germany as well as our global representatives in the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Vienna remain steadfast supporters, helping us strengthen programmes, build new partnerships and explore opportunities for growth across the continent.

Throughout all of this, one thing remains clear: our greatest strength lies in our people. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our staff, trustees, board members, donors, partners and friends. Your commitment, wisdom and generosity make our work possible. Together, we are building an organisation that is stronger, more resilient and increasingly capable of delivering scalable, sustainable and digitally enabled, high-quality blended education to disadvantaged Africans and their communities.

After more than three decades, I remain as optimistic and committed as ever. The future is bright, and I look forward to continuing on this journey together.

James Urdang

Chief Executive Officer
Education Africa

Celebrating the success of our inaugural Education Africa Founders Day

Educate • Equip • Empower

Our people are the heart of Education Africa.
Their passion, dedication and expertise transform opportunity
into lasting impact in communities across Southern Africa.

2025 Highlights

JANUARY • MARCH • APRIL • MAY • JUNE

JANUARY

- Members of the Education Africa ECD team attend a four-day workshop on LEGO training at Care for Education where they explored innovative ways to enhance problem-solving, creativity, communication, teamwork, and out-of-the-box thinking.

MARCH

- On 17 March we celebrated 33 years since Education Africa first opened its doors. To mark the occasion, we hosted our first Founders' Day event at the Sasfin Auditorium. Besides giving our guests a glimpse of what happens behind the scenes in our ECD training studio and classrooms, we also hosted a memorable and thought-provoking panel discussion titled Building a Strong Foundation – The Power of Quality ECD Programmes & their Role in Economic Empowerment.
- Alexander Frehse and Aleks Stojakovic joined the Friends of Education Africa UK Advisory Board to assist in growing our Social Architecture project
- Two new Education Africa Marimba Hubs were launched: Futura School in Johannesburg, Gauteng and Re-Tlameleng in Kimberley, Northern Cape.
- The Masibambane College Choir and Marimba Band performed at the African Children's Summit in Johannesburg.

APRIL

- Education Africa's ECD and Marimba teams joined forces to host a Marimba Workshop at one of our ECD centres in Orange Farm. Focus was on demonstrating how the marimba can be used as a valuable learning tool in early childhood development.
- Mbali Sebokedi is promoted to the position of Chief Operating Officer.
- Bjorn Schalles, Managing Partner at Shirika gGmbH, our global partner in Germany, visits South Africa to investigate opportunities for a pilot ECD programme into Zambia.

MAY

- We celebrated the 29th Masibambane College Founders Day.
- 60 new teachers have joined the Education Africa ECD Teacher Mentorship Programme.

JUNE

- The Education Africa Marimba team visits our Marimba Hubs in the Northern Cape and North West provinces.
- Congratulations to Thuli Mvala, our ECD trainer at the Braamfontein training centre, who graduated with a Diploma in Grade R teaching.
- With funding from the Australian High Commission Pretoria's Direct Aid Program we officially broke ground for the construction of the much-needed Masibambane College Arts and Culture Centre which will be the home of Marimba training at the school.
- Our ECD trainers were trained on working creatively with Lego, and 300 Lego boxes were distributed to our students and members of our mentorship programme.

2025 Highlights

JULY • AUGUST • SEPTEMBER • OCTOBER • NOVEMBER • DECEMBER

JULY

- The Marimba team hosted a 40-hour Marimba Workshop for new and existing teachers at our Marimba Hubs.
- Our ECD team hosted resource-making workshops at our various training centres – making toys and classroom resources out of waste.
- We launched the international Education Africa Social Architecture design competition, calling for entries for the design of modular, adaptable and aspirational preschool.

AUGUST

- A big thank you to Nucleus Supply Chain Group for hosting a hugely successful Golf Day in aid of Education Africa.

SEPTEMBER

- One of our special needs Marimba Hubs, Dominican School for the Deaf in Hammanskraal, is invited to perform at the GGT 2030 Summit.
- The long-awaited official launch of our CEO's memoir, It Always Seems Impossible – My fight to build and save Education Africa takes place at Exclusive Books in Hyde Park, Johannesburg. This is the first of many book launches and book signings that took place for the remainder of the year.
- We opened applications for the 2026/2027 ECD Train the Teacher Programme

OCTOBER

- The ECD Train the Teacher Programme Open Day is held as our ECD team starts to recruit a new intake of students.
- The internationally acclaimed musician, Guido Spannocchi, visits Masibambane College and holds an unforgettable session with the Masibambane College Marimba Band. He accompanied them on the Flute and the Saxophone.
- Our BackaBuddy campaign Running for Education Africa and Masibambane College at the Sanlam Cape Town Marathon was well supported, in spite of the fact the race was called off on the day due to adverse weather conditions. A big thank you to our runners for their commitment to Education Africa.
- Nine of our dedicated trainers from the ECD Team graduated with a National Diploma in Early Childhood Development (Qualification ID 64650, Level 5).
- The Austrian St Florian Boys Choir visits Masibambane College and performs with the school's Marimba Band.

NOVEMBER

- James Urdang as well as the Education Africa All Stars Marimba Band are featured on SABC's Morning Live programme.
- Daily Maverick hosts a live webinar featuring James Urdang's memoir.

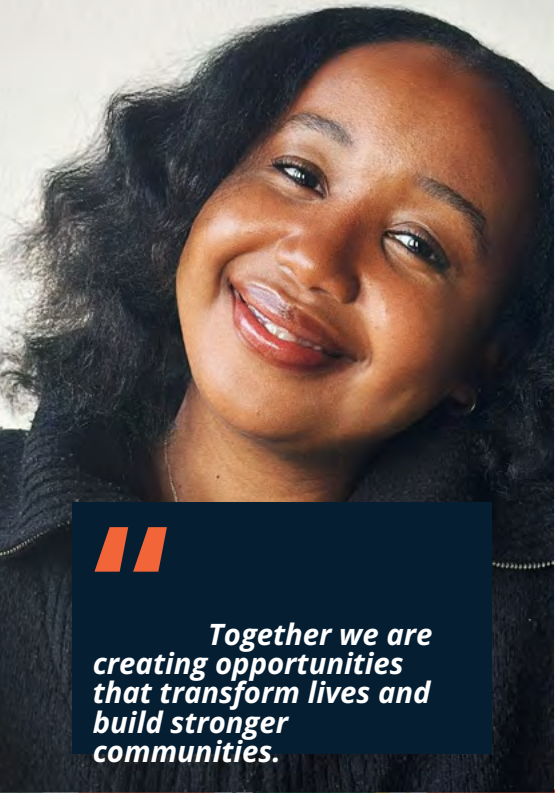
DECEMBER

- We are very proud of James Urdang whose memoir, It Always Seems Impossible – My fight to build and save Education Africa, is proving to be a popular book, and is featured in the Exclusive Books Christmas Catalogue.
- After two years of hard work, dedication and perseverance, 190 student teachers who are part of the Education Africa Train the Teacher programme, graduated with their SAQA NQF Level 4 ECD certificates on 10 December.

Chief Operating Officer's Report

Mbali Sebokedi

Chief Operating Officer
Education Africa



> ***Together we are creating opportunities that transform lives and build stronger communities.***

As Education Africa continues to grow, 2025 has been a year of strengthening our foundations, expanding our fundraising capacity, and investing in the systems and people that enable our programmes to thrive.

Strengthening sustainability through fundraising

Our fundraising efforts gained considerable momentum during the year, resulting in several significant successes and a strong pipeline of future opportunities. We remain profoundly grateful to the many donors, partners and individual supporters whose generosity and confidence in our mission sustain and strengthen our work.

At Education Africa, we deeply value these partnerships and regard them as fundamental to our success. We are privileged to work alongside organisations, foundations and individuals who share our belief in the transformative power of education and community development. Their support extends far beyond financial contributions; it reflects a collective commitment to creating opportunities, alleviating poverty and building a more equitable future.

The expansion of our fundraising capacity, supported by dedicated grant writing and research, has positively enabled us to pursue a broader range of opportunities and strengthen our responsiveness to donor priorities.

As we look ahead, this strengthened fundraising foundation positions Education Africa to nurture existing relationships, cultivate new partnerships and secure the resources needed to broaden our reach and deepen our impact.

Building stronger systems

Creating greater clarity and consistency across the organisation remains a key priority as we continue strengthening our capability to scale our ambitions. By focusing on people, organisational development and governance, digital tools, and performance management, we are building a stronger organisation while also supporting our fundraising objectives. During the year, we continued to review and refine internal policies and procedures to ensure that staff and managers are supported by clear, effective systems. Together, these improvements are strengthening Education Africa's operational foundation and ensuring that we are better positioned to support our teams, enhance accountability and scale our impact sustainably.

Communications

Education Africa maintained an active and growing digital presence across LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube during 2025, using each platform to engage different audiences and promote programme activities, beneficiary stories, recruitment opportunities and organisational milestones.

LinkedI recorded steady growth throughout the year, attracting **806 new followers**

Although posting activity was limited during some months, content highlighting organisational achievements, participant success stories and engagement opportunities consistently performed well.

Facebook continued to serve as Education Africa's primary platform for broad audience reach. The platform reached almost **45,000 users** through **43 posts** during the year.

Recruitment campaigns proved particularly successful, with the ECD Recruitment Campaign achieving exceptional visibility and engagement, reaching tens of thousands of users and generating significant interaction through comments, shares and reactions.

Instagram remained Education Africa's most engagement-focused platform. While overall reach was lower than Facebook, engagement rates were consistently high, demonstrating a strong connection with followers.

YouTube provided an important platform for showcasing Education Africa's video content and preserving programme resources. The channel maintained a subscriber base that grew throughout the year and accumulated more than 10,000 views per month on average.

Moving forward, maintaining a consistent posting schedule, increasing video content production, and continuing to share impact-driven stories will strengthen audience growth, deepen engagement and further enhance Education Africa's digital presence

Investing in Our People

Our people remain at the heart of everything we do. During the year, we welcomed Luthando Dube as Marimba Administrator; Rocko Hughes as Marimba Assistant; and Butikie Buthelezi and Sibongile Mbokane as Teacher Mentorship Interns. Addtionally we celebrated the continued growth and development of staff across the organisation. We also said farewell to colleagues who contributed meaningfully to our work, and we wish them every success in their future endeavours. Professional development continues to be an important focus. We celebrated graduations across our team and through the support of Shirika gGmbH, created opportunities for managers to continue their studies and build leadership capacity, ensuring that we continue to invest in the people who drive our mission forward.

I extend my sincere thanks to our team, trustees, donors, partners, and supporters for their continued commitment and belief in our work. Together, we are creating opportunities that transform lives and build stronger communities.

Educate • Equip • Empower

Introducing Our Projects

Early Childhood Development (ECD) Project

Education Africa's Early Childhood Development (ECD) Project provides a structured and scalable response to the challenges facing early childhood education in South Africa by strengthening the quality of early learning through teacher training, mentorship and capacity building. The impact extends beyond individual classrooms, contributing to stronger early learning systems and more resilient communities over time. During 2025, the Project continued to expand its reach and deepen its impact, while investing in the growth of both teachers and the organisation's own training team.

Train the Teacher Programme

The Education Africa ECD Train the Teacher Programme supported 190 student teachers working towards their SAQA NQF Level 4 qualification in Early Childhood Development. The majority of participants were women working in disadvantaged communities. During the year, students successfully completed all remaining modules and participated in Resource-Making Workshops across the training centres, creating practical learning materials from affordable and recycled resources.

December marked a significant milestone as these student teachers graduated after completing the two-year programme. We are immensely proud of our graduates and look forward to the positive impact they will have in their communities.

Recruitment for the 2026/2027 cohort commenced towards year-end, and we look forward to welcoming our new cohort of students in the new year.

A particularly exciting development during the year was the launch of a pilot initiative, made possible through the generous support of Shirika gGmbH in Germany. Two Zambian women joined the programme as part of a one-year Train-the-Trainer initiative aimed at building ECD training capacity in Zambia. This marks the first steps of Education Africa's journey to create a social franchise initially for the SADC region and represents an important step in extending the organisation's impact beyond South Africa.

Teacher Mentorship Programme

Following the successful launch of the ECD Teacher Mentorship Programme in 2024, the initiative expanded considerably during 2025. Sixty new teachers joined the programme, increasing its reach to 100 educators across 87 preschools. Through a combination of online learning sessions and on-site support, newly qualified teachers received practical guidance to strengthen their classroom practice and confidence.

Grade R readiness remained a key focus, with mentors supporting practitioners to develop children's foundational literacy, numeracy, motor and social-emotional skills. As a result, 1313 children from participating centres enrolled for Grade R in 2026.

ELOM assessments conducted across 17 affiliated centres produced encouraging results, with 88% of children assessed found to be on track for learning overall. Strong outcomes in literacy and numeracy demonstrate the value of sustained mentorship and quality early learning interventions.

Trainer Internship Programme

Developing the next generation of ECD professionals remained a priority throughout the year. Nine members of the ECD team, including trainers and interns, graduated with their NQF Level 5 qualification in Early Childhood Development, while trainer Thuli Mvala completed a Diploma in Grade R Teaching.

These achievements reflect Education Africa's commitment to investing in people and building the capacity needed to create lasting change for young children and the communities they serve.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In addition to the ELOM assessments, teacher growth is assessed through the Learning Programme Quality Assessment (LPQA) tool, which evaluates teaching practice and classroom quality at baseline, site visits, and post baseline stages. Alongside these tools, strict attendance and tracking systems are in place, requiring teachers to meet minimum participation and completion rates, while tablet usage is monitored to ensure engagement with online resources. To complement these quantitative measures, surveys and feedback from teachers, parents, and principals capture improvements in confidence, parental engagement, and perceptions of school readiness. Finally, all assessments are subject to independent verification through external moderators and accredited assessors, ensuring objectivity, accountability, and credibility of results.

Since 2017, 421 teachers have graduated from our Train the Teacher programme with a South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 4 qualification.

Education Africa Marimba Project

In 2025, the Marimba Project continued to build on the momentum of previous years, focusing on programme delivery, expansion, and deepening learner engagement across its growing network of Marimba Hubs. Through music, the project continued to create opportunities for young people to develop confidence, teamwork, creativity, and a sense of belonging within their schools and communities.

Across 40 Education Africa active Hubs (comprising 26 Marimba Hubs and 14 Preschool Marimba Hubs) approximately 2240 learners participated in weekly marimba sessions. These regular engagements provided learners with opportunities to develop musical skills, collaborate in ensembles, and prepare for performances while experiencing the discipline and joy of collective music-making. 10 of our Marimba Hubs cater for learners with special needs such as physical disabilities, hearing disabilities, intellectual disabilites and visual impairments.

Growth and Inclusion

A significant milestone during the year was the launch of two new Marimba Hubs at Futura Special School in Johannesburg South and Re Tlameleng Special School in Kimberley. Both schools serve learners with autism, visual impairments, physical disabilities, and intellectual disabilities, further strengthening the programme's commitment to inclusive music education. Although the Re Tlameleng Hub closed towards the end of the year following the loss of its marimba instructor and challenges in sustaining support within the school, the instruments were transferred to establish a new Hub at Diamantveld Primary School in Kimberley, ensuring the continuity of music education in the area.

Regular monitoring visits to Hubs in Kimberley in the Northern Cape and Taung in North West provided valuable opportunities to strengthen relationships with schools, support educators, and identify areas for future growth. Schools such as Herlear Primary School, Sacred Heart Primary School, and Pampierstad High School demonstrated strong ownership of their marimba programmes, with music becoming increasingly embedded in school life.

The year also saw greater integration across Education Africa programmes. A collaborative workshop held with Early Childhood Development teachers in Orange Farm who are part of the Education Africa Teacher Mentorship Programme, introduced the use of music, rhythm, and movement in early learning environments, demonstrating the value of marimba as a tool for supporting holistic child development.

Strengthening Educator Capacity

Marimba teacher development remained a key priority throughout the year. Our annual 40-hour Marimba Training Workshop brought together 50 teachers from across the country, including 45 first-time participants and five returning educators seeking to refine their skills. The workshop provided an intensive and highly engaging learning experience, equipping teachers with stronger musical competencies while fostering confidence, collaboration, and a growing sense of community among facilitators.

These training opportunities continue to strengthen the network of skilled educators responsible for delivering the programme and contribute to its long-term sustainability.

Performance and Community Engagement

Performance opportunities remained central to the learner experience, providing valuable platforms for learners to showcase their talents and celebrate their achievements. Across the country, many Hubs performed at school and community events, enabling learners to represent their schools with pride while building confidence and public

recognition. Next year we will revive the Education Africa International Marimba & Steelpan Festival and we hope to see many of our hubs performing there.

Alumni Leadership

The Education Africa All Stars Marimba Band comprising a select group of alumni from our various Marimba Hubs, continued to flourish during 2025, with former learners increasingly taking on roles as assistants, facilitators, and performers.

The band appeared at numerous events throughout the year, including Education Africa's Founders' Day celebrations, the African Children's Day Summit, Europe Day, corporate golf days, and SABC Morning Live. Additionally the band performed for the Austrian President, Alexander Va der Bellen during his State Visit to South Africa.

These performances showcase the long-term impact of the programme and provide visible pathways for leadership, mentorship, and continued participation beyond school years.

Measuring Impact

Education Africa recently completed the third year of a longitudinal evaluation examining the impact of the Marimba Hub programme on learners, educators, and alumni.

The findings confirm that the programme delivers benefits that extend far beyond music education.

Learners reported increased confidence, stronger emotional awareness, improved teamwork skills, and a greater sense of belonging within their schools and peer groups. Many described the Marimba Hubs as supportive spaces where they feel motivated and proud of their achievements.

Educators observed improvements in concentration, discipline, listening skills, and perseverance, noting that the dedication required to master songs often translates into stronger academic habits and problem-solving abilities. Participation in ensemble music also promotes cooperation, **empathy, and trust, while public performances provide important opportunities for recognition and confidence building.**

The evaluation further highlighted the programme's inclusive nature and its particular value for learners with disabilities, who benefit from sensory stimulation, communication opportunities, and meaningful participation within a group setting.

The consistency of feedback from learners, educators, alumni, therapists, and schools provides compelling evidence that the Education Africa Marimba Project continues to foster lasting personal growth, social cohesion, and educational development.

By the end of 2025, the programme reflected a strong balance between growth and consistency, with expanding reach, strengthened educator capacity, and increasing opportunities for performance and collaboration ensuring meaningful and sustained impact across diverse communities.

Masibambane College

Masibambane College founded by Education Africa and partnered with St John's College, enjoyed another successful year. In total, **1 228** learners were enrolled at the school in 2025 and our matric learners once again did us proud by excelling in the National Senior Certificate Examinations.

On Saturday, 24 May, the school community gathered to mark 29 years of care and excellence at the **Masibambane College annual Founders Day**. It was a day of joy and celebration, and we were delighted to welcome Elinor Sisulu of the Sisulu family to this special occasion as we paid tribute to the late Walter Sisulu - a great friend of Education Africa and on whose recommendation Masibambane College was built in Orange Farm in 1996.

Another important development this year was the completion of the new Cultural Centre and Amphitheatre – a dedicated space that will serve as a vibrant hub for music education. This facility, which reflects the school's commitment to nurturing creativity and providing learners with opportunities to develop their talents through the arts, was made possible through the Australian High Commission's Direct Aid Program in Pretoria, with additional funding being received from Maria Ragucci, Education Africa Inc. and in-kind support from TCRVP Architects for their pro bono architectural work and project management. DG Consult donated the metal and construction of the stage covering.

Towards the end of the year, we were delighted to host the very first event at this newly completed facility, as we welcomed The St Florian Boys Choir from Lintz in Upper Austria. The choir spent a morning at the college and delighted the audience with traditional Austrian folk songs before joining the Masibambane College Prestige Band for several collaborative performances. The combination of classical choral music and vibrant African rhythms created an unforgettable celebration of cultural exchange and the unifying power of music.

The occasion held particular significance, as Masibambane College was founded in 1996 with early support from the City of Vienna, and The City remains a valued partner to this day. The performance beautifully symbolised the enduring friendship between Austria and South Africa and demonstrated how music can transcend borders, bringing people together and enriching the educational experience of young people. We look forward to the official opening of the Masibambane College Culture Centre early next year.

Congratulations to the matric class of 2025

We are extremely proud of our 2025 Matric learners who achieved excellent results in the National Senior Certificate Examinations.

89.8%
Overall pass rate

61%
Bachelor Passes
(well above the national average of 46%)

84
Distinctions

63%
of matrics took Mathematics as a subject

100% pass rate was achieved in English, IsiZulu, Life Orientation, Geography, Tourism, and Accounting

These results speak to the consistency and care that goes into teaching and learning at Masibambane College every day and we wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to David Jennings (Executive Head), Nombeko Nyathi (High School Head), and the entire Masibambane College team.

Social Architecture Project

Education Africa's Social Architecture Project continues to gain momentum as it works towards addressing one of South Africa's most pressing challenges – the need for safe, inspiring and affordable Early Childhood Development (ECD) infrastructure.

Building Brighter Futures

Building on 22 years of successful community-led construction projects (we have built 19 preschools to date), the programme is now entering an exciting phase of growth. Supported by Friends of Education Africa in the United Kingdom, plans are underway to scale the project significantly, creating sustainable learning environments that will benefit thousands of young children.

The Project is led by Pete Russell, a Trustee of Friends of Education Africa, and we are pleased to announce that Alexander Frehse and Aleks Stojakovic, co-founders of Studio 8FOLD, have joined the Friends of Education Africa UK Advisory Board and will assist in growing our Social Architecture Project

Focus for 2025 has been the Beyond the Classroom: ECD Design Competition - an initiative that challenged architects and designers to rethink early childhood education infrastructure through innovative, scalable and sustainable design.

Participants were tasked with creating modular preschool concepts that are socially impactful, environmentally responsible and financially viable.

We received 233 entries from across the globe and were delighted to announce the winning design: Little Seeds. The Social Architecture team has been hard at work assessing the design as a potential working prototype for future ECD centres. Designed as a flexible, modular learning environment, Little Seeds combines sustainability, play and adaptability to provide children with stimulating environments that can grow alongside the communities they serve.

We look forward to seeing this winning design influence the growth of our Social Architecture Project with projects going on site from 2027.

As the Social Architecture Project continues to expand, it remains committed to developing innovative, community-driven solutions that provide young children with safe, welcoming and inspiring places to learn. Through strategic partnerships, creative design and sustainable construction, Education Africa is helping shape a future where every child has access to a quality early learning environment.

Walter Sisulu Scholarship Fund

Education Africa, together with Walter and Albertina Sisulu, established The Walter Sisulu Scholarship Fund in 1995 with the view of providing scholarships for disadvantaged high school learners who are excelling in Mathematics and Science.

In 2025 we awarded 14 scholarships to the following bright young achievers:

- 8 scholarships to learners from our school, Masibambane College in Gauteng
- 1 scholarship to a learner from Durban Girls High School in KwaZulu Natal
- 2 scholarships to learners from Newton Technical High School, Eastern Cape

Of the fourteen scholarship recipients, 11 completed their final matric examination in 2025, while 3 recipients were Grade 11 learners. 9 were female and 5 were male.

We are extremely proud of our 2025 Scholarship learners, all of whom achieved excellent results (see chart on page 16).

All the matric recipients met the minimum requirements for admission to a bachelors' degree. The future is full of promise for these young achievers, and we look forward to following their journeys and celebrating their continued success.

In total, Education Africa has awarded 3 772 Walter Sisulu scholarships since 1995.

Elinor Sisulu with some of the Walter Sisulu Scholarship recipients from Masibambane College

RESULTS: 2025 WALTER SISULU SCHOLARSHIP FUND RECIPIENTS

NAME	SCHOOL	GRADE	MATRIC RESULTS		
			MATHEMATICS	PHYSICAL SCIENCE	ENGLISH
Makhubu Zandiswa	Durban Girls' High School	12	89	84	91
Fingxa Bongiwe	Masibambane College	12	76	71	90
Kubheka Thandoluhle	Masibambane College	12	73	61	80
Mashamaile Mmanakedi	Masibambane College	12	82	68	74
Masilo Lwandle	Masibambane College	12	76	66	74
Mbele Njabulo	Masibambane College	12	72	67	62
Mooi Othandwayo	Masibambane College	12	56	52	69
Moshoeshoe Fohloane	Masibambane College	12	71	61	66
Njilo Ntokozo	Masibambane College	12	81	79	67
Mochumolotsa Kgalalelo	Newton Technical College	12	43	52	79
Sineke Hlumelo	Newton Technical College	12	59	56	69
Mako Tebogo	Masibambane College	11	71	71	78
Mazibuko Sandile	Masibambane College	11	79	82	83
Mokemane Keabetswe	Masibambane College	11	78	76	79

Sustainability

Education Africa's fundraising efforts gained considerable momentum during 2025, resulting in several important successes and the development of a strong pipeline of future opportunities.

Thanks to the generosity and commitment of a broad range of partners, foundations, companies, trusts, and individual supporters, we secured significant financial and in-kind support across our flagship programmes and organisational operations.

We are deeply grateful to all those who continue to invest in our mission.

During the year, Education Africa strengthened its long-term fundraising strategy with the support of an international strategic partner. Through a comprehensive review of current performance and future opportunities, the organisation developed a clear roadmap to diversify its donor base, strengthen engagement, and enhance internal systems, positioning Education Africa to significantly increase its impact by 2033.

Fundraising capacity within the organisation was further enhanced through the appointment of a dedicated grant writer and researcher. Supported through focused mentoring and professional development, this investment has already yielded measurable results, enabling Education Africa to submit a substantially greater number of high-quality proposals and strengthen our donor reporting. Strengthened internal capacity is increasing both our reach and responsiveness while supporting the long-term sustainability of the organisation.

Collectively, our fundraising efforts — through grant applications, donor engagement, fundraising events, digital campaigns, and the opening of new networks and relationships — produced exceptional results during the year. Strong donor engagement and a diverse portfolio of opportunities have created significant momentum, with a number of major proposals remaining under consideration and positioning Education Africa well for future funding cycles.

Another noteworthy development during the year was the publication of James Urdang's memoir, ***It Always Seems Impossible: My Fight to Build and Save Education Africa***. Supported by a thoughtful promotional campaign, the book has proven to be much more than a personal story; it has become a valuable platform for raising awareness about Education Africa's mission, opening new conversations, reconnecting with longstanding supporters, and creating opportunities for future partnerships.

The initiative has already generated meaningful donor support and continues to serve as an important catalyst for expanding Education Africa's network of friends and champions.

As we look ahead, we are encouraged by the strength of our relationships, the growing recognition of our impact, and the breadth of opportunities emerging across our programmes. Together with our supporters, we remain committed to building a sustainable organisation capable of transforming even more lives in the years to come.

Education Africa continues to maintain its Level 1 B-BBEE contributor status, reinforcing our commitment to transformation and inclusive growth.

Future Plans

As Education Africa looks to the year ahead, our focus remains on strengthening the organisation's capacity to create sustainable, long-term impact. By investing in our people, enhancing organisational systems, expanding strategic partnerships and diversifying our funding base, we are building a resilient foundation that will enable us to reach more communities and transform more lives through educational opportunities.

The coming year will also mark a significant milestone as **Masibambane College celebrates its 30th anniversary.** What began as a bold vision has grown into a thriving centre of learning and opportunity, made possible through three decades of enduring partnership. We look forward to celebrating this achievement alongside our longstanding friends and supporters from Austria and Vienna and our partner St John's College, whose commitment has been instrumental in the College's success.

Across our programmes, we will continue to expand opportunities for learning, creativity and community development. The **Education Africa Marimba Project** will focus on growing its network of Marimba Hubs, training more marimba educators, increasing access to inclusive music education for learners with disabilities, and integrating music more deeply into early childhood development. The internationally recognised **Education Africa International Marimba & Steelpan Festival** will once again provide a platform for cultural exchange, musical excellence and youth development in 2026.

Our newly restructured **Social Architecture Project** has set an ambitious long-term goal of constructing 100 early childhood development centres across sub-Saharan Africa over the next 15 years. In 2026, construction will begin on a preschool in Malesa, Limpopo. From 2027 onwards, the programme aims to build at least two preschools annually while exploring opportunities to extend its impact beyond South Africa's borders.

In 2026, the **Early Childhood Development Project** will welcome a new cohort of students into its two-year **Train the Teacher Programme** while working to increase student enrolment and expand access to quality teacher training.
Plans are also underway to establish an additional training group, enabling the programme to reach more aspiring practitioners and strengthen the quality of early childhood education.

The **Education Africa Teacher Mentorship Programme** will continue its efforts to scale and grow its member base significantly. Together, these initiatives reflect Education Africa's commitment to scale through innovation, collaboration and sustainable development. As we look to the future, we remain dedicated to creating opportunities that empower individuals, strengthen communities and ensure that quality education continues to change lives for generations to come.

2025 Audited Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2025

	2025 R	2024 R
Assets		
Non-Current Assets		
Property, plant and equipment	1,367,498	1,495,808
Other financial assets	3,920,984	3,270,846
	5,288,482	4,766,654
Current Assets		
Trade and other receivables	102,765	163,125
Cash and cash equivalents	4,669,701	7,207,774
	4,772,466	7,370,899
Total Assets	**10,060,948**	**12,137,553**
Accumulated surplus and Liabilities		
Accumulated surplus		
Eskom/Sisulu Scholarship fund capital	5,000,000	5,000,000
Revaluation reserve	1,756,801	1,426,675
Accumulated surplus	302,685	268,917
	7,059,486	6,695,592
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	614,427	590,498
Deferred income	2,076,117	4,569,328
Provisions	310,918	282,135
	3,001,462	5,441,961
Total accumulated surplus and liabilities	**10,060,948**	**12,137,553**

Statement of Surplus or Deficit and Other Comprehensive Income

	2025 R	2024 R
Revenue	16,443,362	17,457,047
Other income	-	294,386
Operating expenses	(16,892,986)	(16,808,906)
Operating (deficit) surplus	**(449,624)**	**942,527**
Investment income	483,392	534,973
Surplus for the year	**33,768**	**1,477,500**
Other comprehensive income:		
Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss		
Fair value adjustment on other financial assets	330,126	480,713
Other comprehensive income for the year	330,126	480,713
Total comprehensive income for the year	**363,894**	**1,958,213**

Chairman's Reflection

> **The story of Education Africa is ultimately a story of hope made practical.**

As I reflect on the past year, I am reminded again that the real work of transformation is seldom loud. It happens quietly, consistently and often far away from the spotlight. It happens in classrooms, in music rooms, in early childhood development centres, in communities, and in the lives of young people who begin to see that their future can be different from their circumstances.

Education Africa has always stood for this kind of work. It is work rooted in dignity, access and possibility. It does not chase headlines. It changes lives.

This year has been particularly meaningful as we marked both the Education Africa Founders Day and the Masibambane College Founders Day.

These moments were not only celebrations of history; they were reminders of responsibility. They reminded us that institutions are built by people with courage, conviction and an unwillingness to accept the world as it is. They also reminded us that legacy is not something we inherit passively. Legacy must be protected, renewed and carried forward with purpose.

That is why the publication of James Urdang's book is such an important milestone. Education Africa's story is now recorded not only in the memories of those who were there, but in a form that future generations can read, understand and learn from. James' journey is one of vision, resilience and deep commitment to education as a force for justice. It is also a reminder that meaningful institutions are never built easily. They are built through sacrifice, persistence, relationships and belief.

For me, serving as Chairperson of the Board remains a privilege. I continue to be inspired by the commitment of our Board, the leadership team, our staff, partners, donors, teachers, volunteers and the many young people whose energy gives this organisation its purpose. The work of Education Africa is not abstract. It is visible in confidence gained, talent discovered, classrooms strengthened, teachers supported and opportunities created.

As South Africa continues to face deep educational and social challenges, our mission remains urgent. We cannot afford to become tired or cynical. We must continue to educate, equip and empower.

We must continue to build bridges across communities, sectors and borders. And we must continue to believe that every child, regardless of background, deserves access to opportunity and excellence.

The story of Education Africa is ultimately a story of hope made practical. It is a story of people choosing to act. As we look ahead, may we honour the past not by simply remembering it, but by building on it with courage, humility and renewed commitment.

Abdullah Verachia

Chairman of the Board of Directors

Education Africa