

Annual Report

2025

15 years

of Impact, Dignity
and Opportunity

tcb

taking care
of business



15 Years of Igniting Impact, Dignity, and Opportunity

Started in 2010, Taking Care of Business (previously known as The Clothing Bank) has been supporting South African micro businesses for 15 years.



7,927

People recruited into our Enterprise Development training programmes.



22,9m

Items diverted from landfill.



R564m

Estimated profits generated from waste items by our circular economy entrepreneurs.



1,169

ECD centre owners have completed our Accelerator training.



11,332

Children benefitting from our daily programme across 252 ECD centres.

Leadership Report

Dear Partners, Investors, and Friends

As we reflect on Taking Care of Business's journey during 2024 and 2025, our 15th year of operation, we are filled with profound gratitude and unwavering optimism about the impact we continue to ignite across South Africa.

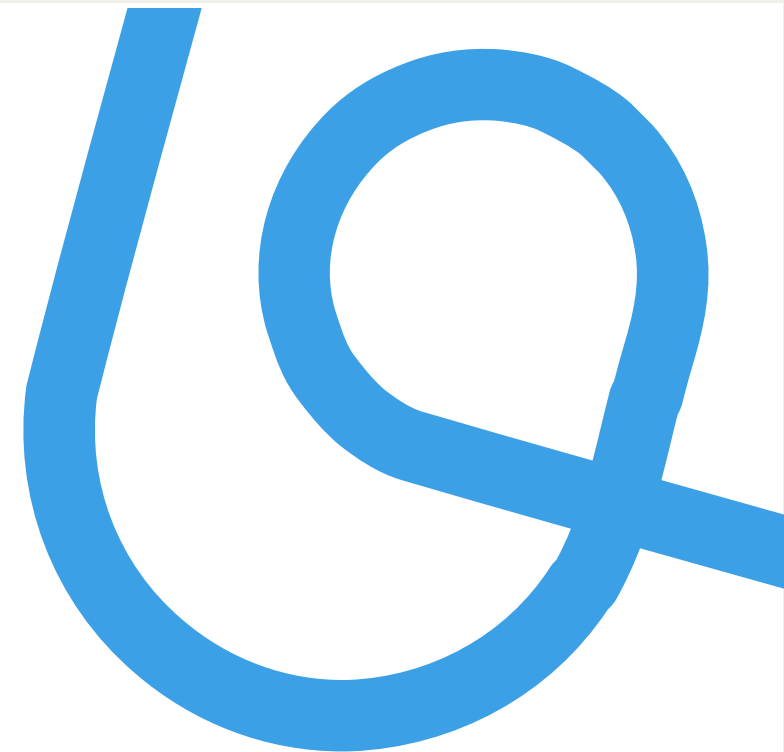
Our theme "Igniting Impact" perfectly captures not just what we accomplished this year, but how we approached every challenge, every opportunity, and every life we touched. We didn't just deliver programmes, we sparked transformation that ripples through families, communities, and the broader economy.

A Year of Remarkable Achievement

This year, we supported 1,748 people through our expanded Reskill division, a 44% growth that demonstrates the hunger for our proven training methodologies. Our circular economy programmes (Resell, Repair and Remake) welcomed **688 new participants** while supporting over **1,020 active entrepreneurs** building sustainable livelihoods from waste that would otherwise go into our landfills.

The numbers tell a powerful story: our participants generated an estimated R49.9 million in profits, while we diverted over 2 million items and 172 tonnes of e-waste from landfill. But beyond these impressive figures lies something even more significant, the restoration of human dignity and the unlocking of potential that many thought was lost forever.

Our Grow ECD programme reached new heights, reaching 82,057 children daily through 3,572 ECD centres actively using our mobile technology platform. We invested in 67 new ECD centres by providing access to low-cost finance and a structured 3-year support programme thereby transforming struggling ECD centres into 5-star early learning centres that are professional and financially viable. 232 ECD centres now receive this support, and they educate over 11,000 learners daily. 84% of our 4–5-year-olds observed and assessed in these centres, are developmentally on track. We are not just changing individual lives, we're strengthening the foundation of our nation's future.



Innovation That Drives Transformation

This year marked several breakthrough innovations that position us for accelerated impact.

Our new Participant Relationship Management system is revolutionising how we track and support our entrepreneurs, enabling faster, more personalised interventions, better measurement and better outcomes.

The launch of our simplified and improved Money Matters mentoring model has made financial literacy more accessible to micro-entrepreneurs who previously struggled with traditional approaches.

Our Remake programme expanded and now has fully fledged production facilities, creating market access opportunities for our participants to grow their garment micro-manufacturing businesses.

Significantly, we made our Grow ECD curriculum completely free to all South African ECD centres, our gift to the sector and a testament to our commitment to systems-level change. With 93% pedagogical scoring from Education Alliance Finland and the official Department of Basic Education accreditation, this curriculum is now empowering teachers nationwide.

Navigating Challenges with Resilience



It would be remiss not to acknowledge the significant headwinds we faced this year. The 22.9% decline in stock volumes from key retail partners tested our adaptability and forced us to make difficult decisions, including the consolidation of our Western Cape operations. Rather than view these challenges as setbacks, we embraced them as opportunities to innovate. We strengthened our branch stock-sharing protocols, piloted dynamic pricing strategies, and leveraged our graduate networks to extend product lifecycles. These challenges reinforced a fundamental truth: our model works precisely because it builds resilience, not dependency. **Our participants don't just survive economic shocks; they adapt, innovate, and often emerge stronger.**

Strategic Partnerships Amplifying Impact

Our partnership ecosystem continued to expand this year. Together with our Remake participants, the collaboration with TFG resulted in over 250 sleeping bags (made from discarded in-store banners) for individuals experiencing homelessness. This demonstrates how circular economy principles can meet urgent social needs while creating income opportunities. We also strengthened partnerships with PEP, TFG, Home of Living Brands and MyRunway, who increased their donations and remain deeply grateful to our 17 retail partners for their unwavering commitment over the past 15 years.

By joining the DBE National Intersectoral Forum and partnering with the Bana Pele mass registration drive, Grow ECD is positioned as a key player in transforming South Africa's early childhood development sector. These relationships validate our work and amplify our impact. The success of our low-cost ECD finance programme, with a 90% repayment rate, is rewriting the narrative around investability of the sector and proving that ECD centres can be both socially impactful and financially sustainable.

Our Heart-Head-Hands Philosophy in Action



Heart

BELIEF



Head

KNOWLEDGE



Hands

PRACTICAL
EXPERIENCE

What sets Taking Care of Business apart is our unwavering commitment to whole-person development through our Heart-Head-Hands methodology. This year, we saw this approach validated repeatedly, from Ntokozo's journey from trauma to triumph in our Resell programme, to Bavumile's transformation from an overwhelmed preschool owner to a confident social entrepreneur.

We begin with the heart because lasting change starts with healing and self-belief. We engage the head through practical, relevant training that builds real capability. We also provide hands-on opportunities to apply learning through income-generating activities.

Looking Forward: Scaling Our Impact

As we enter 2026, we see unprecedented opportunities to scale our proven methodologies. Our Reskill division's growth trajectory positions us to become South Africa's leading provider of holistic skills development for the informal and development sector.

The success of our Grow ECD blended finance models opens doors to expand across all programmes while maintaining accessibility for those who need us most.

The launch of Giraffe 2.0, our next-generation ECD app being developed with The Reach Trust, will further democratise access to quality early childhood education resources. This technology is helping to build a movement toward educational equity.

A Commitment to Transparency and Excellence

Our commitment to accountability remains unwavering. This year's implementation of the STAR Assessment Tool across our ECD centres, plus our Greenlight Tool refresher training for all branches and mentors demonstrates our **dedication to evidence-based impact and continuous improvement.**

We measure what matters because our participants, partners, and investors deserve nothing less than excellence.



Our financial stewardship reflects this same commitment. Every rand invested in Taking Care of Business generates multiple returns, in lives transformed, waste diverted, and economic opportunities created. **We're not just a non-profit, we're a catalyst for systemic change.**

Gratitude and Vision

To our retail partners, funders, staff, and board members: your belief in our mission enables us to Ignite Impact daily. To our participants, you inspire us with your resilience, creativity, and determination to build better futures for your families.

As we celebrate 15 years of impact, dignity, and opportunity, we are more convinced than ever that our model offers a blueprint for addressing South Africa's most pressing challenges. We're proving that with the right approach, poverty is not inevitable, waste can become wealth, and every person has the potential to contribute meaningfully to our economy.

Together, we're not just changing individual lives, we're building a more inclusive, sustainable, and dignified future for all South Africans.

With gratitude,

Tracey Gilmore and Tracey Chambers

CO-FOUNDERS, TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS



Table of Contents

1	Our Vision, Mission and Values
3	Our Programmes
4	Our Footprint, Capacity and Reach
5	Our Approach: Heart-Head-Hands
7	Aligned For Impact
8	The Circular Economy
9	Greenlight
13	Our Year at a Glance: Highlights
14	Resell, Repair and Remake Results
15	Grow ECD Results
16	Resell Programme Overview
18	Repair Programme Overview
20	Remake Programme Overview
23	Reskill Programme Overview
26	Redistribute Programme Overview
28	Grow ECD Programme Overview
43	Financials
46	Our Retail and Supply Partners
47	Our Supporters and Funders



OUR VISION

Eradicate poverty in South African families.

OUR MISSION

Equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the skills and resources they need to unlock their potential and access the economy.

OUR PURPOSE

To empower the people raising and educating the next generation.

OUR PROMISE

Empowering South African families to escape the cycle of poverty.



Our Values

A

Accountability

We act with honesty, transparency, integrity and consistency, so people can trust our word and entrust us with their resources. We see ourselves as responsible stewards.

S

Sustainability

We are committed to creating long-term value for people, communities, and the planet. Our focus is on sustainable life, business and environmental practices.

P

Partnership

We believe in collaborating with others to achieve greater impact.

I

Inspiration

We are bold, optimistic solution-seekers who ignite the fire of volition. We are hope-filled and future-forward with unyielding optimism and energy.

R

Response-ability

We believe in the boundless potential of people. We strive to create an eco-system of continuous learning, where individuals are challenged to grow and become resilient contributive citizens.

E

Excellence

We pursue high standards in everything we do. Our goal is to be the best and to provide the best for our partners, participants, and people - always going the extra mile.

Our Programmes



Resell

We equip unemployed mothers to become successful clothing traders during this 2-year Enterprise Development programme.

Their businesses are fuelled by donations of excess clothing and merchandise from the retail and manufacturing sector, which reduces fashion waste.



Repair

We equip unemployed South Africans (mainly men) to join this 2-year training programme. They learn how to run appliance repair and trading businesses.

Damaged, broken and excess stock is donated by retail partners and the public. It is then repaired and sold to reduce e-waste.



Remake

We equip seamstresses to run financially viable micro-manufacturing businesses through a 2-year Enterprise Development programme.

Donations of fabric, cut samples, and trims from supply chain partners support this circular economy initiative.



Reskill

We offer our life-changing skills training workshops to other organisations (corporate and nonprofit) to improve the lives of their participants and staff.

Modules cover financial freedom, computer literacy, entrepreneurial, financial, business and life-skills.



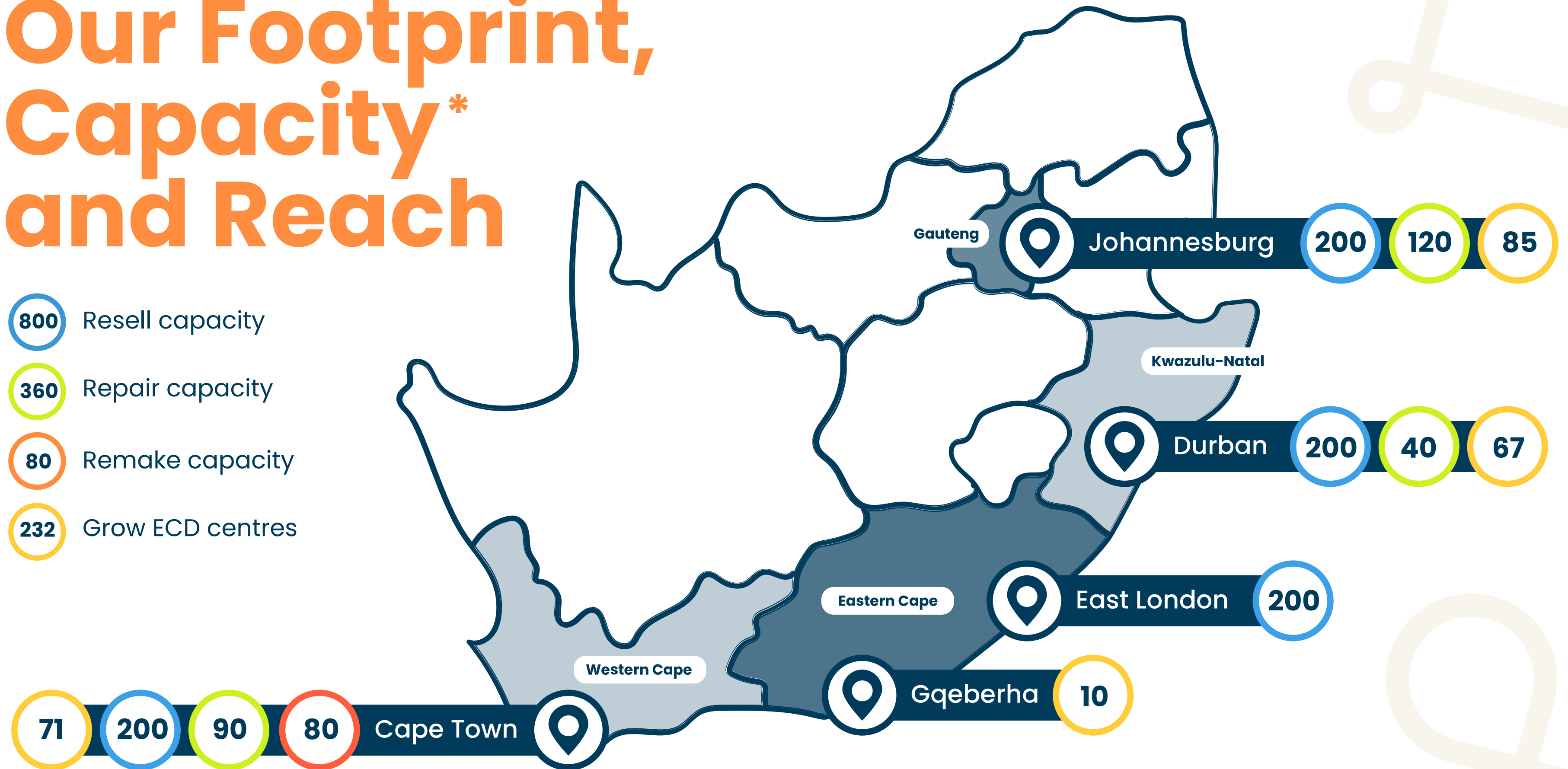
Grow ECD

We equip and connect Early Childhood Development (ECD) businesses with the skills, support and resources they need to provide 5-star early learning for every child.

Our holistic model makes running a sustainable, quality ECD centre a possibility for all.

Our Footprint, Capacity* and Reach

- 800** Resell capacity
- 360** Repair capacity
- 80** Remake capacity
- 232** Grow ECD centres



*Capacity: The number of active Resell, Repair and Remake participants we can accommodate simultaneously on our ED programmes.

Our Approach

Heart Head Hands

A holistic
model for
lasting human
development

At the core of Taking Care of Business and Grow ECD is a simple yet powerful belief: poverty eradication starts with the person, not just their circumstances. We've seen time and again that real, lasting transformation doesn't come from financial support alone. It comes from unlocking human potential emotionally, intellectually, and practically.

That's why all our programmes follow a Heart–Head–Hands approach. It is our blueprint for human development, **grounded in neuroscience, behaviour change theory, and 15 years of working with people navigating the daily reality of poverty, trauma, and marginalisation.**



Heart

Where change begins

- Coaching
- Counselling
- Life skills
- Peer support
- Personal development

When people start to believe “I can,” they take back their power, and everything else becomes possible. Heart-work remains a core part of our model throughout our programmes. Many participants say that **“TCB is a place where I came to heal”**.

Many of the people we work with carry invisible burdens, including generational trauma, chronic anxiety, low self-worth and a deep sense of “stuckness.” Before anyone can run a business, manage stock or staff, or plan finances, they must rediscover their worth. That’s why we begin every programme by focusing on the person behind the business. We create safe spaces for reflection and emotional healing. Our programme builds self-awareness, resilience, and belief that helps **participants shift from survival mode into readiness for change.**

Head

Equipping with tools for growth

- Business skills
- Financial skills
- Money mentoring
- Qualifications

Once participants are emotionally ready, we engage the mind, offering structured learning, critical thinking, and practical training opportunities. Our training is accessible, relevant, and experiential, recognising that **humans learn best through doing, reflecting, and experiencing.**

Our in-depth programmes focus on:

- Understanding how business works.
- Learning to manage money, time, and resources.
- Gaining and keeping customers.
- Developing digital literacy, problem-solving skills, and strategic confidence.

Hands

Applying knowledge to the real-world

- Technical skills
- Volunteering
- Buying and Selling

Learning only creates impact if it can be applied. That’s why we connect our participants with real, tangible opportunities to act on what they’ve learned, whether by volunteering their time, running a business, calculating their break-even or repairing a kettle. This is where theory meets practice.

The Hands stage builds momentum and independence — and turns insight into income.

Why this model works

Heart–Head–Hands is more than a philosophy. It is a tested ecosystem for change. Our model supports whole person development. It respects the complexity of human growth. And it leads to outcomes that go beyond individual employment since an optimum human becomes a role model for change in communities. At TCB and Grow ECD, we’re not just building businesses.

We’re building people from the inside out.

Aligned for Impact

Advancing the SDGs, NDP, and ESG goals through education, enterprise and supplier development.

At Taking Care of Business and Grow ECD, our impact has a ripple effect across multiple domains. We are building more resilient livelihoods, promoting inclusive education, reducing waste and inequality, and advancing the circular economy, all while equipping thousands of South Africans to rise with dignity towards financial and social independence.

Our work is deeply aligned with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP 2030) and our corporate partners' Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) priorities.

TCB's programmes have a positive ripple effect on people, families, communities and the country

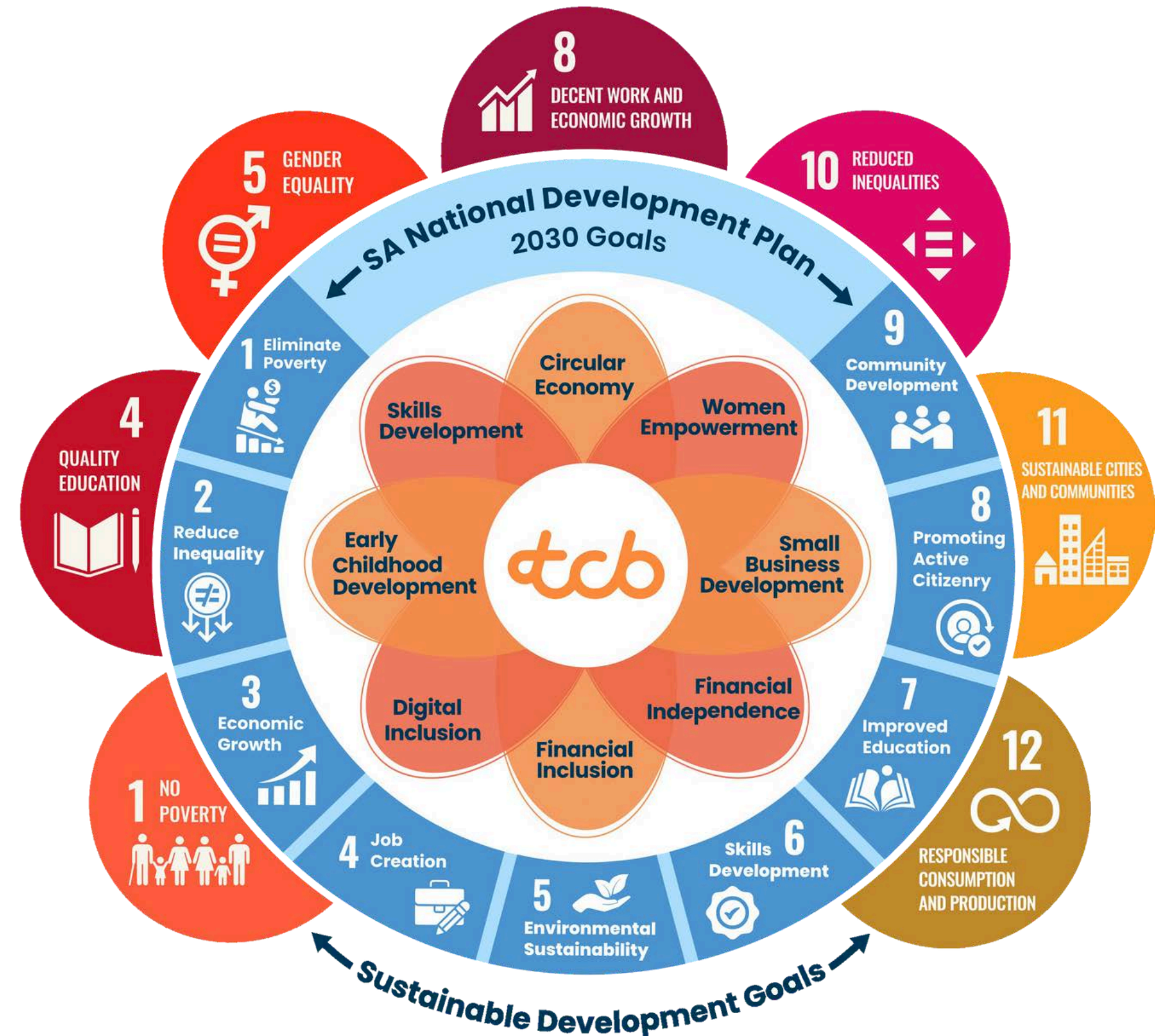
ESG: What we offer corporate partners

TCB and Grow ECD help companies move from compliance to impact across all three ESG pillars:

Environmental: Responsibly diverting retail and textile waste from landfill through reusing, repairing, repurposing and remaking.

Social: Empowering women, men, youth, and caregivers through practical, scalable business opportunities.

Governance: Offering robust reporting, audited financials, measurement tools, and verified impact aligned to donor frameworks.



Circular Economy Initiatives: Resell, Repair and Remake

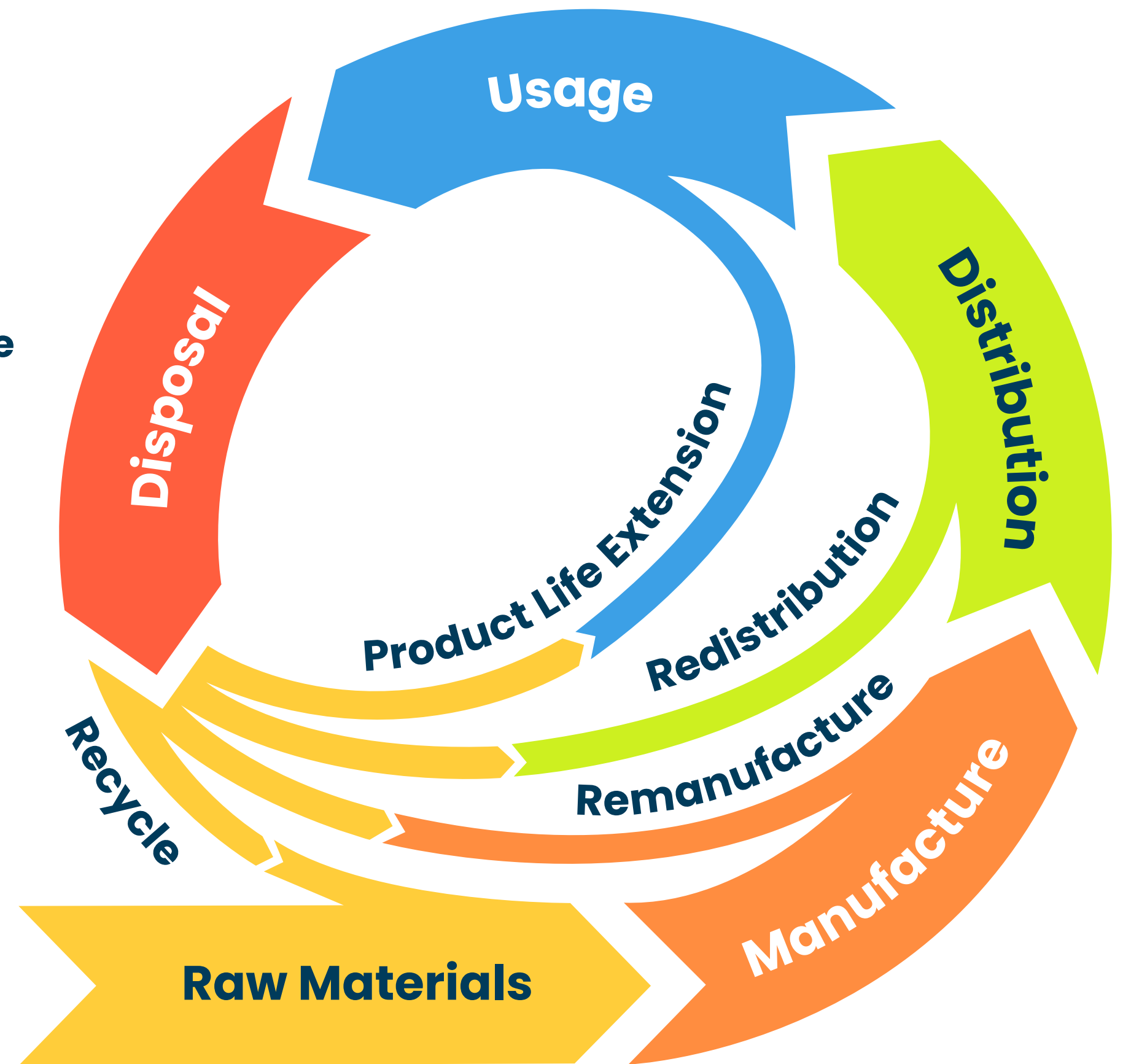
Giving products (and people) a second chance

South Africa generates millions of tons of textile, appliance, and fashion waste each year, most of which ends up in landfills or pollutes our communities. But what if waste could become opportunity? That's the power of the circular economy.

Unlike the traditional "take-make-waste" model, a circular economy keeps products, materials, and resources in use for as long as possible. It's about rethinking consumption, reducing demand for virgin materials, and designing systems that prioritise reuse, redistribution, repair, and repurposing long before we ever get to recycling or disposal.

At Taking Care of Business, our circular economy programmes (Resell, Repair, and Remake) sit firmly within this new value chain. Each one transforms excess stock into income, upskills unemployed South Africans, and reduces pressure on the environment.

► [Watch the video here](#)



The Greenlight Metric:

Empowering Change, Measuring Impact

The Greenlight Metric is central to TCB's empowerment evaluation approach. It combines participant agency with rigorous data to drive individual transformation and evaluate programme effectiveness.

This multidimensional assessment empowers households to self-diagnose their socio-economic well-being, set goals, and track progress over time. It fosters ownership of their journey while simultaneously guiding TCB's support and measuring impact.

Facilitators administer the assessment tool to participants in their homes at three key intervals: at the start, midpoint (12 months), and end (24 months) of the programme.

The assessment tool uses stoplight colours (red, yellow, green) to enable participants to rate how they feel they measure against each indicator.

Not Poor

"We are doing well."
We have dignity and independence.

Poor

"We are trying but struggling."
We need information and assistance.

Very poor

"We are stuck!"
Help me to help myself.



The Greenlight Metric assesses 50 indicators across six domains of poverty. Since adopting the assessment tool in 2013, TCB has conducted 13,258 surveys across 7,877 households. The graphic below presents the average improvements reported by participants across each domain by the end of the programme cycle:



Participants Owning the Journey to Change

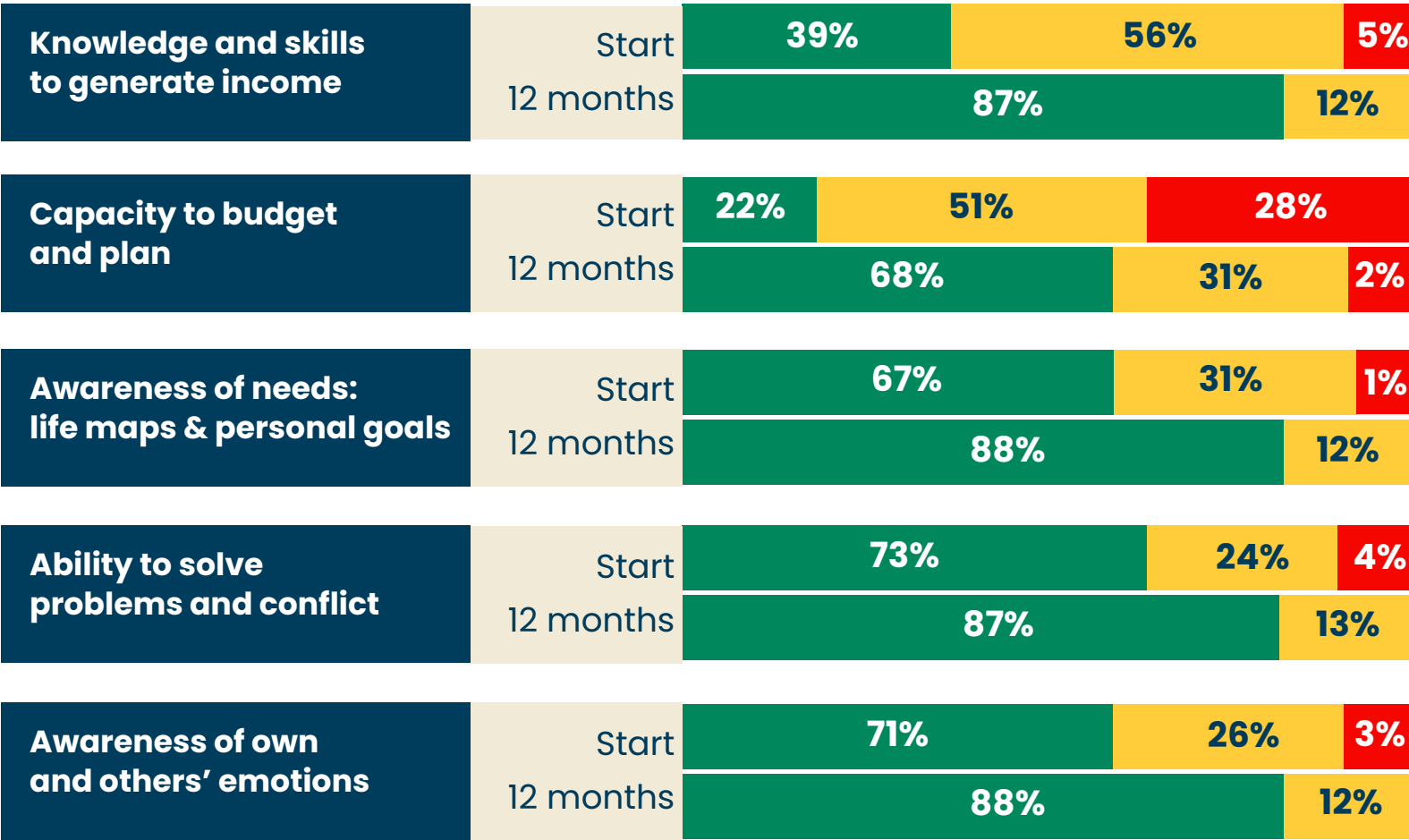


TCB’s longitudinal Greenlight data confirms that the most significant individual transformation occurs in the first 12 months of the 24-month programme. Importantly, **this growth is sustained and even deepened beyond the programme cycle**. By tracking changes across specific indicators, we have gained a clear view of how TCB’s interventions enable individual transformation, which in turn catalyses household-level change.

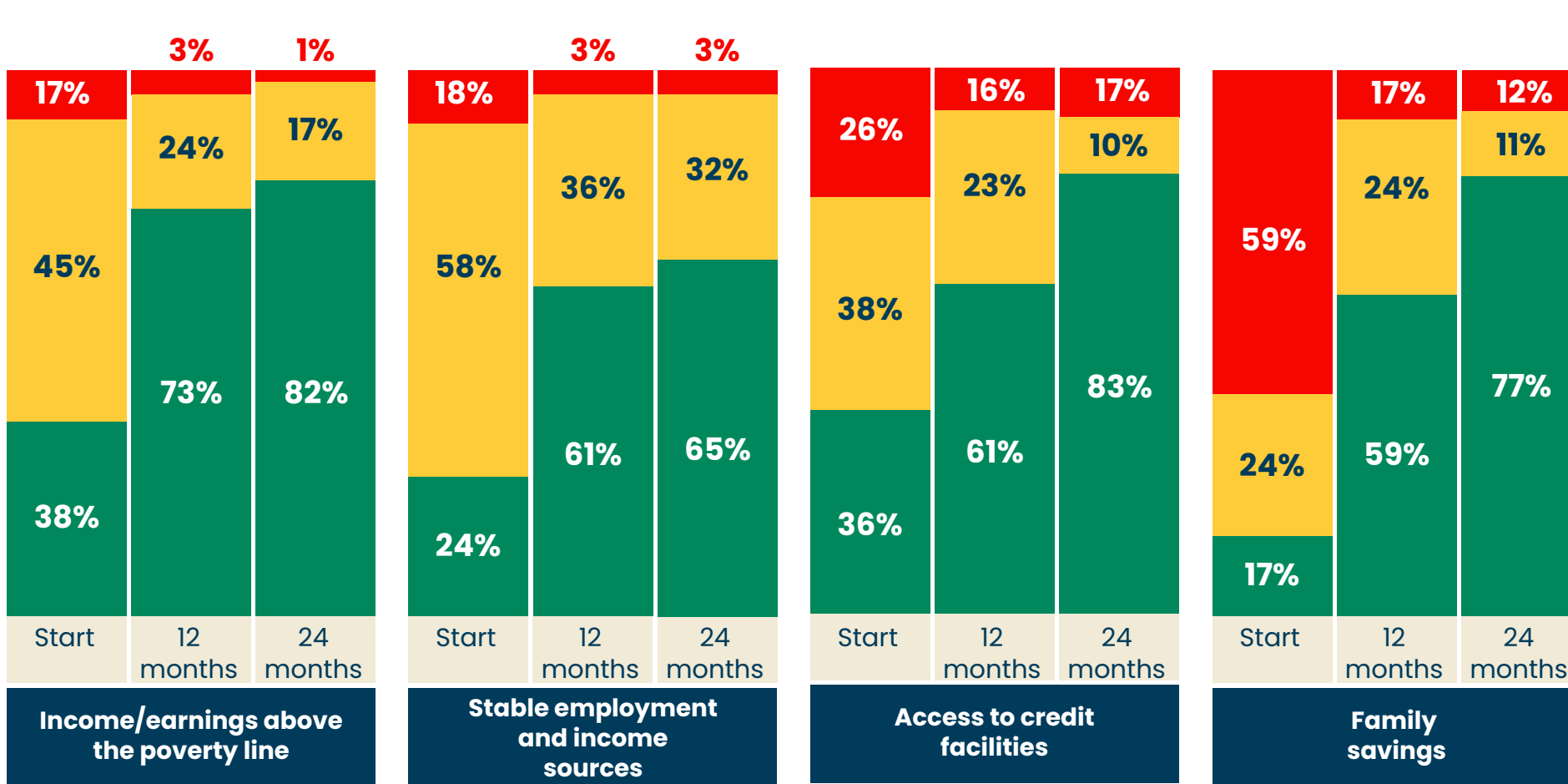
The graphs below illustrate the key indicators that reflect the impact of TCB’s holistic heart–head–hands approach (combining emotional development, cognitive tools, and practical skills) on individual transformation.

These individual shifts are the foundation for broader change. As participants build knowledge, agency, and resilience, we begin to see sustained improvements in the income and employment domain that ultimately drive household-level change

Skills and emotional development indicators:



Financial development indicators:



From Individual Growth to Household Change



TCB’s ultimate goal is to empower South African families to break the cycle of poverty. We believe that while individual progress is a key driver, meaningful impact is only achieved when it translates into improved living standards across the entire household.

The Greenlight data at the 24-month point confirms that individual gains in agency, financial stability, and emotional well-being are linked to measurable improvements in household conditions. These shifts reflect an overall improvement in the quality of life within the home.



TCB’s programmes empower the people raising the next generation

By the end of the programme, the participants are making intentional decisions to secure their children’s education as part of a broader strategy for sustained household change.

100%

- of the participants' children are enrolled in school until Grade 12.
- of the participants' children have access to quality education.
- of the participants' children have school transportation, supplies and uniforms.

At the final 24-month Greenlight Assessment, participants share a narrative reflection of their TCB journey. Sibongile's story illustrates how TCB's holistic approach combines to create lasting impact beyond the programme cycle.

During her time at TCB, Sibongile (pseudonym) experienced significant personal growth and development. Initially, she recognised that she was emotionally attached to others more than to herself, which had become unhealthy. **She described herself as shy and emotionally vulnerable**, often breaking down easily. Through the support and training at TCB, Sibongile gained vital self-awareness and a deeper understanding of herself. She now expresses herself more confidently, practices self-introspection, and understands the importance of setting emotional boundaries. A key realisation for her was that people come and go in life, and her value is not dependent on their presence or opinions.

Sibongile also gained essential business knowledge through the TCB program. She learned that **customers are at the core of any successful business**, and while they are different, they must all be treated with equal respect and professionalism. She acquired strategic business skills, including how to set both long-term and short-term goals, manage finances effectively, and conduct SWOT analyses. She also developed a clear understanding of how to identify competitors and strategies to outsmart them.

Before joining TCB, Sibongile felt her life was stagnant. She was staying at home and providing for her younger sister, whom she describes as ungrateful. This created emotional strain, but **through TCB's counselling sessions, Sibongile began to understand her self-worth and established healthier boundaries**. Additionally, she often found herself snapping at children due to stress, but thanks to the parenting skills training she received, she now manages those situations more calmly and positively.

Sibongile faced several challenges during her TCB journey. One of the main challenges was identifying a suitable target market for her business. However, through persistence and continually seeking out new customers, she overcame this hurdle. **Family issues also posed emotional stress, particularly concerning her sister's behaviour, but with ongoing counselling, Sibongile was able to stay focused and committed to completing her TCB journey.**

Looking ahead, **Sibongile plans to open a clothing store in Port Shepstone, where she has identified a gap in the market** due to the limited number of clothing shops. In addition, she is committed to continuing her studies and redoing her driver's license course before it expires—both of which will contribute to her independence and long-term success.

Sibongile's transformation at TCB is a testament to the power of support, education, and resilience. She leaves the program more empowered, focused, and ready to build a sustainable future.

Our Year At A Glance

- TCB celebrates its 15th year of operations – igniting impact, dignity and opportunity!
- We purchased a building in Johannesburg, securing a permanent home for our expanding operations in Gauteng.
- Our new TCB Participant Relationship Management system launched, streamlining recruitment, programme tracking, and responsiveness across all programmes.
- Our new Money Matters mentoring model launched across TCB, simplifying financial learning and record-keeping for micro-entrepreneurs.
- Remake launched 14 technical training modules to upskill sewists.
- TFG initiated a sleeping bag collaboration (made from marketing banners and manufacturing offcuts) with our Remake programme that will see over 1,000 sleeping bags made and distributed during the upcoming year to night shelters.
- Reskill expanded its client base substantially and trained 1,748 external participants.
- The Grow ECD curriculum received a 93% pedagogy quality score from Education Alliance Finland.
- Grow joined the DBE Intersectoral Forum and became an official partner for the Bana Pele Mass Registration Drive.
- We launched our new, more affordable Grow ECD Classroom Kit, improving accessibility for lower-income ECD centres.
- Grow ECD has made its online curriculum free to all ECD centres in South Africa.



Resell, Repair and Remake Results

Circular Economy Enterprise Development

1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

688

Total ED participants recruited

1,020

Total participants active in our ED programmes

2,08m

Items received

172

Tons of e-waste received

19

Supply partners

1,297

Graduates and ambassadors still accessing stock

R49,9m

Estimated profits made by participants and graduates

Grow ECD Results

Early Childhood Development
1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

82,057

Children enrolled
on our mobile app

3,572

ECD centres actively
using our app

252

ECD centres part of the
Small Business network

449

Owners completed our
ECD Business Accelerator

9,302

Online training modules
completed

1,552

Teachers and principals
trained in person

11,332

Children benefitting from
our daily programme

R2,72m

Investments unlocked for
ECD centres

Resell

Enterprise development through fashion waste

Now in its 15th year, Resell remains the engine room of TCB. It is an enterprise development programme built on the power of second chances. **This year, more than 799 women across five branches were actively supported on their two-year Enterprise Development journey.** An additional 1,034 graduates and ambassadors continue to access product, evidence of the programme's long-lasting impact and the bond of the TCB sisterhood.

Each woman is building a viable business by reselling donated retail stock, such as surplus fashion, homeware, and accessories that would otherwise end up in a landfill. This is where the circular economy meets economic dignity. With an average of 4.1 dependents per participant, the ripple effect of Resell extends into thousands of homes every month — putting food on the table, covering school fees, and creating financial breathing room.

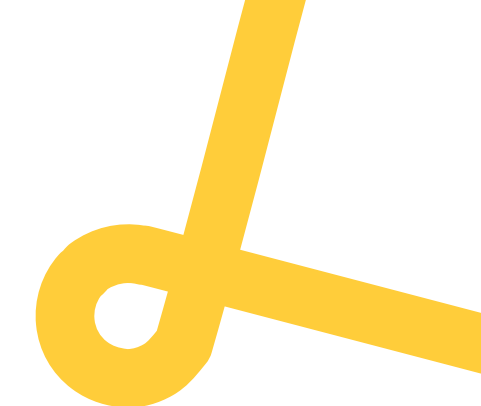


The power of trading

Our participants earned an estimated R22.7 million in profit this year through their micro-enterprises, while our graduate community generated an additional R12 million in ongoing income.

At an average monthly profit of R3,854, Resell continues to offer a reliable income stream that's flexible, dignified, and compatible with the complex realities of informal traders, especially mothers. Many of the women on our programme run multiple businesses, including catering, beauty, transport, airtime sales, affiliate marketing, daycares and other services to make ends meet. Our participants report that the skills they learn at TCB translate into greater success for these side hustles and often have positive flow-over effects on their partner or family member's entrepreneurial ventures, too. Learning to run a business in a safe supportive environment has a ripple effect and unlocks new opportunities that previously felt unreachable.

Navigating the challenges



The past year was not without headwinds. Like many others in the sector, **we saw a sharp decline in stock volumes from key retail partners**, with an overall drop of 22.9% in clothing and homeware donations compared to the previous year. Stock from premium brands such was notably reduced — a significant shift, given that these products typically perform best in township informal markets.

To adapt, our teams:

- Improved branch stock-sharing protocols to meet local demand,
- Piloted new pricing strategies across regions to move slower lines,
- And leveraged the strength of our graduate network to extend the stock life cycle across the ecosystem.

While the closure of our Paarl branch was a difficult decision, we had to move to a phase of consolidation in the Western Cape to reduce costs and respond to persistent reduced stock volumes. We're proud that three former Paarl staff members have since launched their own trading businesses, and that many graduates continue to shop through the Cape Town hub where we welcome them with open arms.

Looking ahead

Resell is our flagship programme and plays a crucial role in our participants' lives. Our focus areas for the year ahead include:

- **Diversifying our retail stock pipeline**, with a focus on reliable, high-volume partnerships
- **Revitalising our Year 1 curriculum** to better serve new traders entering a changing market
- **Using our new PRM to gather insights** to better support participants' success and improve retention.
- **Expanding our graduate offering** with business growth support, mentoring, and financial tools



Impact Story

Ntokozo Alicia Dlomo

DURBAN

Resell Programme



Before joining TCB, Ntokozo's life was marked by deep trauma, loss, and economic hardship. Raised in a large family with an abusive stepfather and a distant mother, she endured emotional and financial struggles, including the devastating loss of three children. Despite everything, her faith kept her going. In 2020, she joined the Resell Programme, not just in search of income, but for healing.

“Walking into that space, I felt an instant connection. I was nervous, unsure of what to expect, but the welcoming atmosphere made me feel at home. **TCB was more than just selling clothes; it was a place where I could heal, where I could grow.**”

Through workshops and counselling, Ntokozo confronted her past, learned to forgive herself, and found peace. The sisterhood helped her grow personally and professionally.

With new skills in budgeting, sales, and stock management, she launched a thriving clothing business in Pine Town, selling at a table and going door-to-door to build her customer base. She expanded into perfumes and bags, constantly restocking to keep her offerings fresh and exciting. She began to save and plan for the future, and her efforts paid off. She moved into a better home, created a nurturing environment for her children, and started investing in her dreams, which included building her mother a new home.

“ TCB gave me more than a business, it gave me a new life. ”

► [Read the full story here](#)

Repair

Reclaiming value, restoring dignity

The Repair programme is a story of second chances for appliances, for the environment, and for the people behind the tools.

In 2025, our Repair teams supported 162 participants across Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Durban, all engaged in a two-year journey to build income-generating appliance repair businesses. This year, we welcomed 121 new participants, and 160 graduates and ambassadors continued to benefit from access to stock and support opportunities.

Participants earned an average profit of R8,427 per month, demonstrating the strong demand for affordable, repaired appliances in underserved communities. At that income level, significantly above South Africa's minimum wage, Repair offers a real, viable alternative to formal employment. All you need is the right tools and access to spare parts.

Environmental and economic impact

Through partnerships with five supply partners, we received:

- **150,633 donated items** (including small appliances, power tools, cell phones, and white goods)
- **172.8 tonnes of e-waste** diverted from landfill

The Repair programme directly contributes to the circular economy, allowing our supply partners to meet environmental goals and responsibly manage their waste while creating job opportunities for participants, the majority of whom are unemployed fathers.



Partnerships that power transformation

In 2025, we took several strategic steps forward: eWASA equipped all TCB hubs with high-quality tools and branded e-waste bins, boosting repair capacity and reinforcing our commitment to environmental sustainability.

UJ PEETS funded an additional technical trainer in Johannesburg, allowing us to increase intake and enhance training quality.

We explored new opportunities with Home of Living Brands to streamline collections and repairs from retail stores. As a pilot, HOLB employed a TCB Repair graduate at their Germiston distribution centre to handle in-warranty repairs, a promising step toward unlocking broader repair contracts for our technicians.

While public donations remain essential in some areas, Midrand's large stock volume enabled us to conduct four intakes in 2025, a scalable blueprint for other regions.

Looking ahead

Although East London's pilot Repair programme closed this year due to inconsistent supply, it left a strong legacy of impact and a clear lesson on the importance of stock stability to programme viability.

Looking ahead, we aim to:

- **Strengthen relationships** with Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs) to deepen our environmental impact and unlock self-funding opportunities
- **Expand our mentor support tools**, especially around money management and sales strategies.
- **Grow our base of non-traditional supply partners** (e.g. wholesalers, manufacturers, distributors.)
- **Pilot a referral-based micro-franchise model** for high-performing graduates.

With 15% of our participants now being women, we're also excited by the growing interest in appliance repair as a gender-inclusive skillset. Repair is making technical skills more accessible, respected, and rewarding no matter your background.

Impact Story

Antonio Mhlongo

IVORY PARK
Repair Programme



Antonio grew up in a family of ten in Ivory Park, where hardship was a daily reality. With their mother as the sole breadwinner, meals were uncertain, and he and his siblings began selling sweets at school just to get by, despite teachers often confiscating their stock. Business has always been part of Antonio's life.

After matric, he pursued short courses and even started a car wash with dreams of expanding into a buy-and-braai, but poor management caused him to lose everything.

When he joined the TCB Repair Programme in 2023, he initially thought it would be a quick opportunity to buy cheap items and resell them. But he soon discovered the deeper value: structured training, mentorship, and real business skills. **At TCB, he learned to repair appliances, manage stock, and run a business professionally. The experience also helped him grow as a parent and a person.**

Today, Antonio runs his business online, delivers directly to customers, and focuses on building stock ahead of busy sales periods. He's learned to manage his money better, stick to cash sales, and aim to sell at least one item a day. While he still faces challenges like rising prices and competitors, he sees how far he's come.



Being self-employed is not a joke, it can be tough, but TCB has taught me how to do it right.



► [Read the full story here](#)

Remake

Building resilience, one stitch at a time

The Remake programme continues to grow into a vibrant space for circular innovation, skills development, and creative micro-enterprise. With a focus on seamstresses and sewists, Remake transforms textile waste into new garments, products and profit for our Remake participants.

In 2025, Remake supported:

- 59 active participants in our 12-month Remake journey.
- 47 new recruits, most of whom are mothers and caregivers.
- 85 graduates and ambassadors, who continue to access fabric and production orders.

Based in Cape Town, the programme operates at a capacity of 80 participants and remains 95% female-led, reinforcing Remake's role as an economic empowerment engine for women.

Turning textile waste into micro-business

Measuring the Remake programme's direct financial impact for participants is not a straight line. In our other programmes, we can rely on estimated profit margins per item, as participants sell the final products. In Remake, however, participants purchase fabric, trims, offcuts, and cut samples as raw material at significantly reduced rates from TCB. Then, they add significant value to the raw material and transform it into clothing, toys, accessories, dog beds and more. Our conservative estimates are that participants and graduates earned an estimated R937,000 in profits this year through TCB stock alone.

The 12-month programme includes 14 in-depth technical modules to help seamstresses take their sewing skills to the next level. They learn how to operate industrial sewing machines and equipment, employing advanced techniques to produce consistent, high-quality garments. This training requires an investment of time and effort that pays dividends in the long run.

We gratefully received **113,802 donated fabric items and haberdashery from 4 key supply partners**, including offcuts, cut samples, end-of-season stock and discontinued uniforms. While supply consistency remains a challenge, our participants have become masters of creativity, finding new ways to repurpose every scrap into useful products.





2025 programme highlights



- We rolled out a **14-module technical training curriculum**, building on foundational sewing skills, including education in sewing, costing, and production management.
- Our **training production line** enabled participants to earn while they learn, fulfilling small orders for corporate partners like TFG and Woolworths.
- Through a powerful new **collaboration with TFG**, Remake will produce over 1,000 sleeping bags in 2025 for local shelters. The bags are made from waste material sourced from stores and TFG's manufacturing facilities.
- **Woolworths invited customers to donate** their second-hand denim items to Remake at selected stores, resulting in over 1,000 items being collected. The Remake team have been using these in creative ways to make new products, from dog beds to bespoke dresses for events!
- **Remake graduates produced soft toys** for TFG's toy drive, resulting in repeat orders and future income streams.



Looking ahead

In the coming year, our goals are to:

- **Launch the next phase of our co-designed circular curriculum**, with an emphasis on market readiness and quality assurance.
- **Diversify our fabric supply base through new partnerships** with retailers and manufacturers.
- **Deepen our mentor support and graduate tracking** and engagement, helping more graduates formalise their businesses.
- **Explore expanding Remake to a second branch** based on current learnings and demand.

Impact Story

Neliswa Poni
CAPE TOWN
Remake Programme



After losing her job in 2020, Neliswa faced a tough season of financial strain and emotional difficulty. Her husband's income couldn't cover their needs, and her attempt to sell wigs didn't take off. Seeking a new direction, she took a short sewing course, which sparked a love for making garments but left her unsure how to turn that passion into a business. Then, in 2023, she saw a Facebook post about the TCB Remake Programme – and applied, hoping to build both her skills and confidence.

Over the year-long programme, Neliswa experienced a transformation that went far beyond sewing. With the support of mentors she learned how to manage finances, face challenges, and rebuild her self-worth. "They taught me how to love myself, accept what I can't change, and forgive. Now I have peace."

She graduated in July 2024 with a registered business: 7STITCHES (Pty) Ltd, a name inspired by her personal journey and the idea of completion and perfection.

She now works from home, creating bespoke traditional wear, ready-to-wear garments, and outfits for special occasions like weddings and matric balls. While she still works solo, Neliswa dreams of growing into a space with equipment, staff, and an online presence.



TCB has the best coaches, and the experience has been life changing.



► [Read the full story here](#)

Reskill

Sharing TCB's knowledge and skills with others to multiply impact

TCB has spent over a decade refining training modules that work: practical, emotionally intelligent, engaging and locally relevant. With the launch of our Reskill division in 2023, we've expanded our reach by offering this training to other organisations, companies, micro-entrepreneurs, and community members.

We offer our life-changing training workshops in personal mastery, finance, business, computer and life skills to corporate and non-profit organisations nationwide.

In 2025, Reskill grew significantly. **We trained 1,748 people** (a 44% growth) from over 25 organisations across the country. We also expanded our pool of quality, vetted trainers, enabling us to respond to the growing demand for our training services while maintaining high-quality delivery.



25

Organisations benefited from our in-person training

1,721

Total number of people trained

947

People trained in Me and My Money: Financial Freedom

435

People trained in Computer Skills

157

People trained in Entrepreneurship (Financial, Business and Life Skills)

182

People trained in the A2B Methodology

Reskill is filling a gap

Many South African organisations face the same challenge: they need to develop people (staff, beneficiaries, interns, volunteers) but don't have the tools to do it effectively.

Also, people development requires more than passing along knowledge and facts – it requires a heart-heads-hands approach to ensure that training sticks and translates to improved resilience. **That's where Reskill comes in.**

What makes Reskill unique:

- **A whole-person approach** to training and development that integrates emotional intelligence with business and financial skills.
- **Short, high-impact workshops** that are easy for organisations to commit to and implement in high-pressure environments.
- **Content that's been tested, refined and proven** through 15 years of TCB's programme delivery.
- **Blended delivery models** that include in-person and online engagement, making it adaptable to every organisation's needs.
- **Peace of mind for clients**, knowing that their investment supports a mission-aligned impact organisation such as TCB's financial sustainability while also benefitting their goals.



Financial Skills

- Me and My Money
- Calculator Skills
- Business Calculations
- Recording Income
- Recording Expenses
- Budget versus Actual
- Managing Stock
- Selling on Cash vs. Credit
- Costing and Pricing of Products



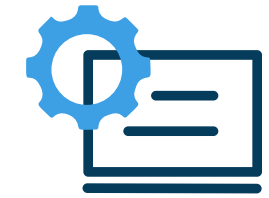
Business Skills

- Self-employed, An Entrepreneur, Who Me?
- Turning Dreams Into Reality Through Saving
- Selling, a Skill That Can Be Learnt
- SWOT Analysis
- Business Ethics
- Marketing



Life Skills

- I Can Be Organised
- Ignite 1: Awakening My Potential.
- Ignite 2: Let's Start With the End Result in Mind.
- Ignite 3: Mindset Matters.
- Parenting Skills 1
- Parenting Skills 2
- Parenting Skills 3
- Stress and Trauma
- Wellness and Nutrition



Computer Skills

- 17 modules
- Microsoft Office
- Digital Marketing (Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp)
- Competency Assessment



Me and My Money – My Journey to Financial Freedom

Now our most popular course, this one-day workshop continues to spark deep personal transformation. It offers a safe space for participants to explore their financial habits, learn essential skills like debt management and saving, and create a roadmap to financial independence. This year we offered the course with the support of a sign language interpreter at I Love Coffee. This organisation supports individuals who have hearing difficulties or deafness.

"I learnt that I have the power to choose how I use my money. That changed everything."
ECD CENTRE OWNER

"Our staff are now actively applying the lessons in both their personal and organisational finances."
MAHARISHI INSTITUTE



Computer and Digital Skills Training

Our 17-session course equips youth, community workers and entry-level staff with essential digital literacy skills ranging from typing and email basics to internet safety and Microsoft Office. This year, we expanded access through NGO partnerships in rural and peri-urban areas.

Entrepreneurship, Business, and Life Skills

This modular training combines business ethics, pricing, marketing, emotional resilience, and problem-solving, ideal for informal traders, unemployed youth, and entry-level entrepreneurs.

What's next for Reskill?

Reskill is no longer a pilot programme. It is a proven, high impact programme that is ready to grow. In 2025/26, we aim to deepen our reach and multiply our impact through strategic partnerships, expanded delivery, and new course innovation. Our key priorities include:

- **Expanding our national facilitator network** to increase training delivery capacity.
- **Developing new courses** rooted in behavioural change and mindset methodologies.
- **Rolling out Me and My Money to over 1,750 students** at the Maharishi Institute and 250 Job Boost students through TTIBSA.
- **Empowering partner organisations** to deliver Reskill's entrepreneurial training to their own programme participants.
- **Providing consulting and mentoring support** for training rollout and participant development.
- **Facilitating life-changing skills training**, including stress, trauma resilience, and financial literacy workshops, in collaboration with corporate clients.
- **Launching a Job Readiness programme** for youth, leveraging our regional computer centres for digital and employability skills.

"The programme taught me not just about business, but about myself. I now understand what I want, how to plan, and how to build something real."

GRADE 11 PARTICIPANT, I SEE YOU NGO

"The training was very well received by the participants. They had many 'aha' moments and learned new skills to improve their lives. During the second session, we could already see the impact created in the first. The content is practical, easy to understand, and transformative."

THE HOPE FACTORY TEAM



Redistribute

Extending dignity through generosity

Not every item donated to TCB is suitable for resale or micro-enterprise but that doesn't mean it can't change a life.

Through our Redistribute initiative, we ensure that every usable product reaches someone who needs it. This year, we proudly supported 71 non-profit organisations that serve vulnerable children, the elderly, displaced people, and families in crisis. These organisations are the beating heart of their communities, and TCB is honoured to stand alongside them by meeting urgent material needs. In total, we redistributed:

- **172,486 donated items**, from warm clothing and homeware to baby goods and hygiene products.
- **R5.08 million** in estimated value delivered.

By giving these items a second life, we help other non-profits focus on their core missions, reduce operating costs, and restore dignity to the people they serve. Many of these donations are shared during moments of deep distress, such as after fires or floods, displacement, or during periods of hardship.

Redistribute is a simple yet powerful expression of TCB's purpose: to care for people and planet, by ensuring that no good thing goes to waste and that dignity is never out of reach.

Impact Stories

Ignisive NPC

CAMPS BAY, WESTERN CAPE

Ignisive NPC in Camps Bay, Western Cape, works to reintegrate those living on the street through their extensive social support and training.

They also work at source with local schools, SAPS and the Camps Bay Improvement District.



"It's not an easy path to social reintegration for those facing rough sleep conditions as they still tread the demons of trauma and the limitations of their past," says Theresa Massaglia, founder and CEO of Ignisive.

TCB donated shoes and clothing to support their work and the tireless Stewards who are upskilled through the Ignisive programme.

Siyabulela Community Services

MDANTSANE, EASTERN CAPE



Siyabulela Community Services in Mdantsane, Eastern Cape, has been receiving donations of clothing from TCB East London for 6 years.

They operate various community care programmes, including a soup kitchen, food parcels and assistance for the elderly. This year, **donations of winter clothing helped to provide comfort and warmth for 130 adults and 110 children in need.**

Family Care Durban

KWAZULU-NATAL

Family Care Durban, in Kwazulu-Natal, work tirelessly to be "the difference" to assist in raising the standard of living in disadvantaged communities. This includes distributing food, books, clothing and hosting informative, training seminars in townships and villages. **TCB regularly donates clothing and school uniforms to support their work.**



Community Shop

BEAUFORT WEST

Over the past year the Community Shop at Beaufort West NGK Gamka-Oos has made a profound impact on local lives by providing **affordable clothing, supporting food security, and offering practical assistance to vulnerable community members.** Through strategic use of clothing donations received from TCB, volunteer effort, and community partnerships, the shop has not only sustained operations but expanded its outreach. Items are sold at low prices to maintain dignity and access for all, regardless of economic status. Funding generated through the sales supports food parcel donations, school supplies and fees, and other projects. Clothing is also donated to an old-age home and other initiatives, ensuring every item has a use.



GROW ECD



Report
2024/2025

The Grow ECD Approach

A PARADIGM SHIFT IN EARLY LEARNING

Grow ECD started in 2014 as part of the Taking Care of Business group.

We have set out to create a holistic model that makes running a sustainable 5-star Early Childhood Development (ECD) centre possible for all. We do that by equipping and connecting ECD businesses with the technology, skills, support and resources they need to provide quality early learning, at scale, sustainably.

We are shifting the narrative in the ECD sector by altering the mindset of ECD centre owners from charity-focused to that of social entrepreneurs.

This increases self-esteem and agency among centre owners. As a result, they become determined to offer a quality service, use business principles to run a more professional centre, comply with legislation, and begin to understand that financial sustainability is a crucial part of their potential success.

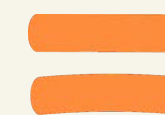
OUR UNIQUE APPROACH TO EARLY LEARNING INCORPORATES SMALL BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

This formula becomes a tangible mantra from which we can engage ECD centre owners on the components of a 5-star ECD centre.

Heart for children



Head for business



Sustainable ECD business

- Professional, competent teachers
- Play-based curriculum and structured daily programme
- Relevant educational resources
- Safe, conducive learning environment
- Learner development assessment
- Engaged parents
- Compliance with ECD programme registration requirements

- Management and leadership skills
- Money management skills
- Compliance with Partial Care registration requirements
- Compliance with applicable laws
- Efficient administration and reporting
- Investing in the business for growth and quality

- Businesses are financially viable
- Teachers are paid a living wage
- Centres are registered
- Qualifying centres can apply for a government subsidy
- Cashflow is well managed
- Parents value and pay for the service
- 5-star quality education for every child

Services we offer ECD Centres



Free Mobile App

Tools, resources and online training to run a professional preschool, save time on admin and engage parents.

- Android app for owners, teachers and parents.
- Admin and reporting tools.
- Hundreds of free downloads.
- Data-free online learning.
- App Helpdesk.



Free Online Curriculum

Digital NCF-aligned, play-based curriculum for 0-2 and 2-5 year olds.

- Easy-to-use daily teacher's guide with step-by-step instructions.
- Includes videos, voice notes, photos, songs and rhymes.
- Data-free.
- Only available through the Grow mobile app.



ECD Business Accelerator Training

6-part in-person course. Learn how to run your preschool like a business and provide quality education.

- Leadership
- Me and My Money
- Financial Sustainability
- Quality Education
- Compliance and Registration

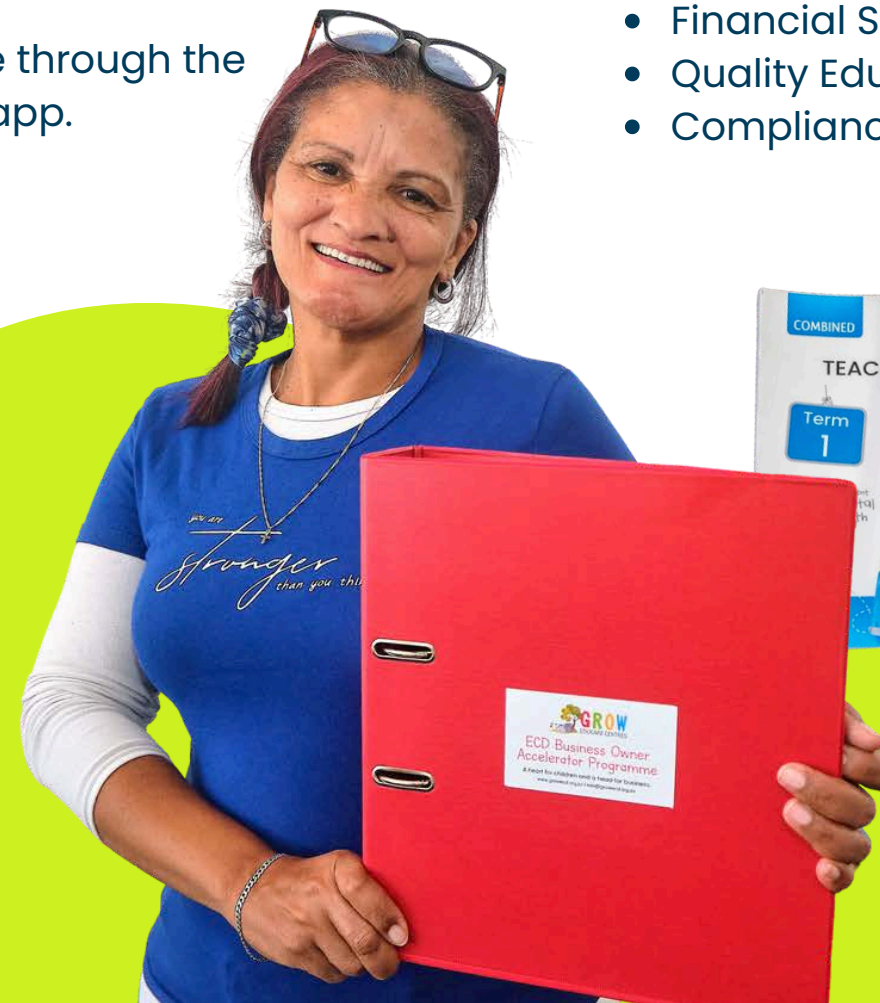


ECD Small Business Programme

3-year support programme to improve your business sustainability and education quality. Includes:

- **Education Support**
 - Curriculum
 - Classroom kit
 - Teacher training
 - Education mentoring
 - Baby programme (optional extra)

- **Business Support**
 - Business training
 - Business mentoring
 - Registration guidance
 - Low-cost ECD finance



GROW ECD

2024/25 Key Stats

Technology Platform

5,924 Active App Users (Centre Owners, Teachers and Parents)

3,572 ECD Centres Actively Using Our App

82,057 Learners Enrolled on The App

2,108 People Accessed Online Training

1,128 Teachers Used Our Online Curriculum

54,746 Resources Downloaded

ECD Small Business Accelerator

449 Centre Owners Completed Our ECD Accelerator

4 Provinces Hosted Accelerator Training

Sector Collaboration

25 Organisations collaborating with Grow ECD

Small Business Programme

232 ECD Centres in The Grow ECD Programme Network (includes 185 Active And 47 Graduates)

11,332 Children at Grow Programme Centres

1,552 Owners and Teachers Trained In Person

84% Of 4-5-year-old learners met expected developmental milestones.

70% ELOM Results

53 Loans Issued

R1,8m In Micro-finance Loans Provided

R392k In Grant Funding Provided

Introduction

QUALITY EARLY LEARNING CAN UNLOCK OUR NATION'S POTENTIAL

Access to quality early learning is one of the most powerful levers for breaking the cycle of poverty. In South Africa, too many children still enter Grade R developmentally unprepared, and too many early learning centres still operate without the resources and skills to address the issue. In a country where inequality is high and meaningful work is scarce, especially for women, we need to **help South Africans operate quality early learning centres as a viable business opportunity** so that we can address under-employment while also providing quality education for our youngest citizens.

Grow ECD has been operating for over a decade, and our vision is to see 5-star early learning happening in every neighbourhood. We do this by equipping and connecting preschool owners and teachers with the skills, tools, and resources they need to provide quality education and run successful, sustainable preschools.

In 2025, Grow ECD continued to scale its operations and impact, while remaining fully committed to excellence, service delivery, and sustainable outcomes for its ECD centres, learners, and our partners. We grew our Small Business network by 69 new ECD centres (our centres now support over 11,300 children every day). Our free mobile apps have become the most popular ECD apps in South Africa with over 5,900 active users. Our diverse collaborations with partner organisations across the country have unlocked opportunities and resources for thousands of learners and are helping to strengthen the ECD sector through data-driven decision-making. Grow ECD has also partnered with the Government to support the Bana Pele registration drive and secured accreditation from DBE for our curriculum.

We believe that investing in early education is not just a moral imperative, it's a strategic one. The earlier we invest in human potential, the bigger the return.

GIRAFFE: OUR MOBILE TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM

The Giraffe, Meerkat and Lion Apps continue to be Grow's most scalable and inclusive tool, providing ECD centre owners, teachers and parents with free access to online training, interactive curriculum content, classroom, business and financial management tools, assessment templates, downloadable resources and more.



South Africa's most popular ECD app:

- ✓ Over 5,900 active users across all provinces.
- ✓ Top-used features: lesson planning tools (curriculum), daily attendance tracking, learner assessments, and downloadable resources.
- ✓ Great content: 15 online training modules and over 450 downloadable resources.
- ✓ Play-based curriculum: Free, media-rich curriculum for 0-5-year-olds to guide teachers with structured, theme based lesson plans.
- ✓ High data usage sections such as downloadable resources, online curriculum and online training is data free across all major mobile networks, making the app accessible and affordable for all South Africans.

This year, we were proud to join the Injini EdTech Fellowship, which supported our tech development, mentorship, and research. With the growing demand for the Giraffe app, we've completed scoping for Giraffe 2.0, the next-generation version being developed in collaboration with The Reach Trust, set to launch in 2026.

FREE DIGITAL CURRICULUM

Grow ECD's play-based curriculum and online teacher training modules continue to be a highly valued component of our support model. It's popularity and effectiveness led us to move from providing the curriculum as a paid-for subscription service to a free resource for all ECD centres using our app in February 2025. This is our way of expanding access to high quality, locally relevant resources at scale, and is our gift to the ECD sector. Since then, **the 0-2-year-old and the 2-5-year-old curriculum has been used by 1,128 teachers to plan and prepare their daily classroom activities.**

This year the Grow ECD curriculum received 2 accreditations:

1. A 93% pedagogical score from Education Alliance Finland
2. Curriculum approval and registration with the Department of Basic Education, Western Cape

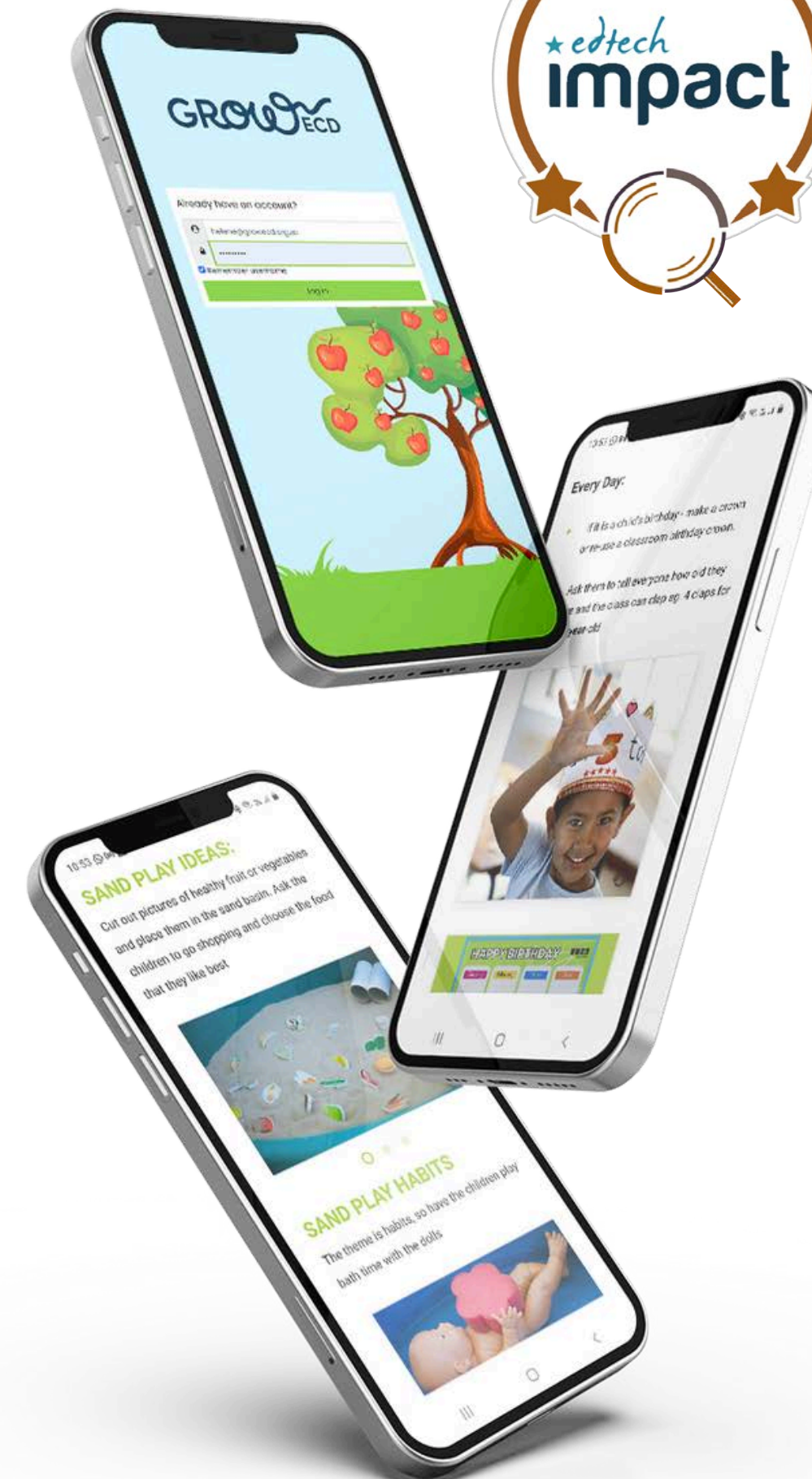
Many teachers in low-tech settings still face barriers to digital access, requiring consistent access to data, smart devices and more technical training and support. We continue to see a gap in content confidence among under-qualified teachers, especially those new to play-based methodologies. In response, Grow has expanded its use of voice notes, visuals, video content and interactive workshops combined with our in-person mentoring strategies to support teachers of every level. We have also developed practical "how-to" resources to guide centres that have resource constraints. These guides show teachers how to make educational equipment alternatives from everyday and upcycled items.

Before Grow, our school had some resources and a curriculum, but the teachers were not using them correctly. To cut down on the teachers' workload, we really needed a tried and tested curriculum.

Grow ECD was able to offer us a play-based curriculum with all lessons explained online. Now, my teachers do not stress looking for activities to do with the kids. They have become super confident and handle their lessons with enthusiasm.

Shireen Jacobs

HAPPY HEARTS PRE-SCHOOL



ECD ACCELERATOR

Our ECD Business Accelerator has been a remarkable success, meeting the needs of ECD owners while addressing critical gaps in the sector. It's more than just a course; it's a journey that has empowered ECD centre owners who are passionate about children to develop their business skills and mindset.

This year, 449 centre owners attended and completed the accelerator, bringing the total number of ECD centre owners who have benefited since the launch in 2023 to 1,169.

The Grow ECD Accelerator is also an effective gateway into the Grow ECD ecosystem, offering centre owners a six-week introduction to the business, leadership, and compliance fundamentals needed to run a successful preschool, as well as the practical requirements for providing quality education. During the accelerator training course, we help centre owners realise that they are indeed social entrepreneurs and unlock the principles behind having a heart for children and a head for business.





SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMME

Building sustainable ECD centres, one step at a time

In 2025, the SBP (Small Business Programme) welcomed 69 new centres, and we now support 232 centres, resulting in over 11,300 children benefitting each day. We also celebrated the graduation of several centres, who will remain part of the Grow ECD network and our community of practice.

The Grow SBP is more than a training intervention, it's a three-year transformation journey that helps preschool owners become confident social entrepreneurs who understand what it takes to offer 5-star early learning. In a sector where most centres struggle with compliance, funding, and management systems, the SBP provides the building blocks for long-term sustainability.

Each participating SBP centre receives a powerful bundle of support, combining:

- **Access to low-cost loans** for infrastructure, resources, and compliance.
- A **free play-based curriculum**, available online and in printed kits.
- Our **classroom kit** of educational equipment.
- Ongoing practical **business and education training**.
- Ongoing **mentorship and coaching** to bring theory to practice.
- **Registration guidance** and support.

This wraparound support ensures that centre owners aren't just learning, they're acting and growing with each engagement. While our Small Business Programme is heavily subsidised to ensure accessibility, we require our participants to invest to access the service and show their commitment. Shared investment increases ownership, responsibility and implementation follow-through. On average, Grow ECD invests R200 000 worth of programmatic interventions into an ECD centre over three years.

We ask ECD centres to contribute by purchasing their classroom kit. This year we were able to make our classroom kit even more affordable, reducing the price from R40 000 to R27 000 per classroom of 30 learners. We were able to achieve this massive cost reduction thanks to significant support from our supplier, Grow Learning Company.



IMPACT STORY

Bavumile Goba, Sithokozile Play Group, KwaZulu-Natal

Before joining Grow ECD, Bavumile’s centre faced many of the common struggles plaguing under-resourced preschools: a lack of structured curriculum, minimal access to training or materials, overwhelming administrative burdens, and a deep sense of isolation. “We were doing our best,” she recalls, “but without guidance, structure, or support, it was hard to know if we were truly giving children what they needed.” Her passion for early childhood development never wavered, but she knew she needed help to transform that passion into consistent quality.

“Since joining the programme, we’ve seen a big transformation! The school now has from a well-structured curriculum, access to educational materials, and better administration. With the support of Grow ECD, our preschool has become more organised, efficient, and professional. I feel proud because we have a more engaging and stimulating learning environment for the children.

**The programme helped me become a better leader,
and my centre now runs with professionalism and purpose.”**

“Previously, I felt so overwhelmed by admin, uncertain about curriculum planning, and I felt alone in my professional journey. However, with the support and guidance of Grow, I have gained confidence, knowledge, and a sense of community. I am now better equipped to lead my school.”

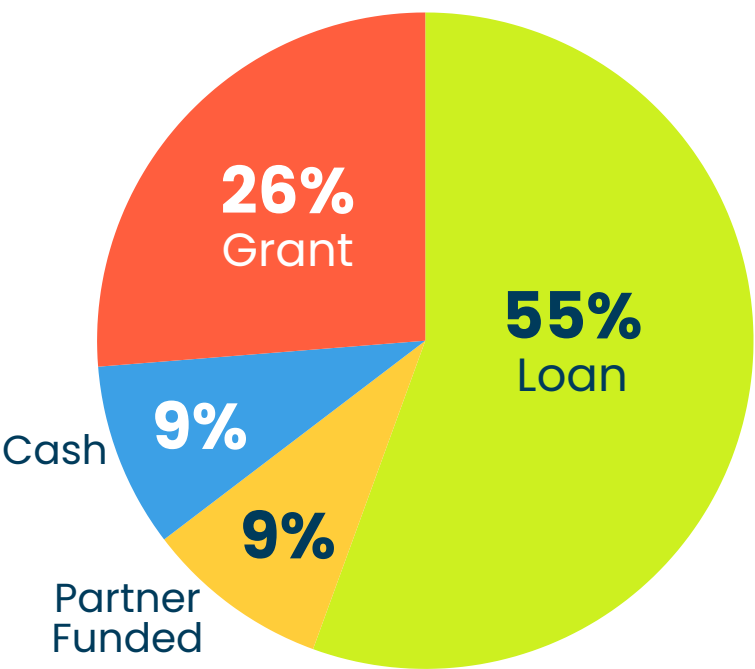
Bavumile Goba
SITHOKOZILE PLAY GROUP



LOW-COST ECD FINANCE IMPROVES FINANCIAL INCLUSION

This year we helped to unlock R2,9mill in investments in our SBP centres through our blended low-cost ECD Finance options. This includes a combination of loans (R1,88mill), grants and partner funding (R845,000) and cash (R245,000) invested by ECD centres directly into classroom kits and infrastructure upgrades.

To make this investment more accessible and affordable for ECD small businesses, we offer blended finance options through radical new risk-assessment models in partnership with Spoon Money, a registered credit provider. This year, we worked together to provide 53 new loans. We continue to have an excellent loan repayment rate of 90%, and since inception of our low cost ECD finance services we have only written off 2 loans, both with severe mitigating circumstances. This initiative is helping us to set a new narrative on the investability of the ECD sector.



Total Blended Finance 2024-25

LEARNER OBSERVATION RESULTS DRIVE DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING

4,427

Learners observed by teachers in 2024.

Twice a year, our Small Business Programme centres complete learner assessments and observations to help us understand learners’ developmental journeys. This year, 4,427 learners were observed across the 2-to-6-year-old age groups, using our in-app learner observation tool, which helps teachers review progress, for each child , against their age group. During the observation periods, our education team assist teachers with these reviews, ensuring accuracy and consistency in scoring. Teachers also receive training in advance to help them use the learner observation tools and rubric effectively and to help them turn their results into practical reports straight from the app (for easy sharing with parents) and insights (to help them address gaps).

84%

Of 4-5 year old learners met expected developmental milestones.

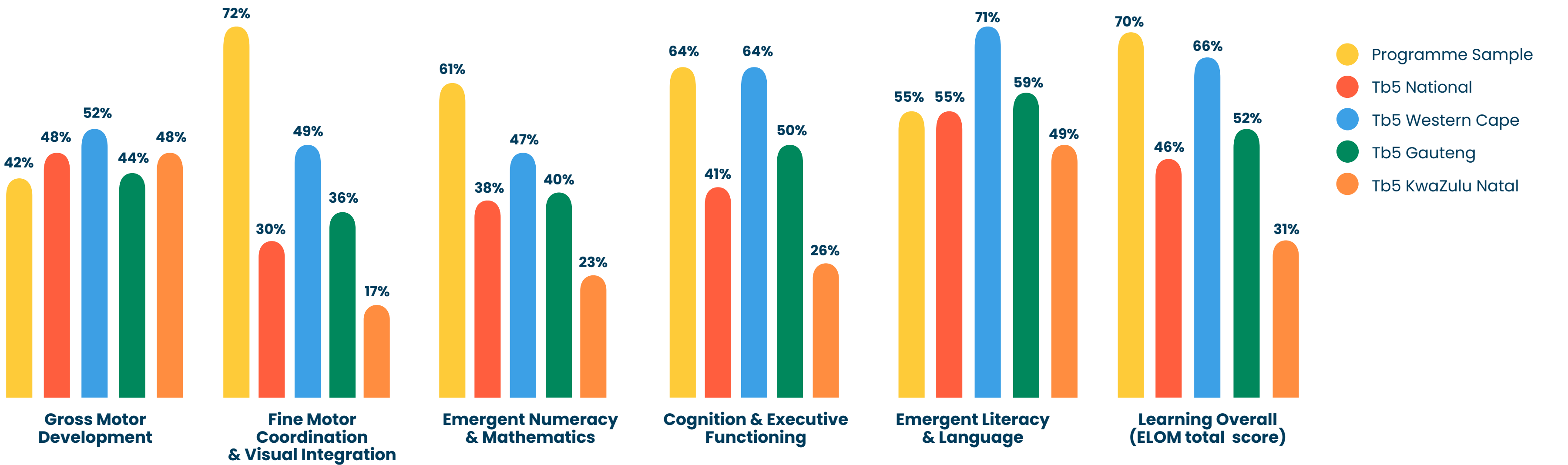
The feedback from results have been mainly positive, notably for the 4-5 years age group (with 84% of learners assessed “on track” for meeting expected developmental milestones) and the 5-6 years age group (90% on track).

Grow ECD also uses the observation feedback, combined with our ELOM results and our mentor-visit feedback reports, to identify risk areas and concerns. Data-driven decision making allows us to respond fast and deploy resources where they are most needed, while also customising our implementation plan for each classroom and region.

This year the observations highlighted gross motor integration as areas needing improvement, consistent with feedback we have received from our mentors. To address this, a new teacher training module focusing on this domain has been developed, along with additional mentorship and support for teachers.

ELOM RESULTS SHOW OUR CHILDREN ARE THRIVING

In 2024, Grow ECD conducted a formal dipstick assessment of 91 learners across three provinces using the **ELOM (Early Learning Outcomes Measure)**, South Africa’s standardised tool for measuring school readiness in children aged 4–5. The results were deeply encouraging: **70% of children in Grow-supported centres were developmentally on track**, significantly ahead of the national average of 45.7% reported in the Thrive by Five Index.



Grow ECD programme results vs. 4 sets of Thrive by Five Data

Children performed particularly well in fine motor coordination (72%), cognition (64%), and numeracy (61%), affirming the strength of our play-based curriculum and educator development model. The ELOM also surfaced areas for focused improvement, particularly in gross motor development, where only 42% of learners met the age-appropriate benchmark.

Notably, 80% of learners demonstrated strong social-relational skills, and 76% showed emotional readiness for school, a testament to the nurturing, holistic environments created by Grow-supported centres. These results not only validate our model but also provide us with a roadmap for targeted programme refinement in 2026 and beyond.

OUR STAR CENTRE ASSESSMENT

Shining a light on what quality looks like

The STAR Assessment Tool was developed as a structured, standardised, and practical way to evaluate the **business, operational, and educational health of ECD centres**. Previously, we had monitored these components, but often through separate, disjointed documents and processes conducted at different times. We realised the need for a single monitoring and evaluation system that would provide us, our centres, and our funders with a consistent, cross-functional view of centre performance across all the key aspects of running a successful ECD centre.



Our assessment framework was built on our learnings from ELOM, QAAS, the national Vangasali registration frameworks and input from several other ECD support organisations. The framework was refined through partner use cases and practical trials, then formally rolled out in 2024 as STAR, a more comprehensive and purpose-fit instrument aligned to the new DBE registration standards (Bana Pele) already embedded.

STAR ("Support, Track, Assess, Reflect") was designed as a baseline-to-graduation assessment tool used throughout a centre's three-year journey in the Small Business Programme (SBP).

The STAR Assessment tool evaluates centres across five key dimensions:



Evaluations are conducted by trained external assessors who understand the realities of running an ECD centre. This independent process ensures objectivity and trust. Importantly, assessors provide immediate feedback during the site visit, helping centre owners understand their results in real time, even before their debrief with the Grow ECD team. This year we have already conducted 162 assessments (53 baseline, 65 at 12 months, 30 at 24 months, six at 36 months and eight ad hoc assessments for partners).

This assessment enables Grow and its partners to:

- 1 Identify support needs at the outset (baseline).
- 2 Track progress at 12-, 24-, and 36-month intervals.
- 3 Give actionable feedback and guidance to centre owners, increasing co-ownership.
- 4 Measure growth in both compliance and quality.
- 5 Help centre owners stay motivated as they can see progress made (not just results).

The STAR Assessment is helping us all grow stronger

STAR results often spark powerful “aha” moments, helping centre owners shift from reactive to proactive thinking. This shows that external evaluations are not only beneficial for ECD service providers but for centre owners too.

- For Grow: it enables data-driven decision-making and tailored support.
- For centres: it offers clear goals, structure, and encouragement.
- For the sector: it sets a benchmark for ECD enterprise performance and accountability.
- For partners: it provides peace of mind that their investments are unlocking measurable impact.

We believe the STAR Assessment Tool will become an invaluable system-wide resource, enabling us to measure what matters, allocate resources wisely, and keep every stakeholder focused on what truly supports thriving ECD centres. It is a scalable, credible tool that aligns with national ECD priorities while also speaking to the hearts and minds of the centre owners who run these vital pre-schools every day.



Initial insights from STAR:

- At baseline, the lowest-rated areas are typically governance and legal requirements, learning programme quality, and policies and procedures.
- Within 12 months, the most significant gains are often seen in learning programme quality and implementation.
- By 36 months, the strongest improvements are typically in governance and legal compliance, policies and procedures, followed by staffing and learning programmes.

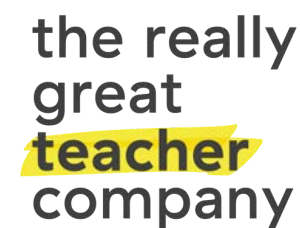
PARTNERSHIPS THAT POWER IMPACT

Grow ECD's work would not be possible without the powerful partnerships we've built across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

- ✓ Grow ECD joined the National Intersectoral Forum and has signed up as an official NPO partner to the DBE Bana Pele mass registration drive.
- ✓ We have strategic collaborations with CLEAR, IMBE, Penreach and other umbrella organisations to expand reach and build capacity in the sector.
- ✓ We hosted satellite ECD Accelerators with partners Zensar and VW Community Trust to reach more rural preschools.
- ✓ A collaboration with Environ is currently benefiting 1,500 children with a daily healthy breakfast.
- ✓ Our Book Dash literacy initiative has distributed over 15,000 books to families.
- ✓ JET Education Services is working with Grow ECD to validate the reliability of Grow's learner observation and assessment tool.
- ✓ Kaizenvest is making our ECD Accelerator affordable by subsidising the cost and supporting our low-cost ECD finance initiatives.
- ✓ Spoon Money, a registered credit provider, is co-creating our microfinance lending programme.
- ✓ Grow Learning Company has been a long-standing strategic partner and supplier of equipment.
- ✓ Michaelhouse Community Partnership Trust and Wild Tomorrow engaged Grow ECD as a service provider for 8 ECD centres in Pietermaritzburg and 2 ECD centres in Hluhluwe, respectively.
- ✓ ShareForce funded regional training competitions and resource subsidies aligned with STAR assessment gaps.
- ✓ Care for Education supported our centres with invaluable Lego Playboxes, which we integrate into our teacher training and play-based curriculum.
- ✓ Grow ECD was proud to represent the voice of implementing organisations on the National ECD Alliance board this year. Our participation brought a practical lens to qualifications, policy and training discussions, grounded in the realities and needs of ECD centres on the ground.



OUR ECD PARTNERS



Financials

Our commitment to transparency
and good governance



Financial Commentary for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

In a year marked by global and local economic challenges, the TCB Group remained steadfast in its mission, demonstrating resilience, adaptability and purpose-driven execution. The 2025 financial year highlighted not only our ability to deliver on impact but also our commitment to operational excellence and financial sustainability. While total revenue (including grant funding) for the Group declined, we applied a disciplined approach to cost control. Importantly, total expenditure came in below budget despite external pressures, reflecting strong governance, proactive management and strategic prioritisation. The Group achieved an operating surplus, reinforcing its long-term financial sustainability.

Taking Care of Business NPC (excluding Grow ECD)

Despite a tough macroeconomic environment, TCB delivered a solid financial and operational performance. Programmatic revenue declined slightly by 2.9% to R36,1 million, primarily due to shifts in our supplier contributions resulting in a challenging year in revenue collection for our Resell program. These revenue challenges were somewhat mitigated through strong revenue-related performances in both our Repair and Reskill programs. Earned income contributed a robust 55% of total income, with other income (including interest income) contributing 8% and grant income contributing R23,9m (37%) of total income.

Total operating expenditure rose to R55,7m, an increase of 12,6% on the prior year. However, the increase in costs were mostly driven by the strategic investment into scaling both our Remake and Reskill programs and it also reflects targeted investments in system strengthening, business intelligence and impact measurement.

TCB closed the year with a self-funding ratio of 65%, a decrease on the prior year's 75%. This self-funding ratio still came within the Groups budgeted ratio which underscores TCB's ability to weather funding fluctuations while maintaining service delivery and producing impact at scale. We remain deeply grateful to our donors, partners and suppliers for their enduring belief in our mission.

GW Foundation NPC (trading as Grow ECD)

The 2025 financial year was a period of significant operational adjustment for Grow ECD, shaped largely by external developments, including the conclusion of a major grant & partnership with Old Mutual's Next 176. This influenced both the organisation's revenue mix and strategic focus. Revenue declined from R40,5m in 2024 to R25,1m in 2025, a reduction of 38%, primarily due to our grant with Old Mutual ending, thus impacting our corporate grant income.

Despite this, grant income remained the cornerstone of our total income (including interest income), with its share of total revenue sitting at 67% – albeit down from the prior year's 84%. Encouragingly, donations more than doubled to R1,85 million, highlighting improved community engagement and broadening support.

Operational expenditure rose to R20,5m, up 6% on the prior year, with program costs increasing in line with expanded regional reach and deeper programmatic support. School-related costs also saw a notable increase during the financial year, however, prudent financial oversight ensured expenditure remained within budget. Investment income grew to R4,8m, from R4,05m the previous year, a 19% increase. This performance provided important buffer capacity during the year's revenue transition.

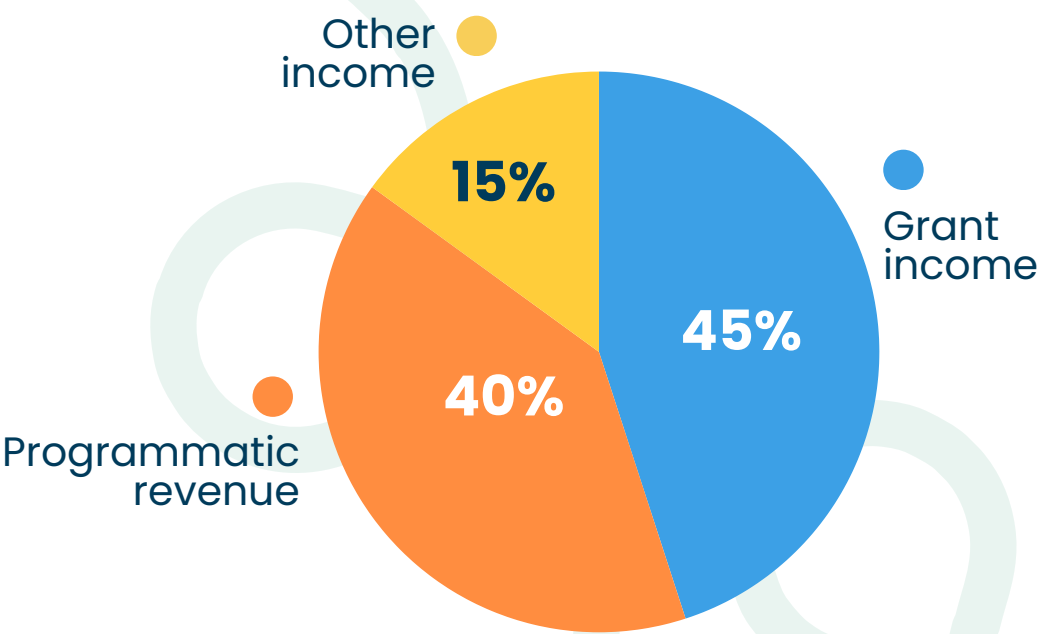
Consolidated Financial Perspective

Across the TCB Group, total revenue declined from R104,5m to R89,5m (-14,32%), while group expenditure increased to R76,3m (+10,91%). Despite these movements, overall performance reflects a strong commitment to financial discipline, with total costs ending below budgeted projections. The Group delivered an operating surplus that reinforces its continued financial health and capacity to scale impact sustainably.

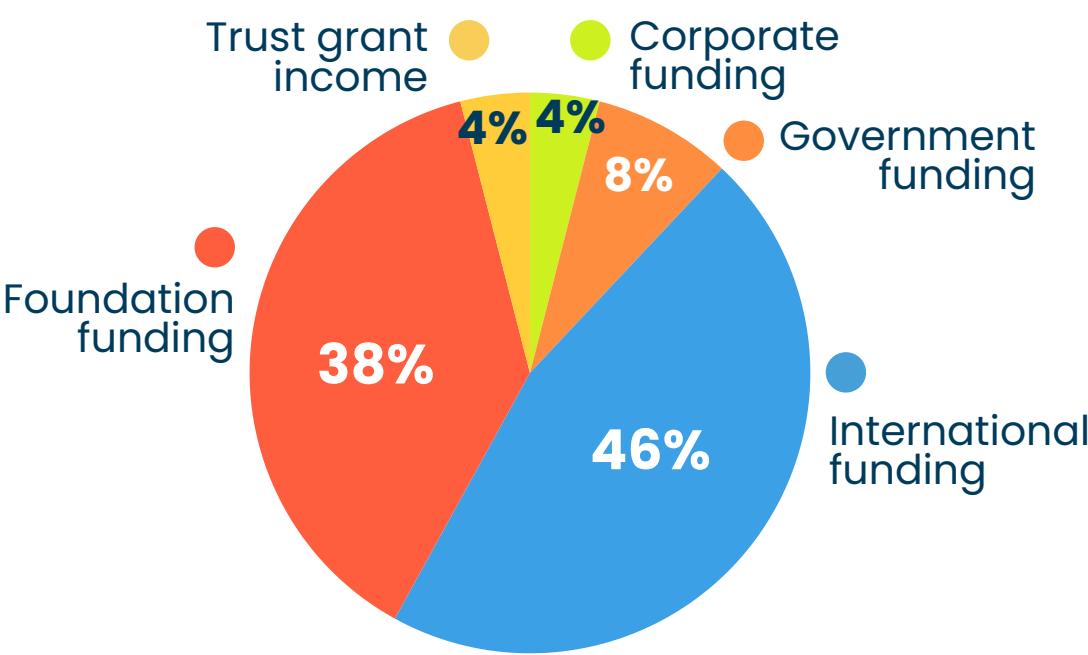
Group income composition shifted modestly. Group income composition shifted modestly. Grant income now accounts for 45% of total income (down from the prior years' 55%), while programmatic and other income increased their contribution of total income to 40% (up from 36%) and 15% (up from 9%), respectively. Expenditure allocations remained focused on impact delivery. Enterprise Development Training and Operational Costs comprised 63% of total spend, with our GROW ECD programme accounting for an additional 27%. Administrative and overhead costs were held below 10%, reflecting our efficient cost management and alignment with donor expectations.

As we look ahead, the TCB Group of Companies remains committed to maximising the impact of every rand received. With strengthened systems, capable teams and a resilient financial foundation, we are confident in our path forward to deliver meaningful, scalable and inclusive development outcomes.

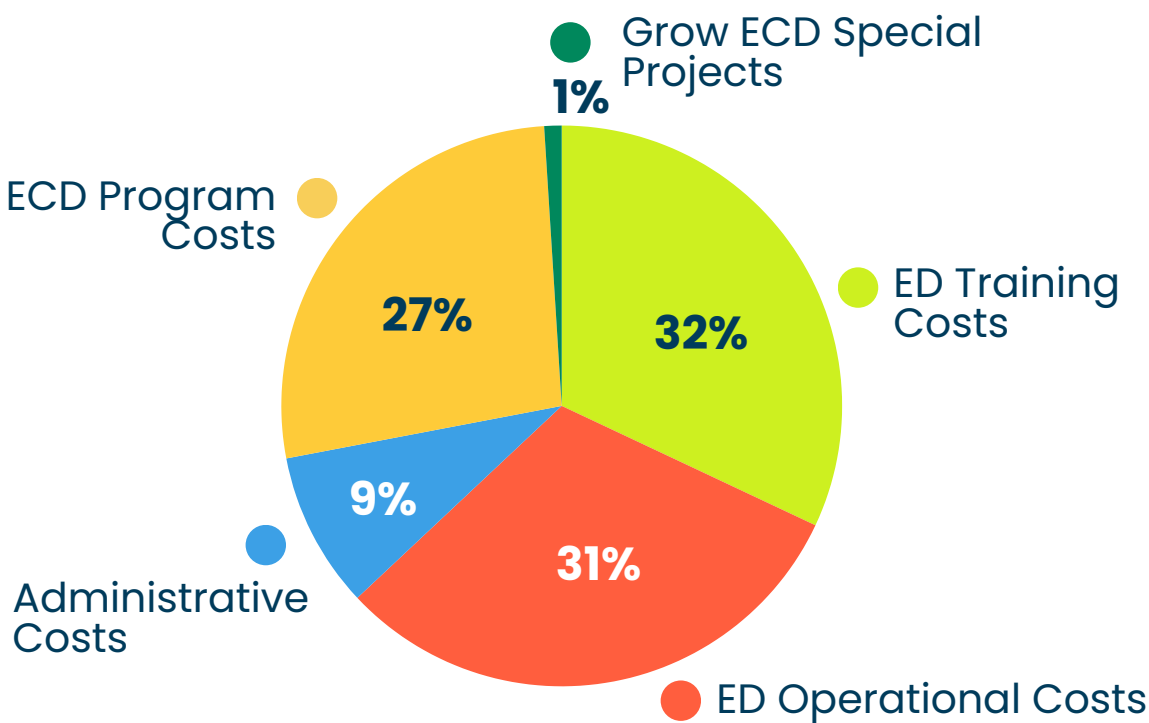
Total income



Grant income breakdown



Expenditure breakdown





Thank You to Our Impact Partners

RETAILERS AND SUPPLIERS



Thank You to Our Impact Partners

FUNDERS



Humulani
Empowerment Trust



Ruth & Wise
CHARITABLE
TRUST



the really
great
teacher
company



Belgotex™

NADIA + ALF TAYLOR
FOUNDATION

changeX



momentum
group | FOUNDATION



**Donations of
less than
R50 000**

Caversham Education Institute
Rotary Club Franschhoek
Beck Family Estate

Container World
Pattern Matched Technology
RFPT Group

Focus on iThemba
Woolworths Trust
Allport Cargo Services

Thank you

Ngiyabonga

Kea leboha



Get in touch for any more information.

 **021 531 2134**

 **info@tcb.org.za**

 **tcb.org.za**

Enkosi

Dankie

tcb taking care
of business