taking care of business





ASPIRE TO GREATNESS

2026

ANNUAL REPORT

Eradicating poverty through small business opportunities and holistic human development.



TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

VISION

Eradicate poverty in South African families.

MISSION

Equip aspiring entrepreneurs with the skills, support, and resources they need to unlock their potential, access the economy, improve circularity, and provide 5-star early learning for every child.

PURPOSE

To empower the people raising and educating the next generation.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

TCB OVERVIEW

Our Programmes	4
Our Footprint	5
Circular Economy Results	6
Our Model	8
Greenlight Survey Results	9
Resell Programme	12
Repair Programme	14
Remake Programme	17
ISBP Qualification	20
Reskill Programme	21
Looking Forward: TCB	26

GROW ECD OVERVIEW

Grow ECD Results	29
ECD Approach & Services	30
Giraffe App	32
ECD Accelerator	35
Small Business Programme	36
Loans & Blended Finance	38
STAR Assessment Results	39
Partnerships & Sector Collab	43
Looking Forward: Grow ECD	47

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Financial Snapshot	48
Financial Commentary	51

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.





RESKILL

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

REPAIR

We equip unemployed South Africans, primarily fathers, to build sustainable livelihoods through a two-year appliance repair and trading programme. Donated damaged, broken and excess stock is repaired and resold, reducing e-waste and generating income opportunities.





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 preschool a possibility for all.

REMAKE

We equip seamstresses to transform surplus fabric and textile waste into functional, quality products while building their small businesses. Through a 2-year programme they become independent remakers.



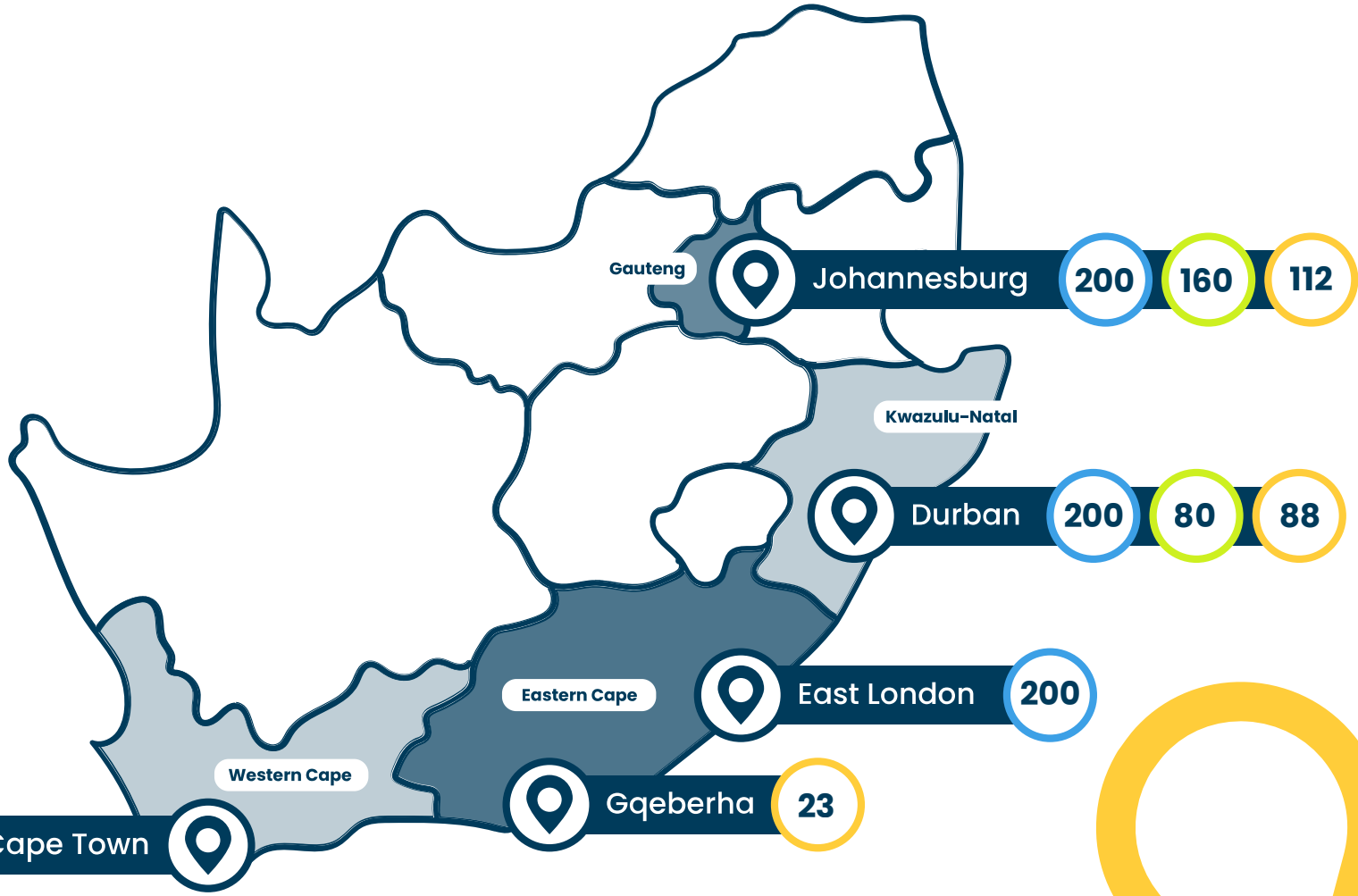
OUR FOOTPRINT

800 Resell capacity

400 Repair capacity

80 Remake capacity

315 Grow ECD centres



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

CIRCULAR ECONOMY ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

RESELL, REPAIR AND REMAKE RESULTS

1 APRIL 2025 – 31 MARCH 2026



Tracey Gilmore, COO

Our circular economy pathways convert waste into small business opportunities and long-term family resilience. Generous donations of excess pre-consumer items from retailers and manufacturers fuelled 2,543 entrepreneurial businesses this year while extending the life of products responsibly.

966
Participants active in our ED programmes

1 686
Graduates and ambassadors still accessing stock

1 896 839
Items received

176
Tons of e-waste processed

R50,6M
Estimated profits made by entrepreneurs

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPLY PARTNERS

ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT SUPPLY PARTNERS

PEP

CLICKS

mr price

TFG

WOOLWORTHS

Pick n Pay Clothing

TRUWORTHS

SHOPRITE & Checkers

COTTON:ON

gemelli CLOTHING (Pty) Ltd

REX TRUEFORM GROUP LIMITED

RETAILABILITY

HOME OF LivingBrands

HEADWEAR24 GLOBAL MANUFACTURERS

MDD Fabrics

styleeyes

my runway



When we sing together, pray together, work together, we heal together. It's a sisterhood."

Nomzamo Matodlana,
Branch Manager, Cape Town

OUR HEART–HEAD–HANDS MODEL

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO RESILIENCE

At the core of Taking Care of Business and Grow ECD is our belief that poverty eradication starts with the person, not their circumstances.

We've seen time and again that real, lasting transformation doesn't come from business skills alone. It comes from unlocking human potential holistically and creating personal agency.

Our Heart–Head–Hands framework addresses psycho-social wellbeing, business know-how and practical skills simultaneously, thereby creating the conditions for genuine resilience to take root and grow.



Heart (belief)

Emotional resilience, self-esteem, psycho-social growth.

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



Head (knowledge)

Business knowledge, planning capacity, financial literacy.

- Business skills
- Financial skills
- Money mentoring
- Qualifications



Hand (experience)

Running a real, viable business.

- Stock access
- Market access
- Start-up capital
- Buying and Selling
- Repairing
- Making

BUILDING RESILIENT ENTREPRENEURS

MEASURING LASTING CHANGE

We tracked 882 programme participants over 24 months, from baseline to endline, using the internationally recognised Greenlight Assessment framework. **This framework assesses poverty across 6 dimensions and 50 indicators,** creating a holistic picture of individual and family progress towards financial and social independence.
Each indicator is rated on a scale of 1 to 3: red, yellow and green.

There are 6 dimensions of poverty in the Greenlight survey:

1. **INCOME & EMPLOYMENT**
2. **HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT**
3. **HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE**
4. **EDUCATION & CULTURE**
5. **ORGANISATION & PARTICIPATION**
6. **SELF-AWARENESS & MOTIVATION**

Not Poor

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

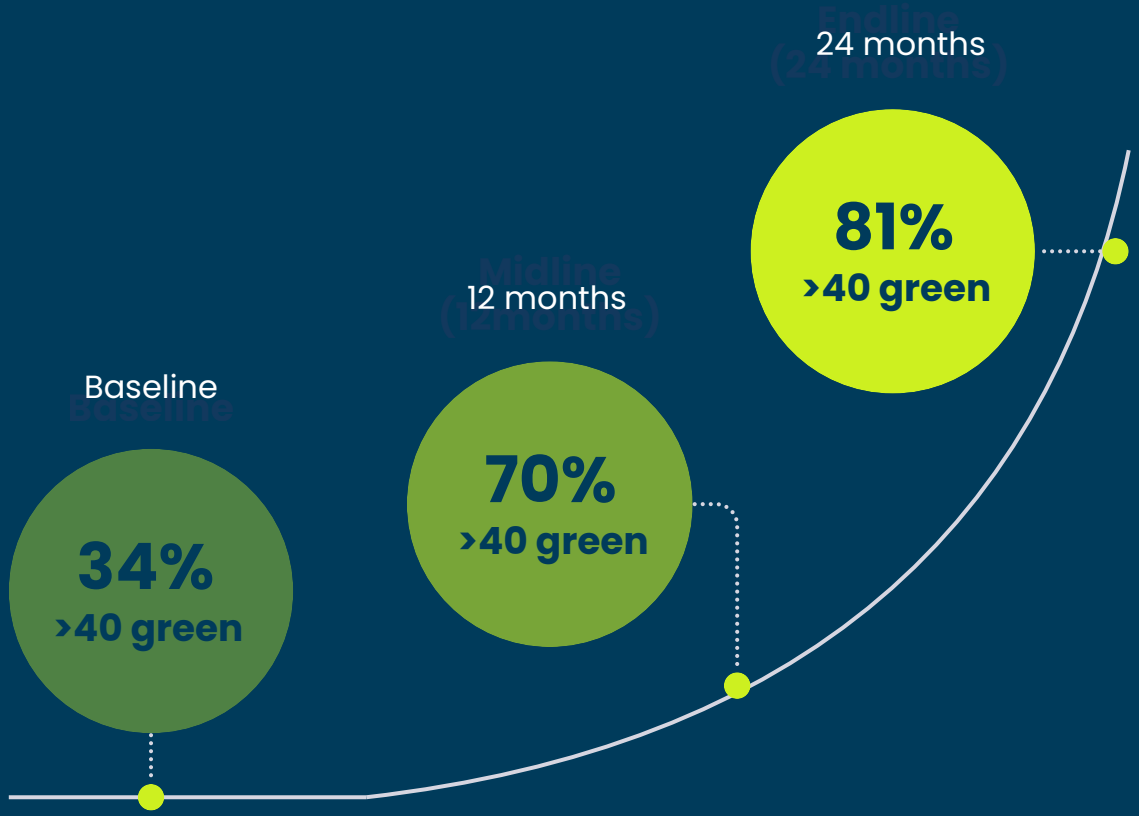
Poor

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

Very poor

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

GROWING RESILIENCE: PARTICIPANT WELLBEING SCORES OVER TIME (OUT OF 50)





FROM STRUGGLING TO THRIVING: MOVING THE NEEDLE ON POVERTY

Positive movement is tracked across each of the 50 indicators. Three key indicators stand out in our 2025/26 cohorts:

+34%
Capacity to budget and plan

+62%
Financial savings behaviour

+29%
Income above poverty line

WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAY: RESILIENCE IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Thematic analysis of participant narratives reveals a **consistent pattern:** participants start the TCB programme feeling overwhelmed by their circumstances and end with agency, practical skills to overcome obstacles, and dramatic changes in family poverty levels and income trajectory.

Confidence & Self-Belief
EMOTIONAL HEALING

Before joining TCB, Thobeka faced significant financial hardships. She lacked the confidence to run a successful business. Through TCB, she experienced transformative growth gaining confidence in herself and her work

Facilitator narrative, **Thobeka M,** Endline participant

Overcoming Setbacks
PROBLEM-SOLVING

Zama described herself as shy and emotionally vulnerable. Through TCB, she gained vital self-awareness. She now expresses herself more confidently and understands the importance of setting emotional boundaries.

Facilitator narrative, **Zamantungwa G,** Endline participant

Financial Discipline
INDEPENDENCE & AGENCY

Despite the loss of her father and being scammed of R32,000, Thokozani remained resilient. TCB helped her step out of her comfort zone. She discovered she is capable of more than she ever believed.

Facilitator narrative, **Thokozani C,** Midline participant

THE "STUCK" INDICATOR: THE MOST TELLING RESILIENCE METRIC

The Greenlight "Stuck" score (measuring complete stagnation across 50 life domains) is the most powerful indicator of resilience capacity. A high Stuck score signals paralysis; a low score signals the ability to move, adapt, and navigate adversity.

↓ 67%
reduction in "Stuck" score

Qualitative reviews of our Participants' narratives over time show that they evolve from survival and dependency at baseline to agency, planning, and forward motion at endline, mirroring the quantitative score improvements. Counselling, peer networks, and practical mentorship are consistently acknowledged, proving that running a successful business requires more than stock and selling skills.



RESELL PROGRAMME

RESILIENT WOMEN BUILD RESILIENT FAMILIES

It's a sense of independence I never thought possible. More importantly, I can provide for my children in a way I couldn't before. TCB didn't just provide income. It equipped me with the skills to manage a business.

Qiqa Nyangiwe, Resell Programme, East London

Read full story here

Now in its 16th year, Resell is the largest programme in TCB. It is an enterprise development programme built on the power of second chances.

Participants are thriving and diversifying:

- This year, 705 women were actively supported on their two-year Enterprise Development journey, 26% of whom are youth (under 35 years old).
- An additional 1,449 graduates and ambassadors continue to access product.
- Collectively, Resell entrepreneurs made R31,2 million in total estimated profits.
- At an average monthly profit of R3,018 per Participant from TCB stock alone, Resell continues to offer working mothers a reliable income stream that's flexible and dignified.
- With an average of 4.1 dependents per participant, the ripple effect extends into thousands of homes every month.
- Many of the women in our programme run multiple businesses. Our participants report that the skills they learn at TCB translate into greater success in their side hustles and often have positive spillover effects on their family member's entrepreneurial ventures too.

Stock availability and mix under pressure:

- Access to great stock is the fuel for a reseller's business. This year Resell continued to face structural pressure due to reduced stock inflows from key national retail donors.
- Goods received declined from 1.8 million units in 2025 to 1.7 million units in 2026, a 6% reduction.
- Our mix of 15 supply partners remains incredibly valuable. Without their generosity, the Resell programme could not deliver the impact results we have seen.

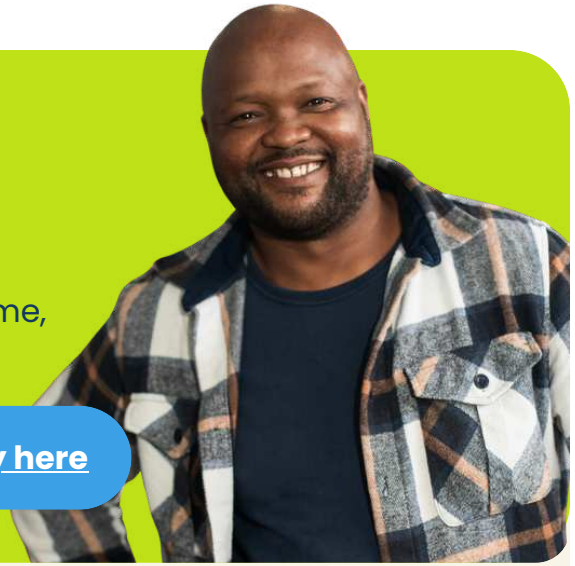
The combination of reduced stock received, a weaker stock mix that lowers the average selling price, and increased competition from low-priced market competitors has prompted us to seek alternative supply solutions. We plan to implement these solutions in 2026 to ensure consistent supply.



REPAIR PROGRAMME

REPAIRING APPLIANCES, RESTORING DIGNITY, REDUCING WASTE





Nkumbulo Magqabi,
Repair Programme,
Cape Town

Read full story here

I have done so many jobs over the years, trying to get by, that I can't even remember them all. When I tried out TCB, I expected to be given appliances I could buy and sell. That's all. I didn't expect to get taught so much. Now I'm a professional businessman.

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

Participants are growing circular economy businesses:

- This year, 176 Enterprise Development participants were actively trained across the Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Durban branches.
- 31% of participants are youth (under 35 years of age).
- Encouragingly, 13% of our participants are women, showing growing interest in appliance repair as a gender inclusive skillset.
- 217 graduates and ambassadors continued to benefit from access to stock.
- Collectively, Repair entrepreneurs made R16,4 million in total estimated profits.
- Participants earned a conservative estimated average profit of R4, 570 per month from TCB appliances alone. These estimates exclude independent repair jobs, which are a lucrative source of income for many participants.

More stock is creating more opportunities:

- We received 152,882 donated items (small appliances, power tools, cell phones, TVs and white goods) this year, a 2% increase on last year, from eight supply partners.
- 176 tonnes of e-waste were diverted from landfill.
- Thanks to new and growing partnerships with Shoprite Checkers, Clicks and Yuppiechef, we can expand the programme and will recruit 50 additional participants at our Durban branch in 2026/27.



> **As the men learn to repair appliances, they also start repairing their confidence and dignity. “**

Dheshree Vather,
Branch Manager, Johannesburg



REMAKE PROGRAMME

TURNING TEXTILE WASTE AND CREATIVITY INTO CIRCULAR BUSINESSES

I am really proud to contribute to the circular economy by giving new life to materials that people see as waste. The TCB workshops and mentorships have made the difference. I have business skills now, can upcycle garments, and know how to market my own products.

Balisa Nzululeka,
TCB Remake Programme,
Cape Town

Read full story here



This year, TCB successfully extended its Remake Programme to a 2-year format, strengthening support for sewists transitioning into micro-manufacturing businesses. The programme integrates technical training with real production experience, turning informal seamstresses into Makers.

Participants are growing:

- 85 participants benefitted from our programme this year, a 44% growth on last year. This includes 2 males and 14 youth.
- 20 Graduates continue to access stock and benefit from workshops, production tenders, and fabric sales.

Stock variety drives creativity:

- 38,113 items were received this year, including a variety of fabric rolls, sample boards, cut samples, advertising banners, zips, buttons and trims, coffee bags, and offcuts.

SOCIAL PROCUREMENT: PURCHASE PRODUCTS WITH PURPOSE

Made with purpose, designed for impact:

Every product order placed through TCB Remake creates meaningful work, practical production experience and income for our Makers as they build stronger, more sustainable businesses of their own. Working under the guidance of an experienced Production Manager, they fulfil real client briefs in bulk while strengthening their technical skills and quality standards.

Our Remake Makers produce distinctive corporate gifts, event merchandise, retail products and garments using reclaimed materials that would otherwise go to waste. For clients, this offers a more thoughtful and sustainable way to source products.

Because we work with available excess fabrics and reclaimed materials, every product range is slightly different. That uniqueness is part of the value, offering clients items with real character while supporting a more circular model of production.

18 clients

placed bulk stock orders from Remake this year

4,593 items

were produced, creating additional income opportunities for our Makers



This is not mass production. It is circular design with social impact built in.

Download our catalogue to explore the range and discover how your next order can create both practical value and meaningful impact.

DOWNLOAD THE CATALOGUE

GRADUATION DAY

THE CROWNING GLORY OF A FORMAL QUALIFICATION





Jane te Water Naude

National Programme Manager

Studying for a formal qualification can be daunting. This cohort of learners completed a challenging course in our supportive classroom environments and felt the ultimate 'I can' moment on graduation day. We are incredibly proud of every learner.

In their second year, TCB offers Participants an opportunity to receive **a qualification called Informal Small Business Practice (ISBP)** through the Tourism and Business Institute of Southern Africa. This is an NQF Level 3 accredited programme, awarding 120 credits to successful learners made possible thanks to funding from UIF.

Each graduate received a formal certificate, confirming completion of the SAQA-accredited qualification.

380 Participants graduated



TTBISA | THE TOURISM & BUSINESS INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

RESKILL PROGRAMME

MULTIPLYING IMPACT BY SHARING TCB'S KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS



RESKILL

MULTIPLYING IMPACT BY SHARING TCB'S KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS



Wow, I learned so much from the entrepreneurship training. There are lessons that I can apply to my life and work. It taught me that I am responsible for my choices, that I could be organised, and helped me to better deal with stress and trauma in my life.

Michael Patrick Khalema, NOAH beneficiary

TCB has spent over a decade refining training modules that work: practical, emotionally intelligent, engaging and locally relevant. Through our Reskill division, we offer our life-changing training workshops to corporate and nonprofit organisations nationwide.



3,731	People trained in Me and My Money
471	People trained in Computer Skills
914	People trained in Entrepreneurship (Financial+ Business + Life Skills)
123	People trained in A2B Methodology
15	People trained in Technical Repair Skills
5,254	**TOTAL**

RESKILL TRAINING PATHWAYS

Me and My Money

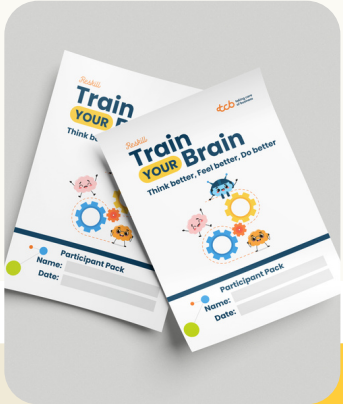
Train Your Brain

Entrepreneurship (Business, Financial and Life Skills)

Computer Skills

Repair Technical Skills









Reskill continues to outperform expectations, driven by strong demand for our Me and My Money programme. This year saw a 145% year-on-year increase in the number of people benefiting, represented by a wide variety of clients, including corporates, youth and unemployed learners, and NPO beneficiaries.

RESKILL HIGHLIGHTS

- Our Me and My Money programme officially achieved **compliance with South Africa's Consumer Education Standards** (GN500), set by the Financial Sector Transformation Council.
- Reskill delivered **more rural impact** across the country through partner-funded programmes: from Pofadder to Limpopo, our teams literally went the extra mile.
- We are ready to launch our **new Train Your Brain programme,** which will significantly strengthen our offering and meet client demand.

ME AND MY MONEY IMPACT

We introduced a new evaluation tool for Me and My Money to assess participant's financial literacy competency before and after the course. An average movement of 17 points shows a significant increase in knowledge and confidence with nearly all participants rating their knowledge very high after completing the course.

32
(out of 50 points)
Average pre-score

49
(out of 50 points)
Average post-score

+17
Average improvement

31%
Significant learning achieved (>10pts)

67%
Excellent learning achieved (>15 pts)

2%
No improvement or decline

Participants report the following after attending Me and My Money:

- Savings as a top priority.
- Budgeting as a new monthly practice.
- Needs versus wants distinction and application.
- Debt awareness and consumer rights knowledge.
- Financial goal setting.

> *I started actively saving after the Me and My Money course. I started small, and I took it seriously. I would put the money in my savings tin, but the kids kept taking the money! So, I started saving in a bank account. Then, I bought the kids their own savings tins, and now they are saving too.*

Carol, East London



Reskill

Train YOUR Brain

THINK BETTER, FEEL BETTER, DO BETTER



Before you are a leader, manager, parent or entrepreneur, you are first and foremost a human.

Train Your Brain is a powerful, interactive 4-day workshop designed to help people understand why they think, feel, and act the way they do and most importantly, how to change it.

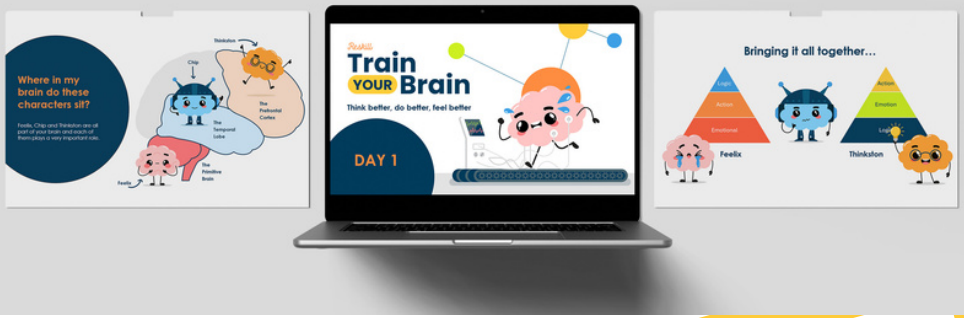
Using a combination of science-backed theory, storytelling, edutainment principles, and practical tools, this course creates meaningful, lasting change for participants.

Train Your Brain is the newest addition to our Reskill offering and is open for bookings.

Read more about Train Your Brain here

The Train Your Brain programme has been one of the most profound experiences of my professional journey. While it is grounded in neuroscience, its true impact is deeply human. The programme creates a powerful intersection between brain science, emotions, behaviours, and lived experiences, enabling participants to understand not only how they think, but why they think, feel, and respond the way they do.

Pula Matsaung (MA Psychology),
Facilitator and Coach, Johannesburg



LOOKING FORWARD

ASPIRING TO GREATNESS



Our theme for the year ahead is Aspire to Greatness.

As we look ahead to 2026/27, our focus is on deepening impact where we already work, expanding responsibly into new communities and partnerships, and continuous improvements that allow our programmes to scale sustainably.

The year ahead is about moving from growth to greatness.

Taking Care of Business priorities for 2026/27

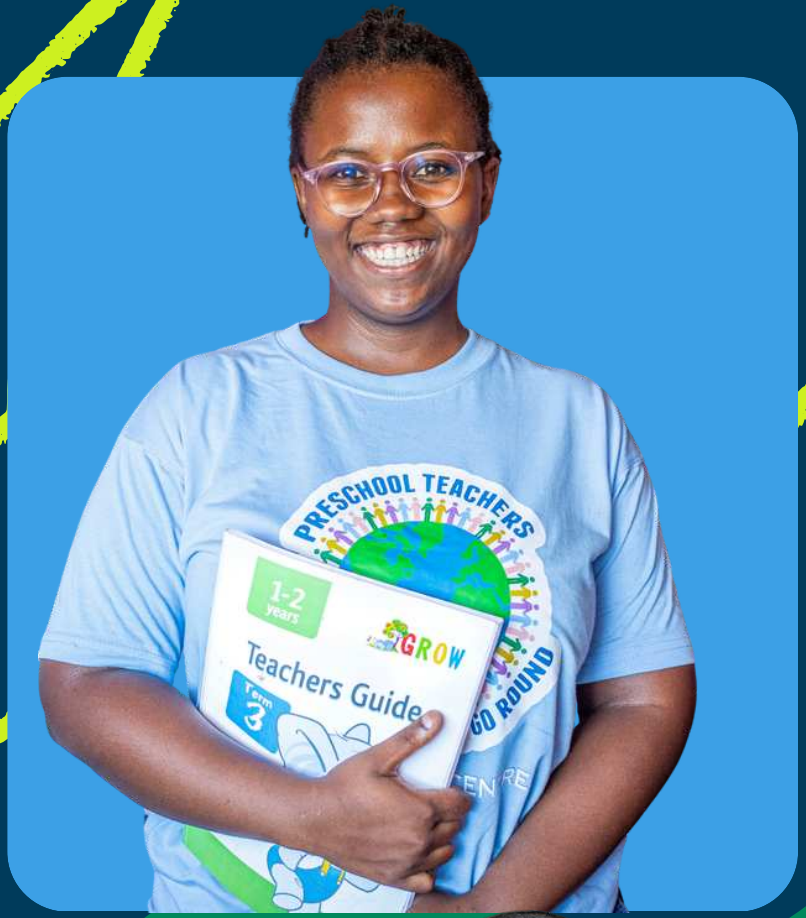
- Pursue new supply partners and strengthen existing partnerships.
- Grow the Repair programme in the Durban branch.
- Strengthen and expand the Remake programme.
- Improve participant performance across programmes.
- Optimise our pricing strategy to support sustainability and access.
- Strengthen data collection, monitoring, and evaluation, including advanced waste reporting and deeper insight generation.

GROW

ECD

Annual Report

2025/2026







GROWING EARLY LEARNING BUSINESSES

IMPACTING WOMEN, CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY

Grow ECD focuses on transforming under-resourced, informal early learning centres into sustainable, women-led enterprises that deliver high-quality early learning.



Tracey Chambers,
CEO

Early Childhood Development centres are complex small businesses with a social-impact agenda. When we invest in the women leading these businesses, we see a positive ripple effect that improves the lives of teachers, parents, community and, most importantly, children.

ECD Small Businesses are at the heart of economic growth, reduced inequalities, job creation, improved education access and quality and ultimately, poverty eradication.



Learners & Parents benefit

- Quality, nurturing education environment.
- Improved school readiness
- Better health and wellbeing
- Increased parent engagement



Teachers benefit:

- Dignified work opportunities
- Reduced in-work poverty
- Skills development
- Financial inclusion



Communities benefits:

- Improved quality and access of early education services
- Local job creation
- Youth empowerment
- Compliance with local laws

GROW ECD

2025/26 Key Stats

Technology Platform

8,274 Active App Users (Centre Owners, Teachers and Parents)

152,355 Children enrolled on our mobile app

2,758 Teachers used our online training

2,286 Teachers used our online curriculum

112,542 Resources downloaded

ECD Small Business Accelerator

508 Centre Owners Completed Our ECD Accelerator

4 Provinces Hosted Accelerator Training

Sector Collaboration

30 Organisations collaborating with Grow ECD

70 Nett Promoter Score on partner satisfaction survey

Small Business Programme

315 ECD centres in the programme network

15,724 Children at programme centres

1,948 Staff employed at programme centres

82% Of 4-5-year-old learners met expected developmental milestones.

70% ELOM 4-to-5-year learner results

81.2% STAR Assessment composite score at programme completion

R3,5m Blended finance provided to ECD centres

OUR UNIQUE APPROACH

THE FORMULA FOR BUILDING PROFESSIONAL, SUSTAINABLE 5-STAR ECD BUSINESSES



Heart for children +  **Head for business** =  **Successful ECD business**

Education Components

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

Business Components

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

Sustainable ECD Centres:

- 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

OUR FULL-SERVICE OFFERING

IMPROVING EARLY LEARNING AT SCALE



Free ECD Management App

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

- Mobile app for owners, teachers and parents.
- Admin, compliance and reporting.
- Financial management.
- Learner assessments.
- Parent engagement.
- Teacher development.
- App Helpdesk.



Free Online Curriculum

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.
- DBE accredited



ECD Business Accelerator Training

A 6-part training programme for ECD centre owners and managers that teaches the crucial business mindset skills they need to take their ECD business to the next level, achieve registration and compliance, and be more financially sustainable.

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



ECD Small Business Programme

3-year training and development partnership with ECD centre. This is a comprehensive programme for running a successful preschool where children thrive.
We provide:

Education Support

- Curriculum implementation
- Classroom kit
- Teacher training
- Education mentoring
- Baby programme

Business Support

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



Free ECD Resource Centre + AI Assistant

A helpful, data-free online library of over 450 free downloadable policies, procedures, templates, educational guides, classroom tools, and more, curated from multiple ECD experts.

GROW GIRAFFE

SOUTH AFRICA'S MOST POPULAR ECD MANAGEMENT APP

The Giraffe App continues 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.

Our EdTech solution equips preschools with the tools and resources to:

- operate professionally.
- improve learner outcomes.
- scale social impact.

5,370
ECD centre owners actively using the app

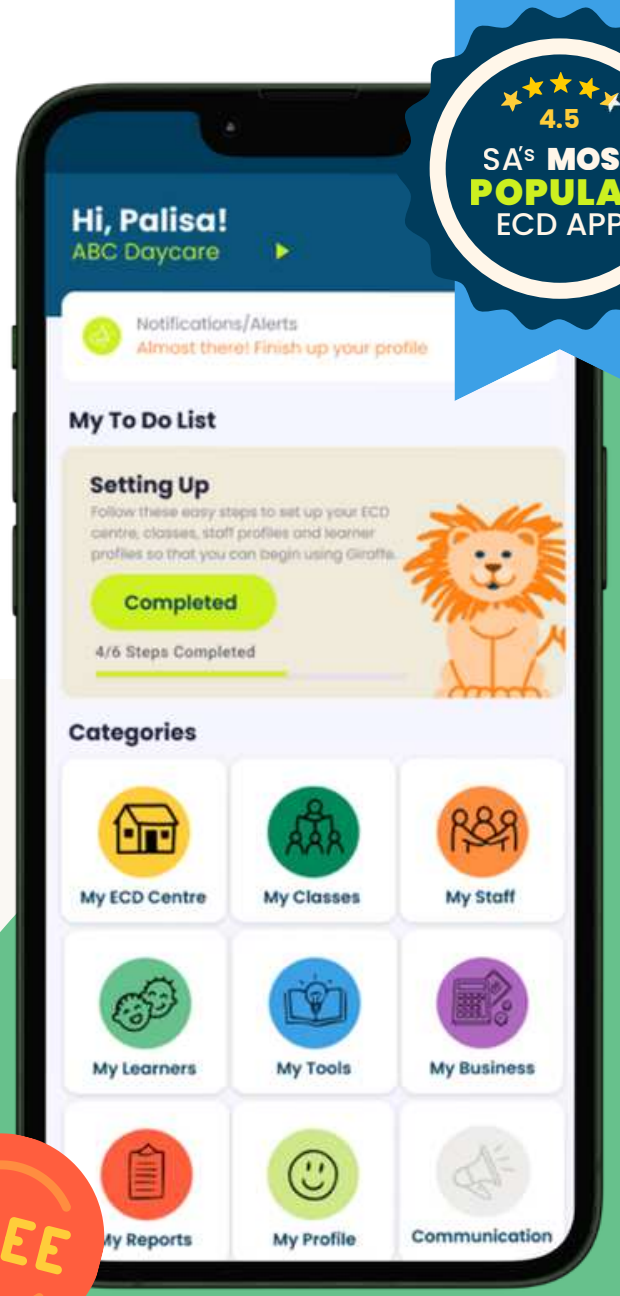
152,355
children enrolled

6,795
Online training modules completed

15,862
Curriculum engagements

528
Free downloadable resources available

112,542
Resources downloaded



Emily Ngobeni

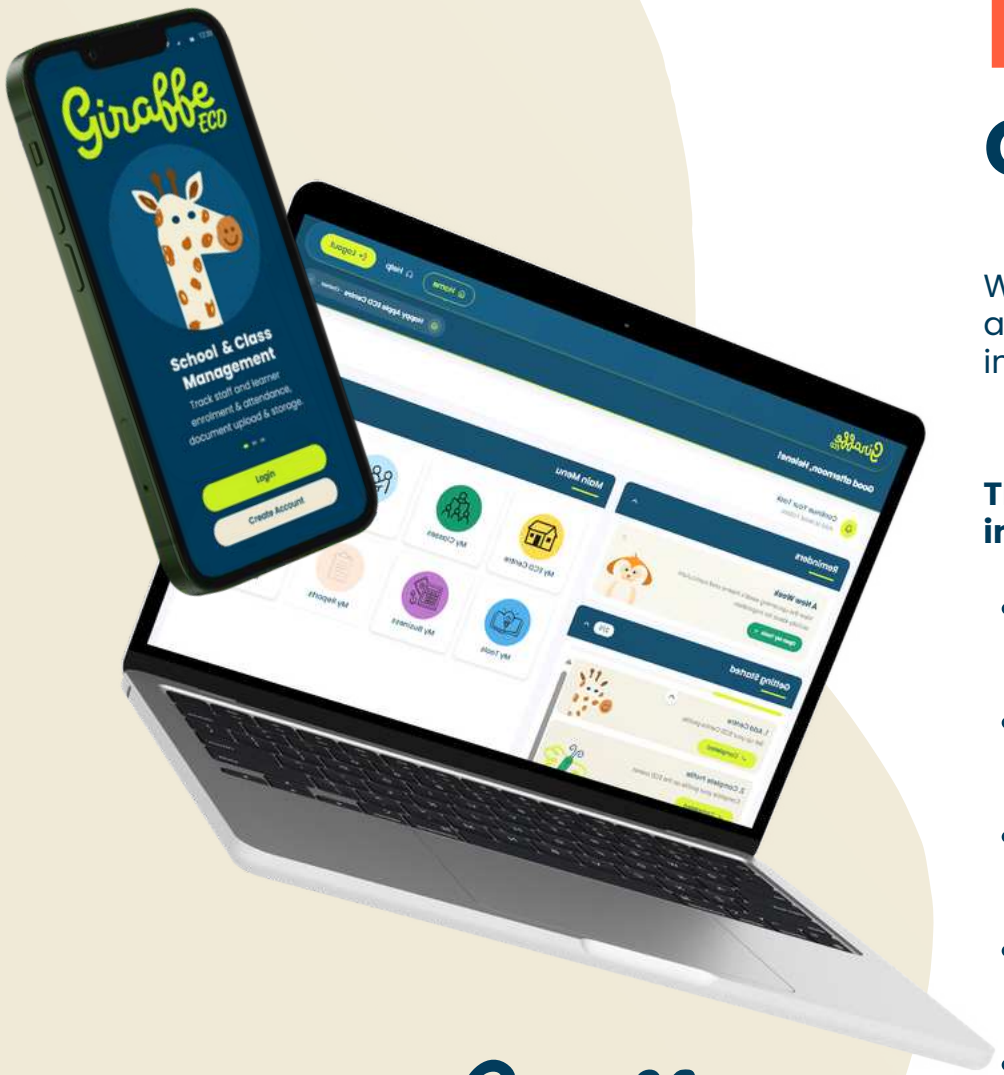
Firm Foundation Education Centre, Benoni



What caught my eye about the Grow ECD App is how easy it is to use and how effective.

I can monitor my centre's operations right from my phone, manage my finances better, and the learner assessment tool helps us track each child's progress with confidence.





NEW!

GIRAFFE 2.0:

With the growing demand for the Giraffe app, we're excited to announce that Giraffe 2.0, the next-generation version developed in collaboration with The Reach Trust, will launch by Aug 2026.

The app South Africa already knows, and loves, will have improved features:

- **Web-based design** to accommodate all devices (smartphones, tablets, desktops) and users (Android and iOS).
- **Data-free platform** to ensure zero-cost access for all users country-wide.
- **Guided onboarding** process to help new users set up their school with confidence.
- **Embedded coaching, nudges and personalised tips** to guide users and increase impact.
- **Improved financial management tools** that can grow with the ECD business.
- **Dashboards, insights** and better reports for ECD centres and partners.

ECD ACCELERATOR

ACTIVATING THE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR MINDSET

Our ECD Business Accelerator has been a remarkable success, meeting the needs of ECD owners while addressing critical gaps in the sector. The 6-day training course covers financial skills, sustainability, leadership, compliance, registration and quality education.

508 centre owners attended and completed the accelerator this year.

1,677 ECD centre owners have benefited since the launch in 2023.

5 In 2026, we will launch our first Accelerator in Limpopo, expanding our reach from from 4 to 5 provinces.



Nontlantla Nkohla
Over The Rainbow Pre-School,
Eastern Cape

The Grow ECD Business Accelerator is worth it. It taught me confidence in everything I do at my centre, from managing finances to dealing with parents and staff. I understand what a business mindset is all about, and I'm making real improvements at my centre.



SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAMME

BUILDING SUSTAINABLE ECD CENTRES, ONE STEP AT A TIME

The Grow Small Business Programme is a comprehensive three-year training, development and transformation journey where we partner with ECD centres on their 5-star early learning journey. In a sector where most centres struggle with compliance, funding, management systems and quality education implementation, this programme provides the building blocks for long-term sustainability and growth.

89 new centres joined the Small Business Programme

315 centres are now delivering the Grow ECD programme (231 active plus 84 graduated)

15,724 children benefit from our daily programme

81,2% the average STAR Assessment composite score achieved by an ECD centre on programme completion (+12,9% increase from Baseline)

3,101 teachers and principals attended in-person training sessions this year (Total attendance; some individuals participated in multiple sessions).

2,883 learners (4-5 years old) were assessed by their teachers

82% of 4-5-year-old learners met expected developmental milestones



This year I opened my second ECD centre! Before, I was operating with just a handful of children, and I was struggling financially, but my dream was to reach more children. Grow showed me I cannot run the centre on passion alone. As a business owner, you need systems, planning, the right tools and an excellent curriculum so you can give the children the best education.

Mthwakazi Nancy Soqaka
Grow Buddies Preschool and Aftercare, Khayelitsha

Read full story here

LOW-COST LOANS AND BLENDED FINANCE

FINANCIAL INCLUSION FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS



Happyness Moloi

Bright Future Preschool

When Grow ECD told us about their low-cost loans, I saw an opportunity to solve some of the maintenance problems we had. They made sure I understood my finances before applying and helped me figure out how to use the loan to benefit the business.

Read full story here

- In 2021 Grow ECD launched low-cost loans and blended finance
- Since then a total of R12,56m has been invested in classroom kits, equipment, registration compliances, maintenance and classroom expansion.
- This year, we issued 32 low-cost loans and settled 30 loans. Only 3 loans were written off
- Partner contributions help to subsidise loans, improving financial inclusion for low-fee ECD centres.



STAR ASSESSMENT RESULTS

EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

Developed by Grow ECD for the South African ECD context, the STAR Assessment is a longitudinal quality assurance and improvement framework for early learning programmes. Independent assessors conduct the review at baseline, 12-, 24- and 36-month intervals. Unlike point-in-time audits, **STAR is designed to track how individual centres change over time measuring quality across seven domains:**

1. Teaching and Learning
2. Policies and Procedures
3. Governance and Legal
4. Health and Safety
5. Networking
6. Infrastructure
7. Nutrition and Food Safety



The STAR Assessment makes it possible to identify not just where centres stand, but how they are improving, and what drives those improvements.

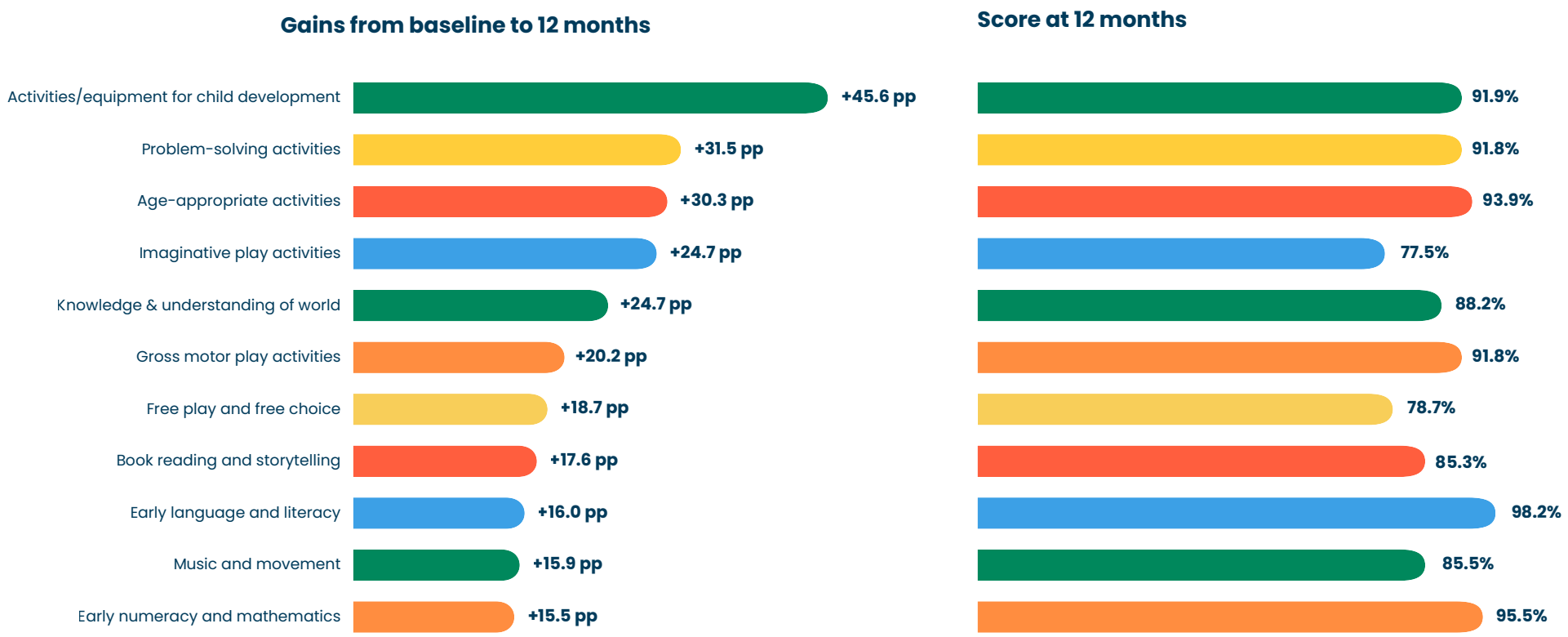
386
STAR assessments conducted

283
ECD centres assessed

4
provinces covered

TEACHING AND LEARNING IMPROVEMENTS HAPPEN FAST

STAR data show strong early results. Across 11 teaching and learning indicators, centres record significant gains within the first 12 months, particularly in areas directly supported by programme inputs such as curriculum use and classroom practice.



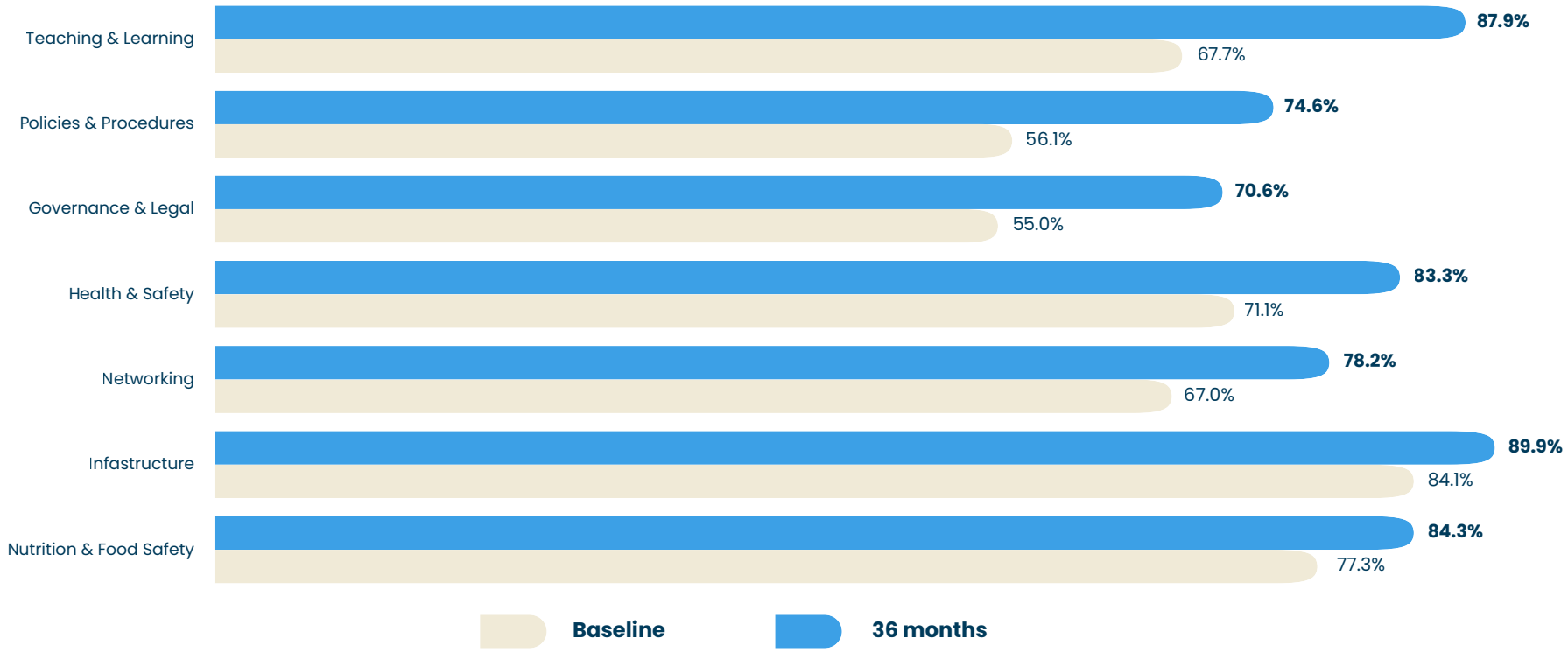
The largest gains were concentrated in structured activity provision and age-appropriate practice, both directly aligned with the ECD kit and curriculum. Early language and literacy (98.2% at 12 months) and early numeracy (95.5%) indicate near-universal uptake of foundational learning practices, with clear positive implications for children's developmental outcomes.

IMPROVEMENTS ACROSS ALL DOMAINS ARE SUSTAINED

STAR data at 36 months show that improvements achieved in year one are not temporary effects of intensive support but are sustained and strengthened over time. Across all seven quality domains, centres continue to improve from baseline, with stronger systems in teaching and learning, governance, safety, operations, and nutrition.

By the end of the three-year cycle, centres are not only offering higher-quality education but also becoming more stable, more compliant, and better equipped to maintain standards independently on programme graduation.

Domain scores: baseline vs. 36 months



81.2%

Composite STAR score at 36 months

+12.9%

Improvement from baseline







Growing up, I never imagined myself being part of the ECD industry. It was something for 'older women'. But watching my mother work with children changed my perspective. I could see the impact she had. At first, when I took over the centre from her, it was hard being a young leader. Many of the staff had more experience than me, but I was determined to make my mother proud. Grow ECD training made a huge impact. I learned how to manage money better, manage staff, and calculate school fees. The Grow App was a game changer. It made life easier for both me and the staff through assessments, registers, and ongoing training that continues to help us develop and improve.

Phelisa Mtengwana,
Yizani Sakhe Ubunye Educare Centre, Khayelitsha

Read full story here

PARTNERSHIPS AND SECTOR COLLABORATION

Partnerships that multiply impact
Grow ECD's partnership strategy is built on the principle that collaboration multiplies what any single organisation can achieve. By convening funders, government, NGOs and community partners around shared goals, Grow ECD acts as a catalyst that attracts investment, strengthens impact evaluation, improves delivery and creates reinforcing ecosystems of support around ECD centres.

30 Organisations are in official collaboration partnerships with Grow ECD

4 Provinces and over 150 centres reached through partner-funded Accelerators

1,050 children are getting a daily breakfast through nutrition partnerships

11 centres received infrastructure and outdoor equipment investments through partnerships

8 rural and farming communities are benefitting from partnerships outside our core operating areas

6 Registration clinics supported

Unlocking investments in ECD centres
Grow's initial investments regularly attract additional funders. A single grant to one centre has, in several cases, unlocked infrastructure funding, equipment and NQF-level training from separate partners multiplying the original investment significantly. The STAR Assessment creates a shared baseline and acts as a gap assessment to drive appropriate investments. There is a level of trust in Grow ECD's education programme delivery that reduces risk for partner investments in complimentary services.

Government alignment and support
Grow ECD is a member of the DBE National Intersectoral Forum and is directly involved in the Bana Pele Shared Blueprint 2030 working group, as well as an implementing partner to the Bana Pele registration drive. Through continuous efforts to align and support the Department of Basic Education's mandate we have grown confidence in Grow ECD as a credible implementation and advocacy partner which resulted in a visit from the Minister of Basic Education, Siviwe Gwarube .



Minister of Basic Education, Siviwe Gwarube, visits Grow ECD

OUR ECD PARTNERS

















































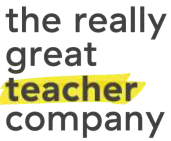
































God is faithful! We started in my dining room in 2017, but I had a bigger dream. I had a site, but I didn't have money to build a proper school. In 2022, I joined Grow, and they introduced us to The Go Group. The two organisations work together, and they helped by building us a beautiful school with proper classrooms. Grow's teacher training, curriculum, and the app have changed how we teach and manage the centre. Now, this year, we received a Gold Star certificate with an outstanding 99% score from the Chief Director of the District Health Services.

Favourite Nompumelelo Mbona,
Zuzulwazi Creche, Pietermaritzburg

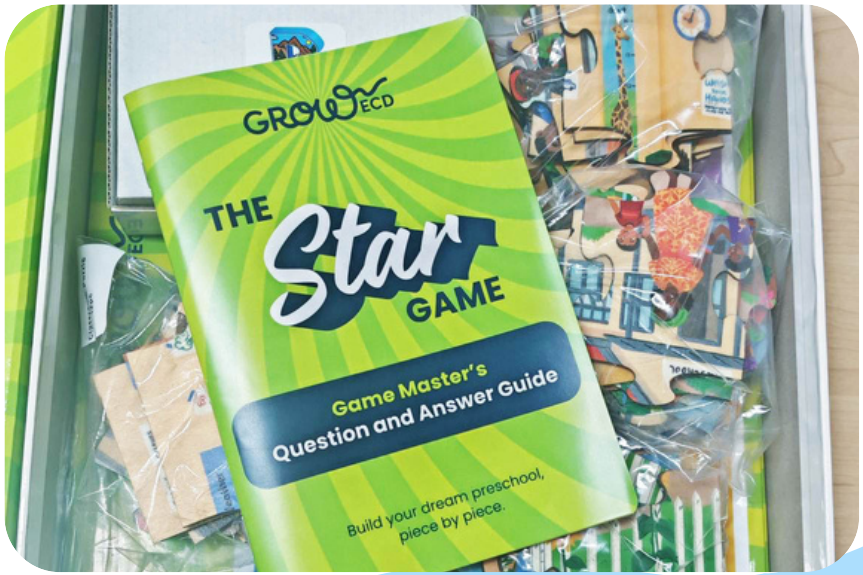
Read full story here

NEW! THE STAR GAME

LEARN TO RUN A 5-STAR PRESCHOOL AS YOU PLAY

The STAR Game is an interactive, facilitator-led learning game developed by Grow ECD to help ECD centre owners and principals understand what it takes to run a high-quality, sustainable preschool. By turning complex compliance, education, and business concepts into fun, team-based activities and challenges, the game creates a safe, low-stress space for learning, reflection, and confidence-building.

- **The game is facilitated free of charge by Grow ECD at ECD forums, networking events, and sector workshops, subject to capacity.**
- It covers the five core operating areas of a 5-Star ECD centre, including business and finance, people and capacity, education programme quality, governance and operations, and health and safety.
- Participants work in teams to answer questions and complete activities, earning puzzle pieces as they go. The winning team is the first to complete their puzzle.





LOOKING FORWARD

ASPIRING TO GREATNESS



Our theme for the year ahead is **Aspire to Greatness.**

As we look ahead to 2026/27, our focus is on deepening impact where we already work, expanding responsibly into new communities and partnerships, and continuous improvements that allow our programmes to scale sustainably.

Grow ECD priorities for 2026/27

- Grow the Small Business Programme in new, targeted communities.
- Launch our new, improved Grow ECD App.
- Expand through partnerships and scalable models that amplify reach without compromising quality.
- Deepen value and impact at existing Small Business Programme centres, focusing on sustainability and education outcomes.
- Strengthen government engagement and align with national ECD priorities.
- Enhance systems, tools, and digital infrastructure to support scale and efficiency.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT: TCB GROUP CONSOLIDATED

FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

Total income
R100.4m
Revenue, grant funding and other income

Grant-funded contribution
53%
R53.2m of total income

Total group expenditure
R89.2m
Admin, training, operational and ECD costs

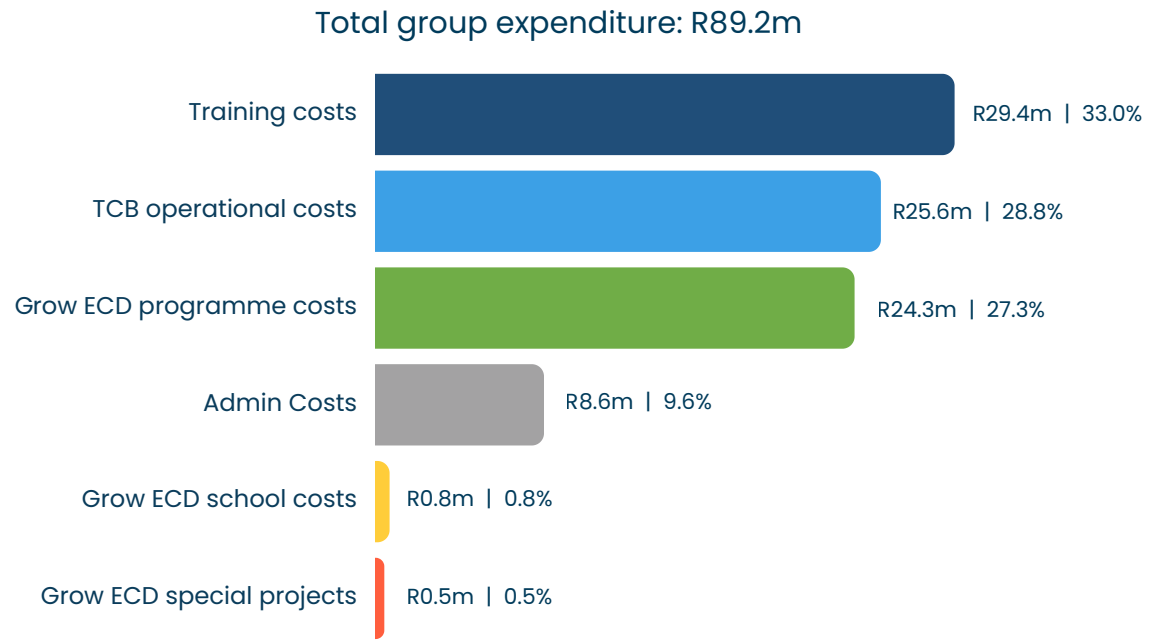
Admin ratio
9.6%
Admin costs as a percentage of total group expenditure

Income composition



- **Revenue** R35.6m | 35.5%
- **Grant funding** R53.2m | 53.0%
- **Other income** (incl. interest) R11.6m | 11.5%

Total group expenditure composition



TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS FINANCIALS

taking care of business

FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

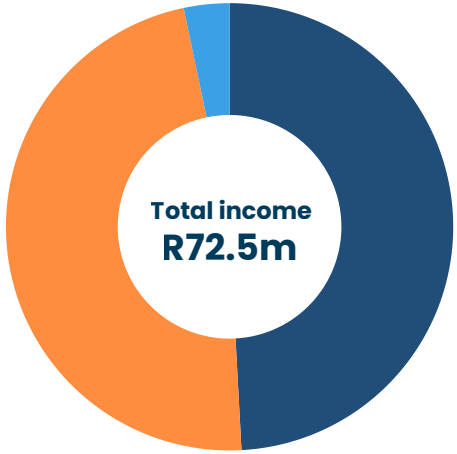
Total income
R72.5m
Revenue, grant funding and other income

Grant-funded contribution
47.6%
R34.5m of total income

Total expenditure
R63.6m

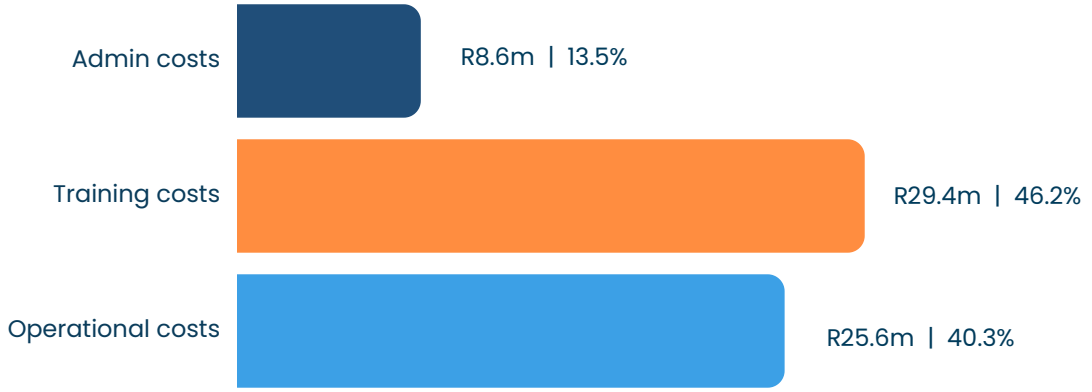
Year-end surplus
R12.1m
After interest income

Income composition



- **Revenue** R35.6m | 49.2%
- **Grant funding** R34.5m | 47.6%
- **Other income** (incl. interest) R2.4m | 3.3%

Total group expenditure composition



GROW ECD FINANCIALS

FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

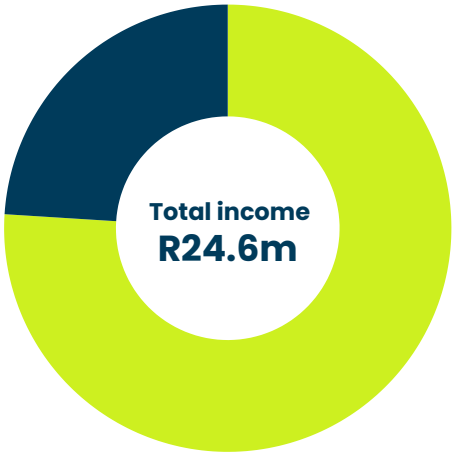
Total income
R24.6m

Grant-funded contribution
76.0%
R18.7m of total income

Total expenditure
R25.6m

Year-end deficit
(R0.9m)
Defecit for the year

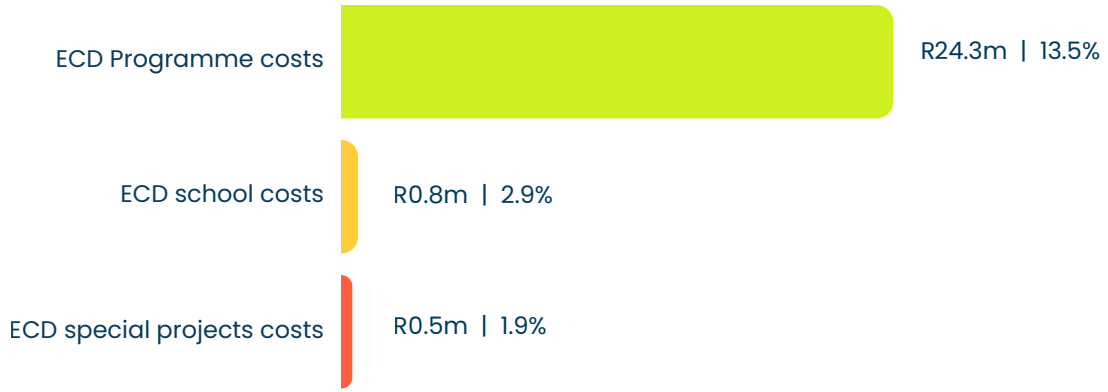
Income composition



Grant funding R18.7m | 76.0%

Other income (incl. interest) R5.9m | 24.0%

Total group expenditure composition



Percentage calculated against total expenditure

FINANCIAL COMMENTARY

TCB, GROW ECD AND SUSTAINABILITY

TCB surplus for the year

R12.1m

Supported by higher grant funding and interest income

tcb taking care of business

TCB reported revenue of R35.6m, marginally below the prior year of R36.1m. Grant funding increased materially to R34.5m from R23.5m - mostly driven through UIF (government) funding for the 'certified' year 2 ISBP (Informal Small Business Program) component of our program, while other income increased to R2.4m and interest income reduced to R3.3m - down from R4.2m in the prior year.

Total expenditure increased to R63.6m from R55.7m. The largest movement was training costs, which increased by R6.5m to R29.4m – again, largely driven by year 2 ISBP related costs - a reflection of scale and programme investment.

TCB closed the year with a surplus of R12.1m compared with a prior-year deficit of R1.0m. The result is positive, but revenue growth, pricing discipline and sound cost management remain important management priorities as program activity scales.

Grow ECD deficit for the year

(R0.9m)

Deficit a result of greater investment into programme delivery

GROW ECD

Grow ECD generated total income of R24.6m, broadly in line with the prior year. Grant funding increased to R18.7m and represented 76.0% of total income, while other income reduced to R5.9m from R8.3m. The reduction was driven by lower donations received, interest income and administration fee income.

Total expenditure increased to R25.6m from R21.0m, with programme costs the main driver at R24.3m or 95.2% of Grow ECD expenditure. This increase in programme costs means that Grow ECD reported a deficit of R0.9m which, if we exclude the prior year donation(s) paid, is a decrease from the prior year "surplus" of R4.1m.

The year ahead is supported by the Jobs Fund grant and active funding relationships, with continued focus required on program delivery & execution and fundraising diversification.



Iesrafeel Jakoet
CFO

"From a sustainability perspective, the outlook remains healthy. Both TCB and Grow ECD have been awarded Jobs Fund grants, and the group continues to benefit from active grant funding relationships.

Fundraising remains top of mind, and the group has broadened its fundraising channels through the opening of the TCB Foundation in the UK. The practical focus for FY2027 is to protect earned income, maintain cost discipline and ensure that new grant activity translates into funded and measurable delivery."

THANK YOU TO OUR IMPACT PARTNERS!

Funders who contributed R50 000+

L'ORÉAL

Rotary Club of Table Bay

Allan & Gill Gray PHILANTHROPIES

Fondation philanthropique NEXT

UIF WORKING FOR YOU

South African Future Trust

Humulani Empowerment Trust

SIMON KUCHER

HR SOLUTIONS

Ruth & Wise CHARITABLE TRUST

Volkswagen Community Trust

zensar™

Ninety One

macs

the really great teacher company

WOOLWORTHS

Michaelhouse Community Partnerships

ENVIRON® Skin Care Institute

EDT

Global Business Solutions — Future Thinking, Now

xylem SA Trust

VINIMARK THE WINE COMPANY

Insurance Institute of Gauteng — Engage. Connect. Grow.

INJINI Africa's EdTech Incubator

HONOR

Kaizenvest

momentum METROPOLITAN

Belgotex™

Other Funders

Raymond Mahlaba Skills Training Centre
iTOO Special Risks
Ingi Tor Hermannsson
ANB Operations
Petco Producer Responsibility Organization
Shareforce
Synchron Markings
WEC
Pattern Matched Technologies
Adinga
ClemGold Foundation
Barker Insurance
Hope Worldwide Africa
Adrenaline Capital
Brightsparkz
The Cipla Foundation
The Domino Foundation
Legacy Ventures
TBI Investment Managers

GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

Independently verified by iZinga Assist

iZinga is a UK-based initiative that independently verifies South African charities, helping international donors confirm the legitimacy and credibility of the organisations they support.

iZinga Assist recognises Grow ECD and TCB as fully verified and compliant — awarded to NPOs meeting the highest standards.

- **Legal compliance:** Up-to-date registration & documentation
- **Strong governance**: Accountable leadership & ethical oversight
- **Financial transparency**: Clear, accurate reporting on funds
- **Proven impact**: Evidence of outcomes, community engagement & sustainable change

View the Grow ECD verification token here.

View the TCB verification token here.



tcb taking care of business

021 531 2134

info@tcb.org.za

tcb.org.za