



WPDI SOUTH AFRICA

2023 Annual Report

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Introduction

The Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative (WPDI) in South Africa has been effectively implementing programs for peace, sustainability, and development in Cape Town for nearly five years. Since its launch in August 2019 and the inauguration of the Community Learning Center (CLC) in Athlone, WPDI has continued to make progress despite facing multifaceted challenges. The Cape Flats region, where WPDI operates, grapples with issues such as high unemployment, poverty, and inequality, providing fertile ground for crime and insecurity.

One most notable challenge is that Cape Town remained one of the most violent cities in the world. Extortion, organized by criminal groups, pose a significant threat in the Cape Flats. This criminal activity hampers development, impacting the prospects of achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Although there are positive trends indicating a decrease in violence, the persistent impacts on community wellbeing and employee mental health are evident, as highlighted by the 2023 Violence Survey WPDI conducted collaboratively with RCS Group and BNP Paribas. The ongoing violence alters personal and workplace experiences, particularly affecting women.

WPDI's programs aim to address the deep-rooted drivers of these challenges, gradually strengthening the capacity of Cape Town residents to become more resilient, peaceful, and sustainable. Notable achievements include training 786 unemployed women in the Women Livelihood Program, funding 42 business ideas through the L'Oréal Fund for Women, and exceeding the 2023 target for various initiatives, including Conflict Resolution Education (CRE) programs.

The CRE programs have positively impacted the Cape Flats with the implementation of Community Leadership training, Teachers and Staff Training, Community Dialogues, Cinema for Peace, CRE in schools, and Peace Activities. Through providing Information Communication and Technologies (ICT) courses, WPDI contributes to bridging the digital divide, offering crucial skills for employment and knowledge access in impoverished communities.

WPDI's programs in Cape Town have made substantial contributions to the broader objectives of empowering youths and women as drivers of positive change. The organization's efforts have shown tangible results in fostering peace, sustainability, and empowerment in the face of challenging circumstances. These progress are covered in the present report which highlights the patient work and efforts carried by our local teams and youths, without forgetting the commitment of our local partners and our beneficiaries and their communities at large. Forest Whitaker evoked the power of the people at the grassroots during his field visit in November, stating: "We know that in these places, residents are too rarely presented with opportunities that will help them unlock their positive energies. And yet, we also know that these places have many people who, despite the hardships they have endured or predicaments they experience, are able to remain hopeful for a better future."



Forest Whitaker Advocates for Women and Youth while on Mission to Cape Town

In November, Forest Whitaker visited WPDI programs in Cape Town where WPDI has actively addressed urban violence in Cape Flats townships over the past five years. Youth and women empowerment through education, vocational training, and Conflict Resolution formed the basis of the advocacy messages he disseminated during several events gathering South African officials as well as representatives of key partners of the private sector, including BNP Paribas, L'Oréal and RCS Group. One of the main messages delivered by Mr. Whitaker focused on the role of sports for raising awareness of the public on values of peace and cohesion, which WPDI will promote through a groundbreaking partnership with NBA Africa.

This partnership, aimed at fostering the development of basketball in South Africa and Africa at large was launched during the unveiling of a basketball court at Cornflower Sports Grounds. Championing the vital role that education plays in promoting a culture of peace and nonviolence, Mr. Whitaker's mission emphasized his programs on Conflict Resolution Education in school. A graduation ceremony at Ikamvalethu Secondary School celebrated 132 students trained in Conflict Resolution Education since 2019. Another ceremony honored Women's Livelihood Program graduates, highlighting women's potential as drivers of peace and economic development.



Key Achievements



13,485 Grand Total for people reached through the activities of WPDI in the region directly and indirectly:



360 Youth Peacemakers

42 Lead Youth Peacemakers

318 Local Youth Peacemakers

7,905 Individuals reached by Lead Peacemakers



PEACEBUILDING

- 334 Conflict Resolution Education Trainees
- 660 Participants in Cinema for Peace
- 638 Participants in CLC Advocacy Campaigns
- **1,632 Total beneficiaries of our Peace Education programs**

PEACE EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

- 30 Schools hosting WPDI programs
- 6,504 Learners and teachers trained
- 280 People reached through advocacy campaigns in schools
- **6,784 Total Participants in school-based peacebuilding activities**

COMMUNITY DIALOGUES

- **12 Community Dialogues held**
- 704 Participants in dialogues
- 417 Local leaders trained
- **1,121 Total Participants in community level peacebuilding activities**



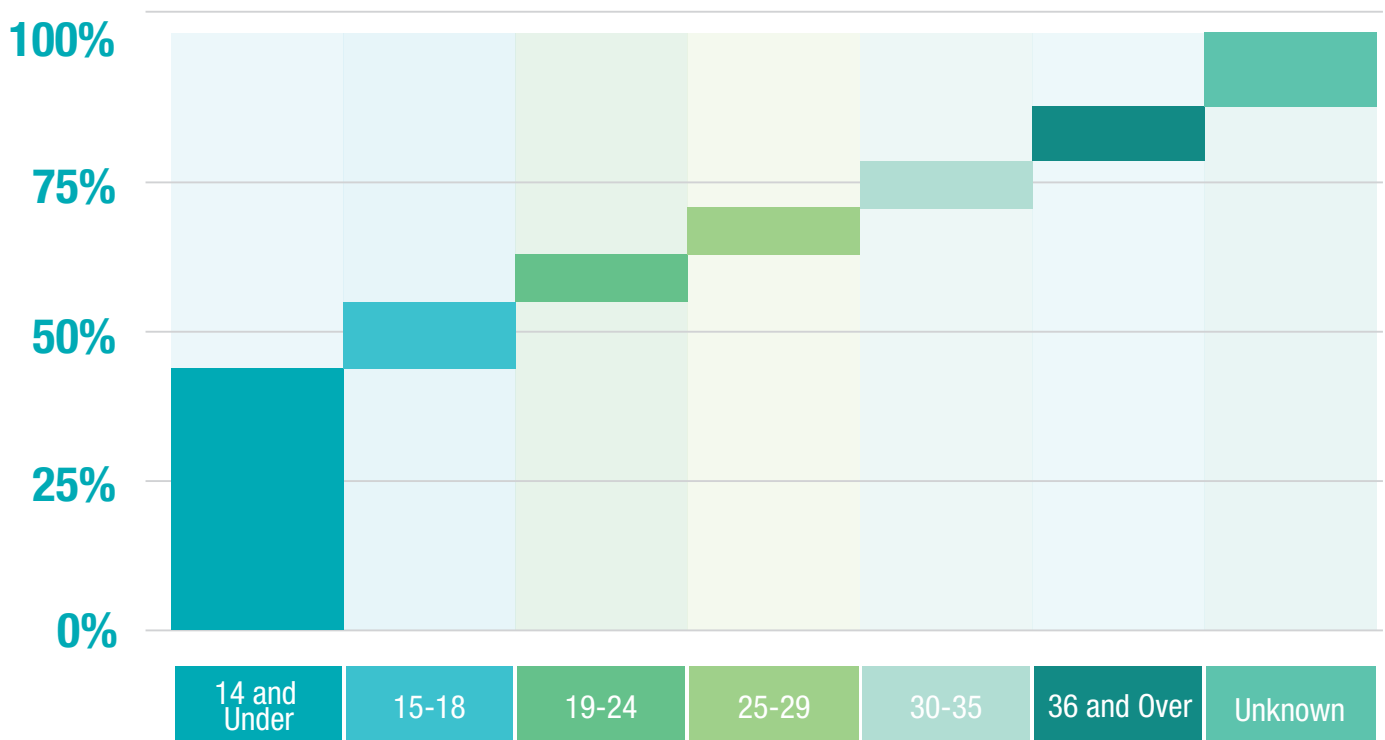
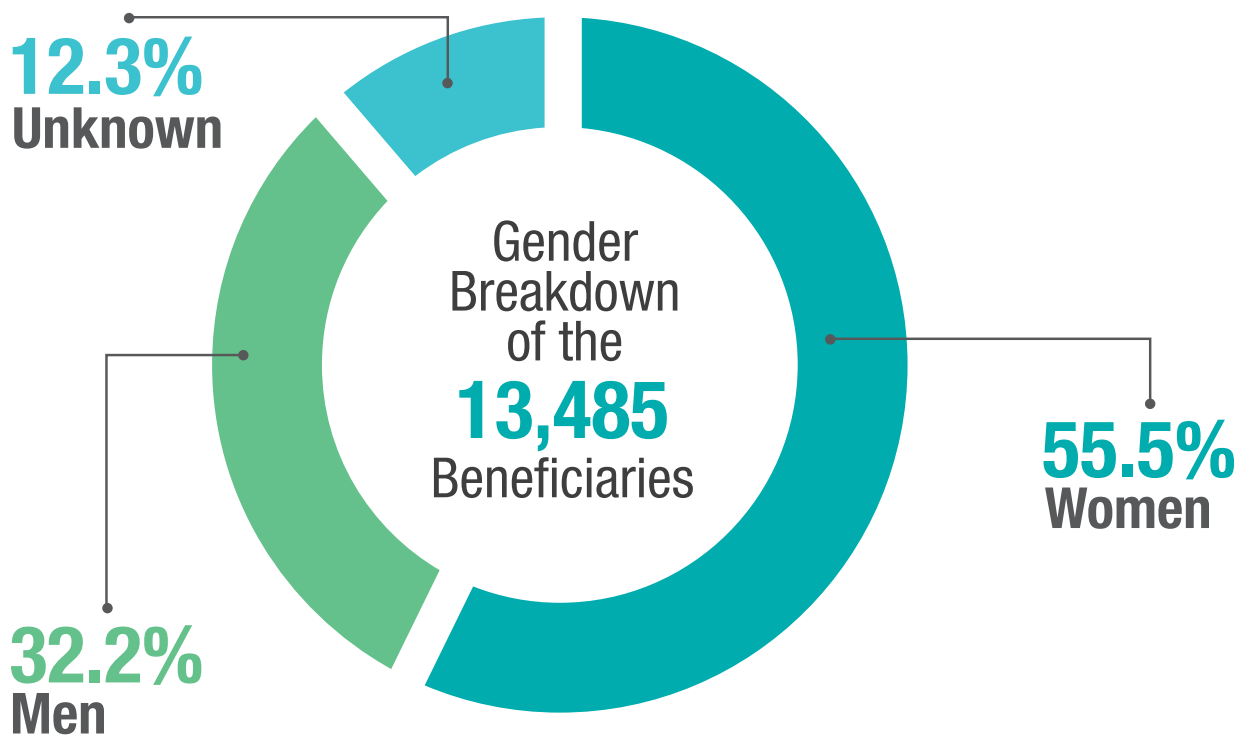
LIVELIHOOD

- 368 ICT trainees
- 395 Entrepreneurship trainees
- 786 Vulnerable women trained in business
- **1,549 Total trainees in vocational courses**
- 49 Businesses created in 2023
- 110 Businesses supported by WPDI
- 322 Jobs created
- 1,645 Indirect beneficiaries of businesses
- **1,967 Beneficiaries of all Businesses**



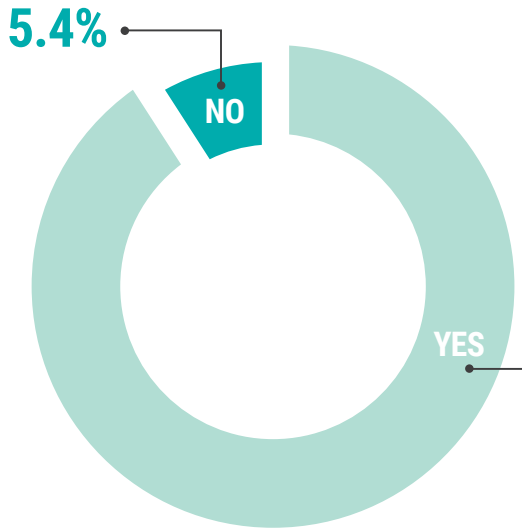
HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 72 Trauma healing participants
- **72 Total Health & Wellbeing participants**



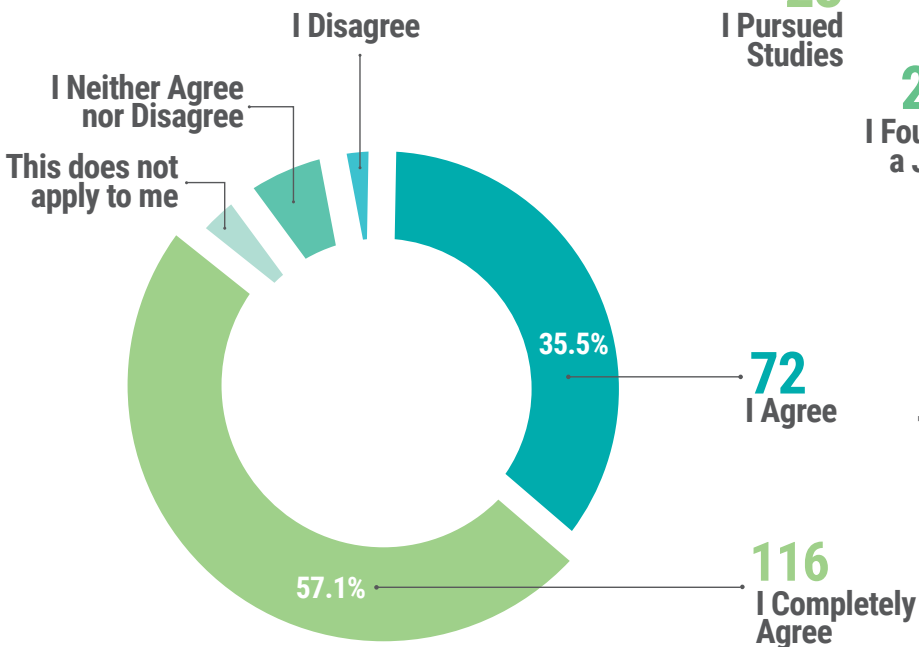
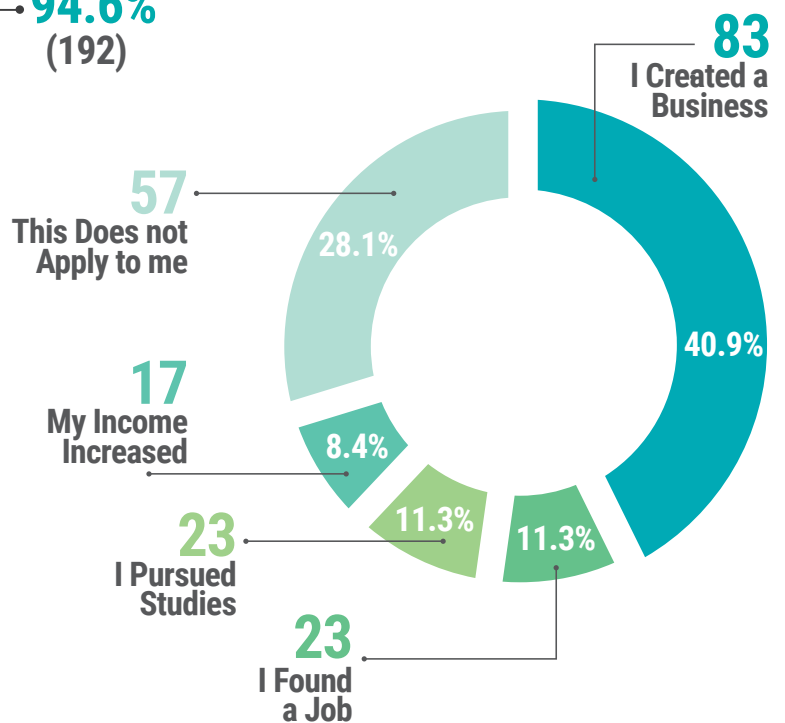
Survey Results

We deliver post-training questionnaires to graduates six months after graduation in order to assess the preliminary impact of the activities.



Have you ever recommended the WPDI program to other people?

Has the program improved your career prospects?



I have been able to apply the knowledge and skills learned from WPDI in my personal or professional life

Feedback from Local & National Stakeholders

“

It gives me great pleasure to write this letter to endorse the work done by the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative within the City of Cape Town. This Initiative is particularly active in 14 of our Mayoral Urban Regeneration Programme (MURP) nodes which we have identified as areas needing various types of investment including into the people of those Communities. The programmes are strategically offered to persons, especially women, living in vulnerable circumstances. Notably at every graduation ceremony I have attended, the women thanked the programme and staff for the invaluable investment into their lives. The women are always appreciative of the opportunity to invest in themselves and to be able to provide a better life for their families, which in turn, I believe uplifts their communities. The focus on entrepreneurial skills also empowers the women to grow their own generational wealth.

”

Eddie Andrews

Deputy Mayor, City of Cape Town, South Africa

“

It is a great pleasure for me to testify on behalf of WPDI as I have been part of this initiative since its inception. WPDI is doing phenomenal work within our communities. As a Ward Councillor in the City of Cape Town and having to bring opportunities to our communities, WPDI is an organization that I would recommend and support every time due to the inspirational work they do, notably in empowering our women. The dignity and respect in how the recipients are being treated is to be commended, very professional, educational and informative. WPDI has changed lives for the better. Giving power back to women who many times are the soul bread provider. WPDI is an asset in any community and I am honored and humbled to be associated with them.

”

Ward Councillor W.Harris



WPDI Conducts Violence Survey in South Africa

The survey aims to understand the effects of violence on vulnerable communities and business operations in South Africa, surveying individuals in high-risk communities across Gauteng, Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal, along with corporates from diverse sectors including construction, retail, hospitality, and financial services.

The fourth iteration of the Violence Survey, led by WPDI in partnership with RCS Group and BNP Paribas, highlights a decline in violence across key categories in 2023. Despite this positive trend, concerns persist regarding the impact of violence on community wellbeing and employee mental health. The findings underscore the profound effects of violence in South Africa, emphasizing its impact on individuals both as community members and employees.

According to survey findings, 87% of corporate leaders noted a significant impact on presenteeism, with employees struggling to perform due to mental or physical distress. Furthermore, 91% of corporations observed an increased impact on employees' mental health compared to 2022, highlighting the interconnectedness of personal experiences and workplace performance. One of the recommendations of the survey is to encourage employers to prioritize supporting employees in creating safer and more fulfilling lives, recognizing the external factors influencing on-the-job effectiveness. While the need for greater cooperation amongst the corporate network has been clearly illustrated in the survey, its findings also point to several significant gains.



Key positive findings for women in the region

The impact of violence on women's income and jobs decreased by

13%

from 2022 (32%)

The impact of violence on women being late for work, school or college decreased by

10%

from 2022 (70%)

The impact of violence on women's physical or mental ability to do their job effectively decreased by

16%

from 2022 (69%)

Vectors for Change

In order to implement activities, WPDI relies on a cohort of Youth Peacemakers who act as a relay in their communities to build capacity for peacebuilding and reduce conflict. WPDI also operates a Community Learning Center (CLC), which provides free access to training, connectivity, awareness raising events, and other resources available for any community members. WPDI has been able to support beneficiaries from the Cape Flats through close cooperation with grassroots organizations, local youths and trusted partners.

Indeed, the continued support of the Mayor of Cape Town, BNP Paribas, RCS Group and the L'Oréal Fund for Women has enabled WPDI to achieve a lot in the Cape Flats. The WPDI partnership with the City of Cape Town, including its Social Development and Early Childhood Development department as well as the Government of Western Cape, continues to contribute directly to youth empowerment. It is through this partnership that 400 people were sponsored with transportation to attend WPDI courses at the CLC.



Mobilizing Youth Leaders to Drive Change at the Grassroots

Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative (WPDI) South Africa, since its inception in 2019, has worked with Youth Peacemakers to replicate the training that they received from trainers at the CLC. We boast 42 Youth Peacemakers who graduated in December 2020 after going through training in ICT, Peacebuilding and Entrepreneurship. All our Youth Peacemakers live in the Cape Flats, the area our programs focus on as it remains the most underserved with continuously high crime rates.

The Youth Peacemakers are mostly working in the framework of Peacebuilding and Entrepreneurship programs in the communities and schools. They teach in primary and secondary schools, organize and manage Peace Activities and support Business owners funded by WPDI.



Specific Activities Undertaken by Peacemakers

WPDI has strengthened its impact in the communities it serves by channeling the energy and know-how of its cohort of peacemakers. Indeed, these young women and men are best placed to identify the needs of the communities they are a part of. With the support of WPDI they implement activities that gather community members and support those most vulnerable.

Equipped with a passion for positive change, the Youth Peacemakers engaged in diverse initiatives addressing the unique needs of their respective areas. From donating sports equipment to Thembani Primary School to creating Netball Peace Clubs and soccer teams, the Youth Peacemakers actively promoted physical wellbeing and peaceful co-existence.

Their efforts extended to essential community services, such as supporting feeding schemes and organizing art programs to keep children positively engaged during school holidays. Additionally, the Youth Peacemakers played a crucial role in challenging societal issues, including gender-based violence, racism, and xenophobia, through awareness campaigns and dialogues. Their actions not only contributed to immediate improvements in their communities but also showcased their leadership potential in addressing complex challenges. Overall, the Youth Peacemakers of 2023 have proven to be catalysts for positive change, emphasizing the transformative power of grassroots initiatives in building safer, more inclusive societies.

Community Learning Center

Throughout the year, the CLC has continued to attract local residents as an access point for learning and more generally, as a hub of the community. This year 1,883 women and youth were trained in one of our capacity-building training courses.

While the CLC hosts various WPDI activities, it also makes available the space to various stakeholders. Some organizations use the CLC for activities related to community matters.

Also, some partner organizations came to avoid the impact of load shedding on their activity as they are able to use our connectivity that was maintained with solar electricity. However modest, these daily services contribute to establish WPDI as a community-friendly organization that aims for the common welfare. Peacebuilding and development require the collaboration of like-minded organizations.



“

I have been working with the youths for a while and they were struggling to get resources to continue playing netball as a team, so I would like to thank WPDI for supporting my activity and for bringing hope to these youths. I will continue to work with the coaches and community members so that we can ensure the young people in my community are constantly engaged in peaceful activities. Thank you WPDI team for all your hard work and supporting us as Youth Peacemakers as we give back to our communities.

”

Alita Makalima

WPDI Youth Peacemaker

“

Some children go without a proper meal for 2 to 3 days, and the little that their parents can afford is not nourishing food at all. Some of these people are on medication and have to take it on an empty stomach. Among them are pensioners and families with children. Thank you so much WPDI for your contribution, it will keep us going until next year. May you carry on touching people's lives and May God continue to bless you.

”

Madonsela Asakhe

Owner of the Gugulethu Feeding scheme

“

I grew up in this community and I understand all its challenges. I recall how I used to come here as a child and stand in a queue with my plate for a meal, having gone for days without anything to eat. I am filled with tears of joy and gratitude to have this opportunity to give back to my community. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for WPDI. I thank you passionately for your continuous support in my life and in my community.

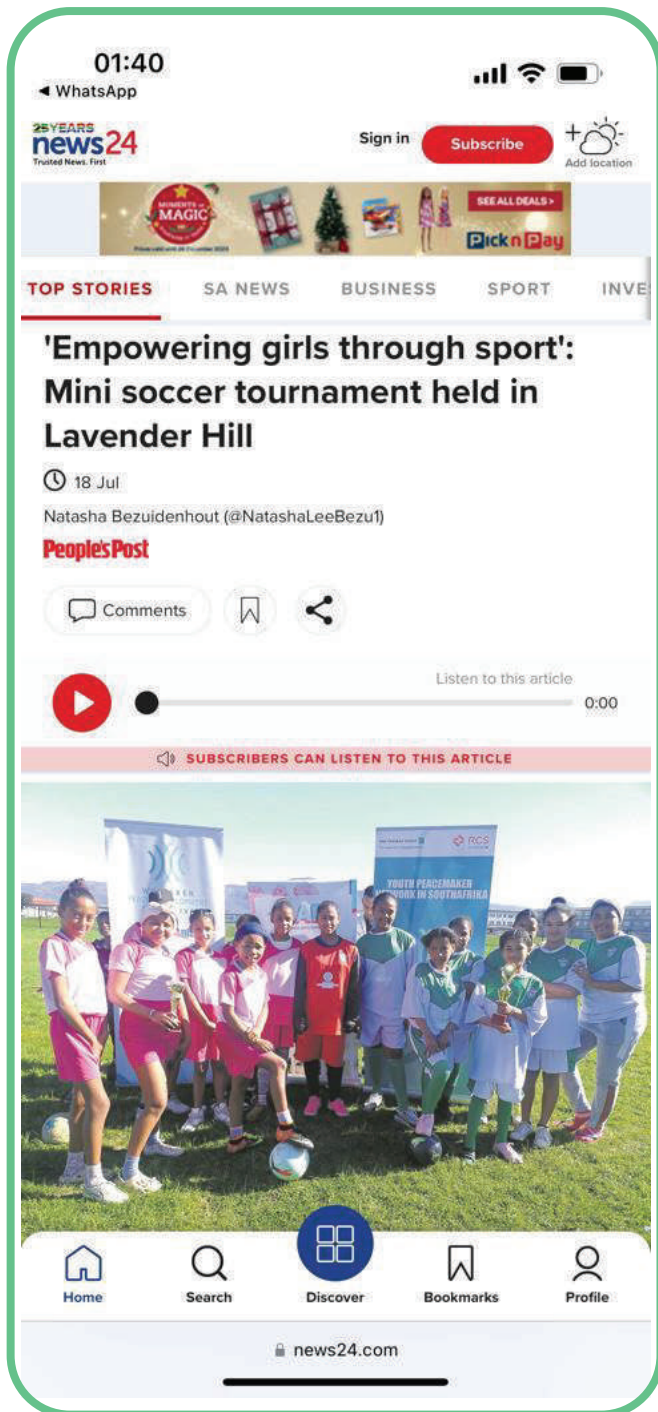
”

Nomaphelo Rangula

WPDI Youth Peacemaker



Press Article



Feedback from Stakeholders

“

From age 12, I had been involved in drugs. I was addicted to different drugs until the day I was caught by police and that was a turning point in my life. When I look back, I see all this was a driving factor to starting a female football club. What WPDI has done is amazing, all these female players here have never had a full sport kit, most of them come from underprivileged homes and are survivors of violence. I am so humbly grateful to the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative program for supporting our women’s football club.

”

Community Development Officer
for Rise above female soccer club



Peacebuilding as Grassroots Empowerment

Mediation Among Community Members



1,121

Total participants in community level peacebuilding activities

704 Participants
in dialogues

417 Local
Leaders Trained

12
Community
Dialogues
held



Community Dialogues



Community Dialogues create opportunities for community members and stakeholders to discuss local issues, find solutions, and to voice their concerns. They provide a platform for different parties to collectively come up with resolutions and discuss how WPD together with these stakeholders could work towards addressing the respective concerns.

In 2023, WPD staff and Youth Peacemakers conducted 12 Community Dialogues in some of the most vulnerable townships in Cape Flats such as Athlone, Khayelitsha, Kraaifontein, Atlantis, and Milnerton. Gathering 704 individuals, the dialogues aimed at mediating racial conflicts, promoting human rights awareness, discussing social justice, finding sustainable solutions to challenges faced by children, breaking gender stereotypes, addressing violence during load shedding, preventing substance abuse relapses, and empowering women in Atlantis.

The outcomes were significant, ranging from agreements on church representation and community-wide workshops to the formation of support groups for substance abuse and the identification of practical solutions for women's empowerment. The community representatives showcased a deep understanding of human rights and engaged influential leaders to raise awareness on xenophobia, resulting in no reports since June. Regular meetings were organized to address challenges identified in various dialogues, indicating sustained commitment. The Youth Peacemakers played a crucial role, conducting training sessions, interactive presentations, and monthly empowerment sessions for boys and girls. The dialogues not only addressed immediate concerns but also paved the way for follow-up actions, creating a positive trajectory for the communities involved.

Testimonials from Community Dialogue participants

“

Thank you for organizing this dialogue. Now we know of other organizations within our areas and where to go, especially for trauma and healing because our communities really need this kind of intervention.

”

Darryll Maverick

“

We are very grateful to the Youth Peacemakers and WPDI staff for assisting us in sorting out our community challenges, we are going to work on this when we get to our communities.

”

Peter Jerkins

“

From what I have witnessed today, we need more empowerment dialogues like this, focused on human rights. We are connected to other nations in the region and some of these nations kept and protected our grandparents who were fighting for South Africa. Instead of fighting migrants, we should fight our government to fulfill what is contained in the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution.

”

Neil Basidium





Success Story

A Youth Peacemaker Addressing Gender Biases with Youths

WPDI Youth Peacemaker Vuyisa, who is part of a community Football club, organized a series of dialogues to discuss sustainable solutions in breaking social norms and gender stereotypes that perpetuate violence. Most importantly, the idea was to try to understand how these cultural practices normalize violence. He engaged youths from his community on this topic.

Vuyisa decided to start regular sessions in conjunction with other influential stakeholders to discuss and debate with these youths and identify daily issues that perpetuate gender discrimination and lead to violence because these challenges begin at home.

Testimonial Feedback from the Youth Peacemaker

"I want to give these young minds a chance to better their lives because I was also given a chance by WPDI. I believe that young people make up the majority of the world's population, so if we start teaching our youths, especially those from our communities, notions of equality, we can achieve transformative change. Thank you WPDI for empowering me to empower other youths in my community."

Vuyisa Hillie

Testimonial Feedback from Stakeholder

"The challenges faced by youths in our communities are multifaceted, ranging from geographical isolation to the belief that their circumstances define their destinies. I want to thank WPDI for believing in our youth. Most of the youths in this community participate in criminal and gang-related violent activities because they are often overlooked. Keeping them occupied will drive a positive change on a monumental scale. These sessions will not only empower them but liberate them from a cycle of limited opportunities and despair. Thank you once again WPDI."

Neighbourhood watch coordinator in Delft

Testimonial feedback from community members

"We are so proud to see youths from our community at the forefront of giving back and being involved in such activities. We thank WPDI for supporting our youths to be active and engaged young people that are dedicated to serving their community. I believe that children's behavior is partly shaped by the type of upbringing obtained at home, regardless of it being good or bad and the same is transferred to the next generation and these sessions are a great start to nip it in the bud. Thank you WPDI."

Akazole Jama

Why it Stands Out

The community dialogue here is a continuous process, with regularly scheduled sessions as the challenge is deeply rooted in the community. To date, Vuyisa is engaged with 30 young boys mostly from Delft and Khayelitsha areas. Each session has a volunteer from various public departments such as nurses, social workers and SAPS (South African Police Service) who volunteers to engage with youths to motivate and encourage them to better their communities.

The ultimate goal is to change their mindset and to give them tools and knowledge to improve gender perception in their communities. Beyond the gender issue, these community dialogues also promote individual empowerment and a broader philosophy around tolerance.

These dialogue sessions stand out from the typical community dialogues organized by WPDI as they are continuous. Each session addresses a particular issue but the recurrent nature also plays a part in the long-term impact WPDI aims to have in the community. Indeed, through these sessions a network of youths are breaking the cycle of violence around them and collectively creating opportunities for change.

Raising the Capacity of Community Leaders for Peace

In communities around the Cape Flats, community leaders are at the forefront of efforts to resolve conflict and try to create peaceful spaces within their communities. It is for this reason that community leaders training is a much-needed resource for communities that

are riddled with violence on a daily basis. The training we delivered to 417 leaders in 2023 provided them with tools to strengthen their capacity to resolve conflicts before they escalate.



“

WPDI has taught me the skills and abilities necessary for mediation. Our community is ravaged by gang wars, shootings day and night. As leaders we find ourselves having to come in and assist. I now fully understand the role that I should be playing in the process of mediation. Thank You WPDI.

”

Joy Davids

Community Leader

“

I knew we needed Conflict Resolution training as leaders to save our communities. Our areas are heading for the rocks. I knew we had to stand up and do something and that something was the time we've spent here acquiring so many ideas and practical ways to build peace. My neighbor told me to contact WPDI and I am thankful that we did, because through all this we are now heading to making our communities safer and more peaceful together.

”

Beaular Pienaar

Community Leader



Promoting Peace through Education and Advocacy



1,632

Total participants in peacebuilding activities

334

Conflict Resolution Education Trainees

660

Participants in Cinema for Peace

638

Participants in CLC Advocacy Campaigns



Conflict Resolution Education at the Community Learning Center

In places like Cape Town, where fragility is a recurring factor, communities are even more exposed to conflict and violence due to their lack of access to the soft skills they so desperately need for reducing tensions and preventing as well as mitigating conflicts in their direct environment. A primary function of our CLC is therefore to ensure such access to free conflict resolution education programs that any resident can attend. The curricula is designed by WPDI and delivered by our local teams, who have the capacity to translate the course content into concepts and language that local community members can easily assimilate.

In 2023, WPDI facilitated standalone training on Conflict Resolution in nine communities in the Cape Flats. These were conducted in various areas such as Phillip, Mitchell Plain, Lotus River/Parkwood, Lavender Hill, Steenberg, Grassy Park, and Hout Bay. The total number of participants for the year was 334. The valuable feedback we have received from beneficiaries attests to the reinforcement of their capabilities in conflict management and successful mediation. The implementation of Conflict Resolution Education and specialized Human Rights training has contributed to fostering harmonious coexistence among community members.



Topics covered

- Understanding Peace & Conflict
- Conflict Analysis
- Conflict Approaches
- Sources of Conflict
- Types of Conflict
- Communication and Active Listening

“

This training has been extremely helpful. I have acquired better skills and knowledge of healthier ways of communicating and relating to one another. I am so thankful that this training has helped me a lot, most importantly to prioritize peace over anything else.

”

Samantha Ackermans

“

I lost two children through gang wars. I have been battling to let go all these years. This program has given me inner peace. It has taught me that, if you hold on to that pain, I might be the one who pays most dearly. Thank You WPDI for this program , I am letting go of my past and I am embracing forgiveness, peace and hope.

”

Isabel Jantties

“

My week here was awesome. At first it started off as nothing but during the sessions I realized that I had to be here. All my life I have been bitter and angry because my father was absent when I was growing up. This training has taught me to let go of the past and make peace with the things I cannot change and that is what I will do with my father. Thank you WPDI.

”

Shandre Oliphant

Mobilizing Cinema for Peace

Our Cinema for Peace program plays a significant role in highlighting inequality, injustice, intolerance as well as offering solutions, hope and a vision for a better future. It is not only important to screen a film but follow each screening with a discussion and other activities to provide the youths with an opportunity to process what they have watched and then directly discuss to

gain a more profound and thorough understanding of the film. The film screening allows learners to gain valuable lessons through this, it encourages them to remain resilient through their challenges and always strive to bring positive change to their communities.

660 Youth have Participated
in Cinema for Peace throughout 2023

“

I have learned many lessons from this movie today, but the most important lesson was being resilient and to never give up on myself and my dreams. I have learned to always respect others but firstly to respect and love myself. I also learned that it is important to always stay positive and believe in myself. Thank you WPDI for bringing this activity to our school.

”

Sky Sibela

Grade 4 Learner at Mseki Primary School

“

I would like to thank WPDI for making this activity possible for the learners at Mseki Primary School. The learners were looking forward to this day and they have learned many things during this movie screening. This has allowed the learners to also learn about peace in a different setting. They thoroughly enjoyed the movie, and this was evident through the discussions that followed the screening. Thank you WPDI for making this possible.

”

Sinazo Mdayi

WPDI Youth Peacemaker



Cinema for Peace at Mseki Primary in Gugulethu



Cinema for Peace at Imperial Primary in Mitchells Plain

Disseminating a Culture of Peace through Schools



6,784

Total Participants
in school-based activities

30

Schools
Hosting
WPDI Programs

6,504

Learners
and Teachers
Trained

280

People Reached
through Advocacy
Campaigns in
Schools

Peacebuilding in Primary Schools

WPDI's Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding Education in Primary Schools program is designed to impart essential skills to school pupils, fostering the knowledge, attitudes, values, and competencies needed for non-violent conflict resolution and the cultivation of harmonious relationships. WPDI staff and Youth Peacemakers diligently guide, mentor, and support a new generation of peacebuilders, bringing transformative change to daily life in primary schools. Introducing Conflict Resolution Education (CRE) at a young age aims to instill the concepts of peacemaking, peacekeeping, and conflict resolution, addressing vulnerabilities to negative influences like gangsterism. Educators note a remarkable behavioral shift in learners, creating safer and conducive classrooms. The program's positive impact is evident, with 3,328 learners graduating from the CRE program in 17 primary schools within the Cape Flats in 2023.



In view of gaining insight into the impact of the conflict resolution education program implemented in schools, we conducted a survey among teachers, headmasters, parents, and other school stakeholders, receiving 15 responses. The majority of stakeholders perceive the program as significantly beneficial for many, if not most, learners across the school. Positive feedback centers on the enjoyment expressed by learners, with some becoming highly vocal in asking and answering questions. Stakeholders note a positive impact on enrolled learners, emphasizing the acquisition of conflict resolution skills, including peaceful and non-violent approaches and the importance of meditation.

While there are mentions of a more moderate impact, particularly on enrolled learners and a few others, stakeholders commend the program's excellence in teaching tools and techniques for discipline and conflict resolution. A desire for program expansion is evident, with stakeholders recognizing the transformative potential to change the entire school's culture positively.

Some respondents highlight a specific impact on enrolled learners, suggesting the program's unique approach and exciting content delivery as differentiators. This approach is credited with fostering learner eagerness and ease in implementing the acquired skills.

The survey responses convey a positive picture of the conflict resolution education program's impact in Cape Town, emphasizing its potential to benefit learners on a significant scale, transform school cultures, and empower students with essential conflict resolution skills. Stakeholders express a strong endorsement for the program's continuation and expansion in the coming years.

“

This program has given me the confidence to speak up for myself and others. I was bullied at my previous school and that affected my self-esteem and my behavior towards others but being a part of this program has helped me to be more confident and it helped me to deal with issues like bullying in a more peaceful way. I hope this program will help other children at my school like it helped me.

”

Grade 7 Learner

at Sakumlandela Primary in Khayelitsha

“

I would like to thank WPDI for teaching us such valuable lessons. Recently we were taught active listening, and this has taught me the importance of making others feel heard and also reminding myself that my opinions matter. I am proud of myself and my peers who have chosen to make use of these valuable tools to make our school a better school. We will continue to work towards making our school the best and safest school in Mitchells Plain.

”

Xena-Kai Bowman

A grade 4 learner at Imperial Primary in Mitchells Plain

“

Thank you to WPDI for making your program possible at my school. Through the peace program I have learnt to be less aggressive in different situations. It has helped me to be less anxious about my surroundings and this has helped me significantly in the classroom and at home. I am grateful that this program has allowed me to be myself and has motivated me to create peace and educate others about the importance of peaceful behaviors. It has changed my life and I hope that the peace program will continue to help other young children like myself to become great leaders.

”

Grade 4 Learner

at Levana Primary in Lavender Hill



Learners Graduating at Primary School Graduation

Peacebuilding Education in Secondary Schools

A total of 2,884 learners across 13 secondary schools around the Cape Flats completed and graduated the Conflict Resolution Education Program in 2023. Through training and events the Peace Education in Secondary Schools program will continue to empower and encourage young boys and girls to build a sustainable school environment.

The Peace Education Program continues to make a positive impact and encourages growth in these schools so that there are fewer school dropouts and less cases of teenage pregnancy in local communities.

This year, teachers have explained that thanks to the progress the peace program has made in secondary schools, there's been a noticeable reduction of lateness and substance abuse within school grounds, and less violence amongst the learners in the class.

“

This program has made a positive change in my life. I am able to deal with the issues that I face at home and in school. The topics will continue to help me to be positive about what I do whether it is at school or home. I am thankful to the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative for bringing such an empowering program to our school and my life.

”

Simamkele Ntswayimbana

Student in a secondary school

“

This Peace Education program has made a huge change in my life. I used to come to school intoxicated and would disrupt other peers in the class. When the peace program started at my school, it showed me how I am hurting others around me and affecting the teachers. Thank you to the Whitaker Peace & Peace Development Initiative for guiding me to a positive path. Today I helped my teachers and others around me. This program should continue working with the kids because it motivates them.

”

Kamva Amos

Student in a secondary school



“

Thanks to the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative for empowering us, the Conflict Resolution program has taught us so much, such as being respectful and speaking about our issues instead of being angry. I will continue applying what I have learned and sharing it with my family and community. I hope this program expands so that more people can be motivated.

”

Iminathi Nayamkazi

Student in a secondary school





Impact Story

Every Member of the School Community Can Make a Difference for Peace

Context of the Intervention

The Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative started conducting the Peace Education program in a school located in Mitchells Plain in 2023. The school is located in a vulnerable area, where learners are exposed to gang violence and distribution of drugs in close proximity to the school premises. Many learners come from homes where their parents or guardians are unemployed or rely on social grants (government financial aid) in order to provide their basic needs.

Identifying and Addressing Vulnerabilities

For this reason, these vulnerable learners are at a great risk of being recruited into these activities. WPDI Youth Peacemaker Rui Solomons was approached by the school Principal, to work with a group of eight boys identified by educators who needed special support due to their display of violent behavior. The group of boys had previously been involved in different incidents that included severe bullying of other learners, physical altercations with educators and were considered to be vulnerable to joining the gangs surrounding the school. The learners were at risk of being expelled and the school principal saw the Peace Education program as the last intervention to ensure that the boys would be kept in school. Our Youth Peacemaker designed a program specific to the needs of the learners where he did activities such as peace education, physical fitness and mentoring.

Positive Impact and Future Endeavors

Through this intervention the school staff and Principal have started seeing major improvement in them to unlearn old and negative behaviors. The educators have shared that their peers feel safer in the classroom as they have started to display more peaceful behaviors and used peaceful techniques to resolve conflicts making the classrooms more conducive for learners and educators. This shows the impact of the work that WPDI Youth Peacemakers continue to make in schools where they are active. The principal and staff have requested that the WPDI Youth Peacemaker continue to work with this group of learners to ensure that they maintain the positive change they have started to show.

Testimonial from School Representative

"I express my gratitude to WPDI for implementing this program at our school. Its timing was crucial as the learners' behaviors had become a significant concern for educators. With limited resources and capacity beyond academics, we sought intervention for a group causing distress. WPDI Peacemaker, Rui Solomons, was approached to assist. Using diverse techniques, he gained the learners' trust, initiating weekly sessions. His engaging approach addressed their academic challenges, providing hope and values crucial for navigating difficulties. Positive changes have been observed, with improved engagement and presence in classes. While there's a journey ahead, the progress is commendable. The school management team appreciates WPDI's ongoing efforts and anticipates witnessing further impact in 2024."

Educator from the Primary School in Mitchells Plain

Testimonial from WPMI Youth Peacemaker

When I was approached by the school principal and she described the situation to me, I was initially overwhelmed because I felt that I lacked the skills to assist in the request. However, I agreed to her request and started planning on how I was going to conduct the program with the group identified. The initial focus was peace education and as time progressed, I started incorporating meditation and physical exercises as this helped them to calm down and work together as a group. This also assisted them to express themselves in a way that was beneficial for their wellbeing. Throughout the sessions I could see they were becoming more committed; they were present at each session and were always enthusiastic and eager to interact during the sessions. I soon started mentoring them and requested that they record their goals and progress weekly. This helped them to set goals for the week but also to hold themselves accountable for their own progress. This is something that motivated them to keep on continuing to work at improving their behaviors and unlearning their violent behaviors. The program has shown them that they can be great leaders if they work towards it. We will continue to work with the group in 2024 and I look forward to seeing their progress.

Rui Solomons
Youth Peacemaker

Peacebuilding Training for Teachers

It's the aim of WPMI to empower and build the skills of teachers to effectively address conflict in some of the most violent-stricken neighborhoods of Cape Town. This will strengthen their capacity to become active agents of peace and social cohesion in classrooms, school and communities. The main objective of the training is to equip them with healthy coping mechanisms through practical ways of finding inner peace. Conflict as a topic helps to equip teachers on how to deal with conflict in the classroom and their work spaces. It also provides them with skills to turn destructive conflict into a positive constructive force that can bring positive change. This has a direct positive impact on the standard of education the learners receive.

The teachers are given lessons to integrate peace education principles into their teaching, by being positive role models as they have the most direct, sustained contact with students and considerable control over what is taught and in promoting peaceful zones. This is how WPMI contributes to fostering a culture of peace and conflict resolution in schools.



292 Teachers have been trained
in Peace and Conflict Resolution Education in various schools during 2023



Teachers training at Imperial Primary in Mitchells Plain

“

The conflicts that we deal with on a daily basis as educators are many and varied, this prompted us as the school to reach out to WPDI to arm us with tools to better approach these challenges. I feel better equipped to deal with any arising conflict in my class and workplace. I will wholeheartedly recommend these sessions to other schools in our areas because they are experiencing similar challenges as teachers. This training has made our life easier to navigate through conflicts and will achieve more.

Nothando Ngeleka
Educator at Alpine Primary School

”

“

Thank you to WPDI and staff for this amazing program. Thembani Primary has been working with WPDI since 2020 and this organization has made a great impact within our school. I have firsthand experience observing the change this program has made in the lives of our learners and today I can confidently say that this program has taught me many tools that I will apply in my classroom. It can be challenging at times to work with learners who come from such diverse backgrounds but I am now better equipped to deal with such challenges and for this I wish to thank WPDI. I look forward to creating a space that is peaceful and safe for my learners.

Ms Tina
Educator at Thembani Primary School

”

“

We are extremely grateful for this training that has empowered us as educators to manage our classrooms in a peaceful way. This training has helped us to understand what our learners are learning about in their peace education sessions and this will assist us to complement their lessons through our own teaching. My key takeaway from this training has been the importance of identifying the underlying needs of my learners. This training has shown me a new perspective and going forward I will implement these tools in my classroom and my daily life.

”

Mr Hendricks

Educator at Imperial Primary School



Teachers training at Thembani Primary school in Langa

Opportunities for Socio-Economic Empowerment

A key aspect of our work in Cape Town is to help individuals and communities improve their livelihood conditions. To this effect, we strive to provide our beneficiaries with access to skills in ICT and Business that they can use to boost their career. Ensuring that our trainees have opportunities for launching or strengthening their business, we hold business plan competitions that serve to identify promising projects that we subsequently backstop to secure their development into profitable enterprises. In 2023, our livelihood program has continued to create better prospects for individuals and the communities at large, starting with the 1,549 individuals who took vocational courses.

Our Business Plan Competition offered them opportunities to win capital start-up grants to develop a business, resulting in the launch of 49 new businesses that generated 322 jobs and benefits for 1,645 in their families. In conclusion, our comprehensive livelihood program in Cape Town has contributed to enhancing the wellbeing of individuals and communities, fostering economic empowerment and community development in the region.



1,549 Total Trainees in vocational courses	368 ICT Trainees	395 Entrepreneurship Trainees	786 Vulnerable women trained in business
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1,967 Beneficiaries of all SMEs	49 Businesses created in 2023	110 Businesses supported by WPDI	322 Jobs Created	1,645 Indirect beneficiaries of businesses
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Capacity Building Courses

Besides the fact that 1,549 attended our vocational courses, gaining skills and knowledge that they will be able to use for many years to come, the impact of the vocational training program on the beneficiaries can also be observed through the surveys that we conduct each year among them six months after courses are completed. In 2023, 165 former vocational trainees of Cape Town responded to our questionnaire, 160 of whom declared that they had used their skills in their daily or professional lives.

Noting that 91% had both applied their skills and recommended the program to others, and that, among them, 39% maintained regular contact with former course-mates, we can conclude that the program had a very strong level of appropriation among beneficiaries in this area.

Building Computer-Literacy Skills in the Community

ICT training is a skills-based training course. Participants from across the Cape Flats attend the two-week long training courses. No marketing is required as the course has been so successful in past years that the courses are filled thanks to word-of-mouth from previous participants. Community leaders have also worked closely with the ICT Trainer, to provide training for their constituents.

Basic Computer Course

The Basic Computer Course assumes no prior computer knowledge beyond basic activities like watching movies or surfing the internet. Participants start by learning mouse and keyboard usage, followed by basics in file management, creating folders, and saving files. They are guided on safe internet navigation, effective searches, and avoiding copyright issues. The course progresses to using Gmail for professional emails, attachment handling, and good email etiquette. Participants conclude by mastering typing and formatting in Google Docs, creating simple documents, forms, and incorporating images. A practical test on the final day requires an 80% pass rate for participants to book an intermediate course.

Intermediate Computer Course

The Intermediate computer course picks up from the Basic course and teaches participants how to use Google Slides to create a presentation. They also learn how to use Google Sheets and engage using simple formulas.

WPDI has a very strong working relationship with the City of Cape Town (CoCT) and during 2023, WPDI ran 7 Basic courses specially for CoCT participants. Two courses are offered: a basic training course and an intermediate course. This year, just over 300 participants attended one of 20 scheduled training courses.

ICT in Schools

WPDI conducts basic computer literacy training in two junior schools in Athlone: Cypress Primary and Bokmakierie Primary. Due to the small computer rooms at both schools, learners are divided into smaller groups and instructed throughout the year. At Cypress Primary, Grade 3 pupils learn fundamental skills such as using a mouse, keyboard, typing, and formatting a simple document. Meanwhile, Grade 5 pupils at Bokmakierie Primary utilize the Internet as a research tool for their Natural Sciences curriculum.



The City of Cape Town arranged for participants from the Women for Change Program to attend ICT training.

“

I've learned a lot in a short time that I never knew about. I would recommend this course because it is also an advantage for you on your CV and you also get a certificate that is awesome. The best part of this is that the course is for free.

”

Tameron Dilgee

Athlone, 26 years old

“

I had little knowledge about computers. I know today how to switch on a computer, do a google search. My laptop was not of much use to me. I learned so much and I am able to even do a few things my sister and dad can't do. Not to brag but I'm super proud of myself and so thankful to my teacher Steffne for taking the time and allowing me to attend this course.

”

Nicole Isaacs

Bonteheuwel, 25 years old

Trainees from the City of Cape Town who attended a Basic computer course in October



Graduation day for the group who attended training in April



Business and Entrepreneurship Courses to Economically Empower Community Members

During 2023 we trained 786 unemployed women in our Women Livelihood Program of which 751 graduated and funded 42 Business Ideas from 147 Business Plan Submissions in our Business Bootcamp Competition. We also trained 395 standalone Business & Entrepreneurship Trainees from various MURP areas, ranging

from unemployed youth, men and women. We also selected 4 Peacemakers and 3 standalone Business Ideas for seed capital grants through our Business Bootcamp Competition.





Impact Story

Bulelwa Moko, Age 36 from Gugulethu

Gugulethu is one of the struggling communities in Cape Town with the high level of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

Bulelwa Moko's testimonial

"I heard about the program from a friend that knows how passionate I am about entrepreneurship. I joined the program in February 2023, when I had a dream of opening my own business, but I did not have the confidence or the know-how to make it a reality. I was struggling with writing my own business plan, managing my finances, and finding customers. I felt overwhelmed and discouraged. Thanks to the program, I learned how to overcome these challenges and achieve my goals.

The program offered me classes in various fields such as marketing, accounting, and legal advice. It also assisted me by meeting a mentor, who is always willing to assist us when one is in need of help in the business. This course also gave me a platform where I met other inspiring women entrepreneurs and potential partners. The program not only taught me how to run a successful business, but also how to be a better leader and a more confident person. I learned how to communicate effectively, negotiate assertively, and collaborate creatively. I also developed a sense of social responsibility and a vision for the future.

Today, I am proud to say that I am selling beauty products outside a mall with a happy, loyal customer base, and a growing income. I am constantly looking for more ways to improve and expand my business, as well as to give back to my community. The WPD Women's Livelihood Program has truly changed my life for the better. It has given me the opportunity to pursue my passion, to fulfill my potential, and to make a difference. I am so grateful for this program and for all the people who made it possible."





Impact Story

Ntombizanele Binase from Khayelitsha



Ntombizanele is a divorced mother of two, she had to run away from her marital home as her husband was physically, emotionally and financially abusive.

She had to raise her children as a single mother. She heard about our program on Facebook where she saw an ad for our Women's Livelihood Program.

Ntombizanele's testimonial

"The training was exciting indeed. I had challenges as I had to leave school at the age of 15 to get married, I have been out of school for more than 30 years. The manual was very difficult for me to read, but WPDI staff made sure that we all understood and that no-one felt left out.

The program is designed in such a brilliant way. It starts with familiar things and then to things we didn't know, I gained knowledge and skills and confidence in myself.

I'm inspired to better myself and women who went through similar problems to mine. Thank you WPDI and L'OREAL for all you do for women in Cape Flats. You are bringing hope that we thought was impossible."



Business Bootcamps

After Basic and Intermediate training sessions, we conduct Business Bootcamps to prepare participants for our Business Plan Competitions, guiding them on formulating effective business plans. This year, we organized three Business Plan Competitions following three Business Bootcamps, receiving a total of 169 business project proposals.

This led to 159 elevator pitch applicants presenting their business ideas to our Review Committee who selected 42 Women Livelihood, 4 Peacemakers, and 3 Standalone Business Plan Winners.



Supporting Income-Generating Projects



Managers F	207
Managers M	24
Managers All	231

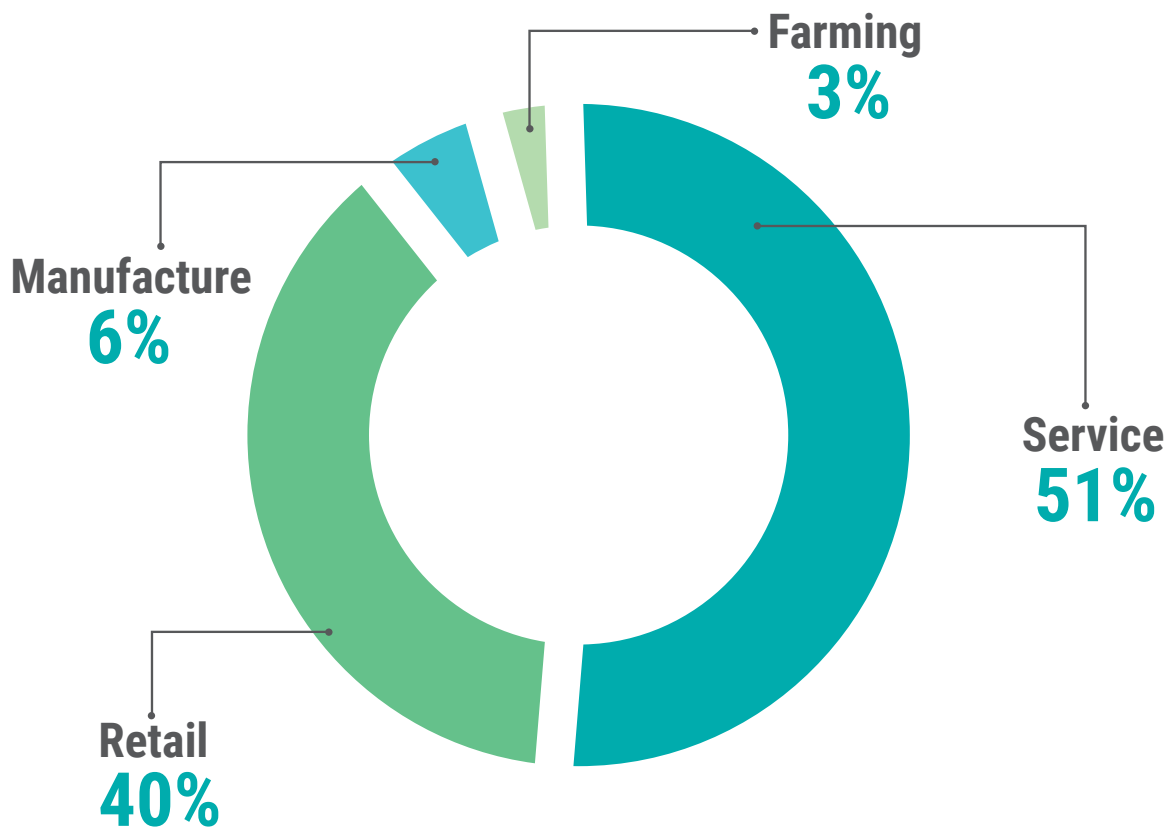


Employees F	67
Employees M	14
Employees All	81

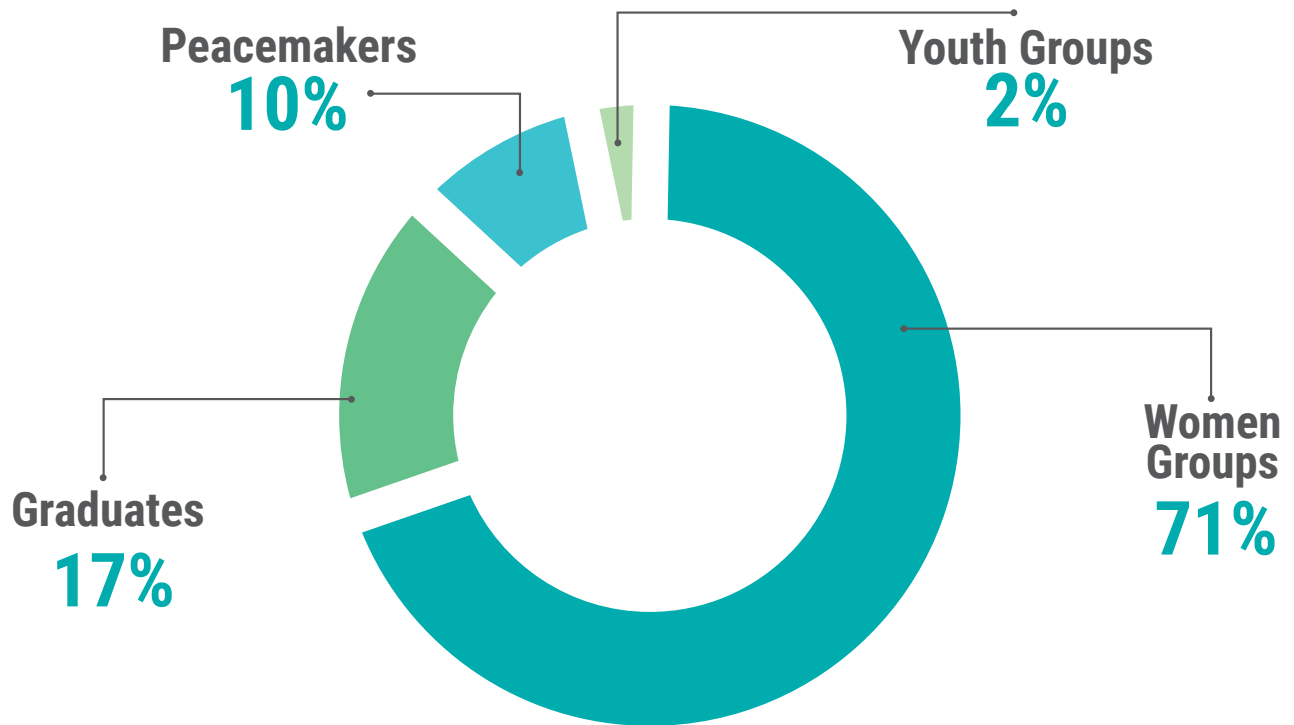


Total Beneficiaries	1,967
Jobs created	322

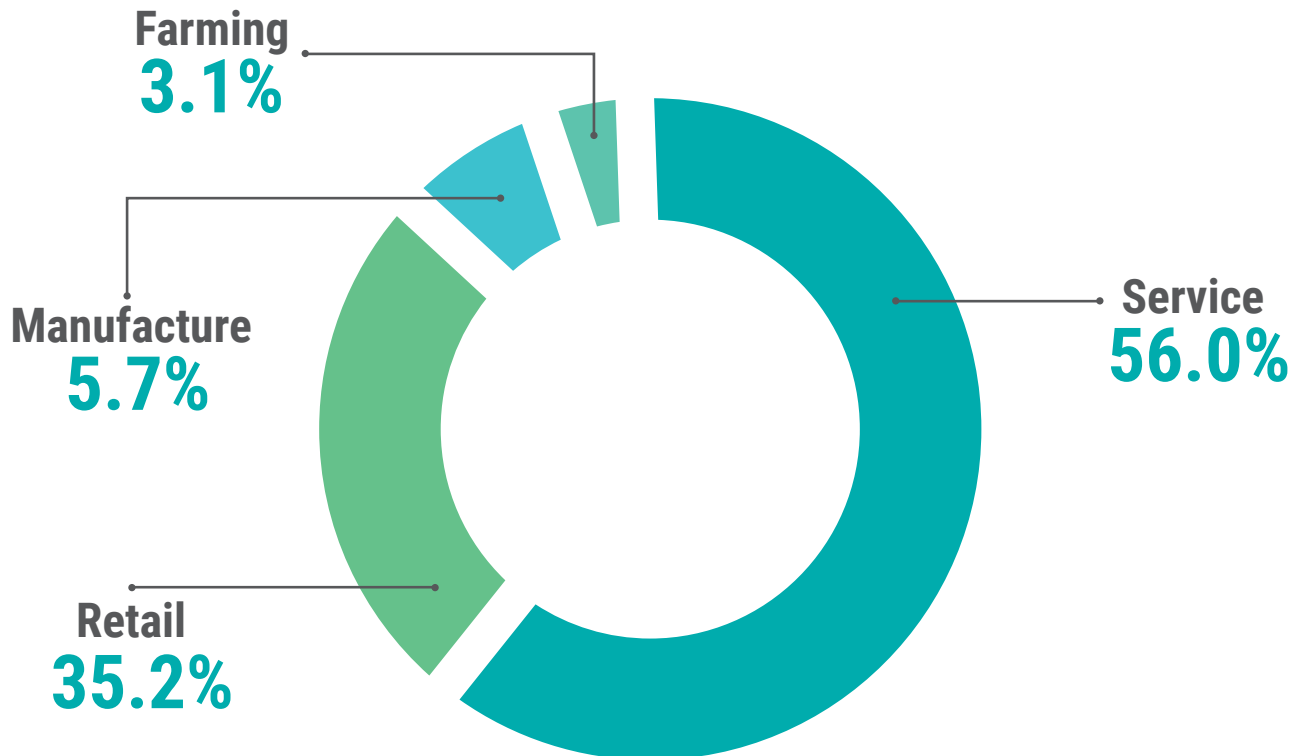
Types of Businesses



Origin of Businesses



Jobs Generated by type of Business Active in 2023 in Cape Town



Women's Livelihood Program

In 2023

WPDI Supported

82 businesses created by Women's Groups in Cape Town including 42 new businesses

In Total

These businesses have generated

124
Jobs

and provided indirect revenue to

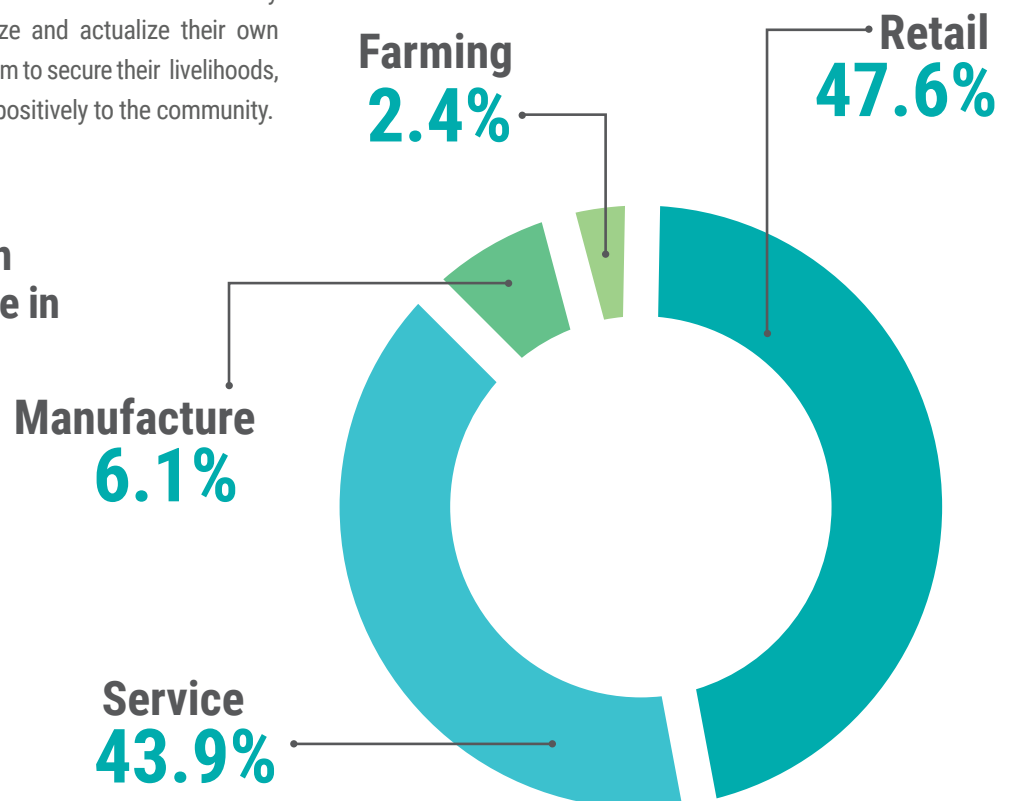
732
Beneficiaries

in the households of managers and employees

WPDI embarked on a transformative journey in 2022 by introducing the Women's Livelihood Program in collaboration with the L'Oréal Fund for Women, a venture that continued to thrive throughout 2023. The genesis of this program was a response to the urgent call from local stakeholders, prompted by the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns on underprivileged women in the region. Notably, there was a significant surge in gender-based violence and a stark decline in household incomes, exacerbating the challenges faced by women of all demographics. With the overarching goal of fostering women's empowerment through entrepreneurship, the initiative was meticulously crafted to deliver localized training in Business and Entrepreneurship. This comprehensive training aimed to equip women with the necessary skills and knowledge to conceptualize and actualize their own business ventures, thereby enabling them to secure their livelihoods, support their families, and contribute positively to the community.

Following the training phase, the inaugural Business Plan Competition (BPC) of 2022, witnessed success, with 750 women graduating from the Business and Entrepreneurship training, and 40 business projects receiving funding and support. The project was renewed for 2023, leveraging insights from the inaugural year to enhance the initiative and provide improved support to future participants. In 2023, 786 women of all ages registered and attended the training program. The overwhelming interest in the program within the local community underscores its relevance and impact, with some prospective applicants eagerly awaiting opportunities in 2024 due to high demand.

Types of the 82 Women Group's Business Active in 2023 in Cape Town





Impact Story

Adams Signs, a Mother/Daughter-led Business in South Africa

Edwina's steadfast belief in her daughter, Jessica, remained unwavering despite initial prognoses of physical disabilities. With the support of her family, Jessica overcame obstacles and completed her education, demonstrating resilience in the face of adversity.

Their decision to pursue entrepreneurship stemmed from an opportunity discovered through their church network. Recognizing the potential for independence and flexibility, Jessica and Edwina established Adams Signs in the printing industry, leveraging their complementary skills and experiences.

While navigating the complexities of starting a business, Jessica and Edwina recognized the need for additional support and skills development. Their participation in an entrepreneurship program provided valuable guidance and resources, enabling them to refine their business model and expand their customer base.

Through dedication and strategic planning, Adams Signs diversified its services to include signage for various purposes, alongside additional printing offerings. This expansion, facilitated in part by support from WPDI, contributed to the growth and sustainability of their business.

Jessica and Edwina's journey underscores the importance of access to resources and training in empowering entrepreneurs, irrespective of background or circumstances. Their success serves as a testament to the potential for entrepreneurship to create economic opportunities and foster self-reliance within vulnerable communities.



Business Growth Incubator

Our Monthly Growth Incubator was kick-launched this year. It is designed to enhance the development of our Business Plan winners and increase their chance of success and durability. Indeed, throughout this contracted year of mentorship, the sessions focus on practical business management tools, addressing both simple and complex challenges that starter businesses encounter.

These sessions are interactive and include Q&A sessions where winners seek advice and share best practices. All 42 winners from the 2022 cohort participated each month. Others from the 2022 graduates of the training would attend a particular class that met their current needs.



Health and Wellbeing

Pathways to Inner Peace



72 Total
Trauma Healing Clients

Trauma Healing Support Inaugural Success: Pilot Phase of Trauma Healing Program in South Africa

The Trauma Healing program was piloted in South Africa from April 2023. This program is critically important and necessary in South Africa. The country faces significant socio-economic challenges, including high rates of poverty, inequality, and violence. These issues have a profound impact on the mental health and wellbeing of individuals, particularly those living in disadvantaged communities like the Cape Flats. The program addresses the psycho-social challenges faced by individuals in these communities, such as family conflict, gender-based violence, substance abuse, and personal identity crises. By providing ongoing counseling sessions and utilizing evidence-based therapeutic approaches like trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, the program helps individuals navigate and overcome these challenges. Moreover, the program's emphasis on strengths-based perspectives and the identification of individual and environmental strengths empowers beneficiaries to transform their lived experiences and build resilience.

By addressing the psycho-social needs of individuals, the program contributes to the overall wellbeing of communities and fosters a more inclusive and equitable society in South Africa.

Despite being in its pilot stage, the program successfully delivered on its objectives, supporting 72 individuals facing various psycho-social challenges. These challenges included family issues, family conflict, gender-based violence, domestic violence, substance abuse, low self-esteem, personal identity crises, and witnessing violent attacks, among others. Operating within the Cape Flats community, an environment riddled with social issues, the program has not only proven beneficial but also necessary in addressing the complex needs of the community. In addition to providing individualized counseling sessions, the program has actively worked to develop partnerships with local organizations and facilities.



Collaborative Interventions and Referrals

This collaborative approach enables the program to make referrals for ongoing cases that require further intervention beyond psycho-social assistance. For instance, cases have been referred to psychiatric facilities, substance abuse treatment centers, and local organizations specializing in family therapy.

By leveraging these partnerships, the program ensures that individuals receive the specialized care they need to overcome their challenges and improve their wellbeing.

Therapeutic Strategies

Moreover, the program has utilized trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy and strengths-based perspectives in its counseling sessions. This approach has proven effective in helping individuals change their perceptions of challenging situations and identify their personal strengths. By focusing on both individual and environmental strengths, the program empowers individuals to transform their lived experiences and create positive change in their lives.

Recognizing the power of sports in promoting wellbeing and fostering peace, the program will also initiate Peace Through Sports initiatives.

By organizing sports events and activities, the program aims to create a safe and inclusive space where individuals can come together, build relationships, and find solace in physical activity. The impact of the program extends beyond the 72 individuals reached in 2023. As beneficiaries return to their families and communities, they can share what they have learned through the intervention, amplifying the program's influence and promoting positive change on a larger scale. Additionally, the program's holistic approach, encompassing individualized counseling, group therapy, community engagements, training opportunities, and Peace Through Sports initiatives, positions it to make a profound and lasting impact on individuals and the wider community.

Multifaceted Expansion in 2024

The psycho-social wellbeing program has demonstrated its effectiveness even though it was in its pilot stage in 2023. With plans for expansion in 2024, the program is poised to make an even greater impact on individuals and the wider community. By providing comprehensive support and empowering individuals to overcome their challenges, the program strives to create a society where psycho-social wellbeing is prioritized, and individuals can flourish. In anticipation of 2024, the Psycho-social Wellbeing program has set forth ambitious plans for expansion. Building upon the success of its personalized counseling approach, the program seeks to introduce group-focused therapy as a means to cultivate a sense of community and peer support among participants. Additionally, the program will enhance its community engagements by organizing workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns, aiming to address psycho-social issues at a broader scale.

Moreover, the program will offer training opportunities for individuals interested in becoming peer mentors or advocates for psycho-social wellbeing. This will include the Youth Peacemakers and student interns from local universities in pursuit of careers in the social work profession. Furthermore, this will include members of the various communities that we serve. Through these training initiatives, individuals will gain the necessary skills and knowledge to support others in their journey towards healing and personal growth. Furthermore, recognizing the positive impact of sports on wellbeing and peacebuilding, the program will also launch Peace Through Sports initiatives, and organize sports events and activities. These initiatives aim to create a safe and inclusive space where individuals can come together, forge connections, and find solace through physical activity.

Testimonials from beneficiaries wishing to remain anonymous

“

I would like to thank Minenhle [WPDl's trainer] from the bottom of my heart, for having sessions with me, even though it hasn't been that long yet, it has already had a good impact on me, it has been good having someone to speak to when I needed it most. The session experience gave me hope and strengthened me within. I look forward to future sessions.

”

“

I have been having counseling sessions with Minenhle for two months now and it has really been wonderful. I have learned about the power of the mind and how to deal with home problems. Since I started the counseling journey, I have learned to be calmer and more positive during my life challenges.

”

“

Firstly, I just want to say thank you to Minenhle and WPDl! I didn't even know that I needed counseling until I was referred by my mentor to talk to Minenhle. She has taken the time to listen to my problems and help me find solutions to my issues with my partner which were having a negative impact on different areas of my life. It is really great to have someone so professional to talk to. I have also learned coping skills which have been really good.

”



Peace Through Sports

In November, NBA Africa and Forest Whitaker unveiled a brand new basketball court at Cornflower Sports Grounds in Athlone, Cape Town, that will host year-round youth basketball development programming and serve the broader Athlone community.

The court was unveiled at a ribbon cutting ceremony by WPDI CEO, Forest Whitaker, the Deputy Mayor of Cape Town, Eddie Andrews, and NBA Africa CEO, Victor Williams. Following the ceremony, approximately 100 boys and girls aged 10-15 participated in a Jr. NBA clinic and peace activity led by the WPDI Youth Peacemakers.

In addition to year-round Jr. NBA programming, the court will also host activities as part of WPDI's Peace Through Sports program, an initiative designed to foster peace and harmony in marginalized communities through sports and peacebuilding training courses.

“

We're excited to unveil this beautiful basketball court with the City of Cape Town and Forest Whitaker, which builds on our previous initiatives to provide more young people in South Africa with safe spaces to learn and play the game.

”

Victor Williams
NBA Africa CEO



Conclusion

The year 2023 has been a testament to the resilience and dedication of the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative in Cape Town, as our teams faced and overcame numerous challenges across the strategic pillars of Peacebuilding, Livelihood, Trauma, and Sport.

In the realm of Peacebuilding, our commitment to promoting peace in the face of escalating violence and increased shootings near schools became more critical than ever. Peacemakers and staff had to confront the harsh reality of these challenges, directly witnessing violence and feeling its impact. The end of the COVID pandemic, paradoxically, led to a resurgence of criminal activities, emphasizing the ongoing relevance of our prevention efforts. Looking forward to 2024, with a general election bringing heightened volatility, WPDI is prepared to navigate the political landscape by focusing on dialogue, cohabitation between national and foreign communities, and the promotion of human rights, striving to foster cohesion in the face of divisive forces.

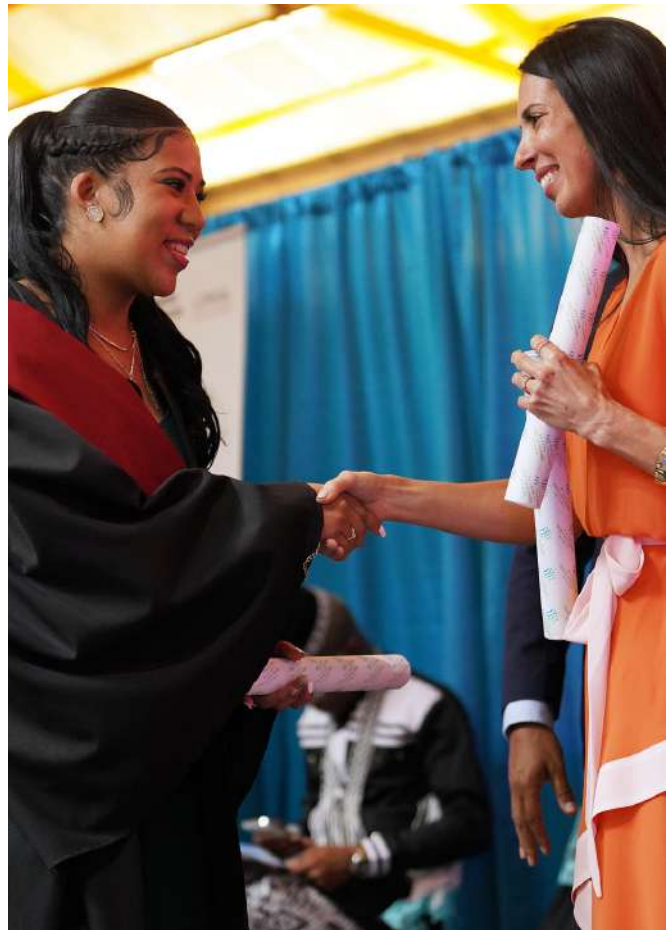
The Livelihood pillar saw remarkable success, with businesses thriving and providing employment opportunities for local residents. However, the demoralizing effect of insecurity, particularly robberies, posed a significant challenge. As we reflect on the achievements of our Business Program, it is clear that addressing insecurity must become an integral part of the incubation process, especially in areas affected by violence.

The Trauma pillar played a crucial role in intervening at schools affected by violence, providing support to both students and staff who witnessed traumatic incidents. The trauma officer's efforts in addressing bullying and responding to incidents in the townships underscore the importance of trauma-informed approaches. In 2024, intensifying trauma interventions in schools remains a priority, ensuring a supportive environment for the affected beneficiaries.

In the Sports pillar, the inauguration of the basketball court marked a significant achievement. The upcoming launch of the full Peace Through Sports program in March presents both a challenge and an opportunity—to bring together youths of different colors and ethnicities, fostering unity and understanding through sports.

Partnerships have been instrumental in our work, and discussions with the City of Cape Town are underway for the renewal of our collaboration. Strong partnerships on the ground are indeed pivotal for implementing programs that promote peace, sustainability, and resilience in areas affected by fragility.

As we conclude the 2023 report, we celebrate the accomplishments of the year, acknowledging the dedication of our teams and the transformative impact on the communities we serve. Looking ahead to 2024, we recognize the challenges as opportunities for ensuring that WPDI continues to be a beacon of positive change in Cape Town and beyond. Through strategic interventions, strengthened partnerships, and a commitment to our core values, we aim to build a more resilient, peaceful, and sustainable future for all.



Partners



BNP PARIBAS



L'ORÉAL
FUND FOR WOMEN





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