

PROJECT PLAYGROUND

ANNUAL REPORT
OPERATIONAL YEAR 2020



PROJECT
PLAYGROUND

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

This has been an extremely trying year for all of us, be it in our family circle, friends circle or being part of this wonderful organisation.

I always wondered what if we could live in a society where each and every child had an equal opportunity to be anything they dreamed of being. In a society where the joy that play brings to the lives of children was a right that each and every child could enjoy.

This is something that I have always imagined in all my time as a sports administrator. I do now believe that being part of Project Playground has been turning those imagined thoughts into realities.

When I was asked to consider serving on the PPG Board, it filled me with immense pride and humility to be able to be part of this wonderful organisation.

I would like to acknowledge everyone that has been part of making Project Playground such a huge success. I am not going to mention names now except the visionaries; Princess Sofia of Sweden and Ms. Frida Vesterberg, the founders of PPG, the latter being the pillar of PPG today.

I will fail in my duty if I do not extend my gratitude to the board members, the wonderful staff, the funders, the parents and of course the wonderful children that crosses our path daily.

I Thank You

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Chairman



THE YEAR 2020

2020 started off as any other year, with registration days in January and the commencement of programs as of February. We registered **645 participants**, including **24 for Play On Wheels**, but it was not long before we realised that 2020 would be anything but a "normal" year.

On the 23rd March, South Africa went into a hard lockdown, which meant that no one was allowed to leave the house except for trips to the doctor or the grocery store.

As of April, our work thus continued online; providing information, activities and much needed essential items to all our 645 participants and their families. Operations as we knew it, was no more.



"A roller coaster journey which was sad thinking of the children who had to share a one room house with families being locked indoors"

Nokwanda Mbekwa - Project Playground Social Auxiliary Worker

LOCKDOWN IMPACT

The hard lockdown prevented any type of ground work on site, but thanks to the incredible flexibility of the staff, we managed to develop a digital strategy which prioritised the physical and mental well-being of the children and their families.

Facilitators developed an online curriculum with interactive and mindful activities which brought families together and kept children feeling safe and cared for.

Our social work department spent weeks on the phone continuing their therapeutic interventions virtually, which wasn't always ideal, but also managed to **call every single family** to map the individual challenges that had risen as a consequence of the lockdown.



We asked parents, what is your biggest concern during lockdown?

It's that we will go hungry because I'm the breadwinner. Now that we stay at home, it will leave us with no food on the table

My biggest concern is that we are running out of money and another thing is people don't listen they still walk around for nothing

My biggest concern is we as parents might lose our jobs and we won't be able to provide for our families.

The school kids are way behind with their school work not every parent has access to the internet and check the work online



LEARN TO PIVOT

With the hard lockdown, *everything* closed. Including schools. Many families who rely on meals at schools, now worried about how they were going to feed their children. Parents were affected financially as "no work no pay" applied. Households went into dire situations, and much due to stress and frustration, cases of domestic violence sky rocketed.

Due to lack of electricity, data, computers, money, space, and responsible adults at home, most children missed all opportunities to homeschool. Privileged children in private schools did not. Between March to July, all our programs were online, reaching **over 1700 individuals**.

During the same period, Project Playground decided to pivot our programs and focus all our time and energy on psychosocial support, food and information, as well as educational support. Facilitators spent the month of June training to be tutors, and in July we opened the doors to **240 children** attending academic classes.

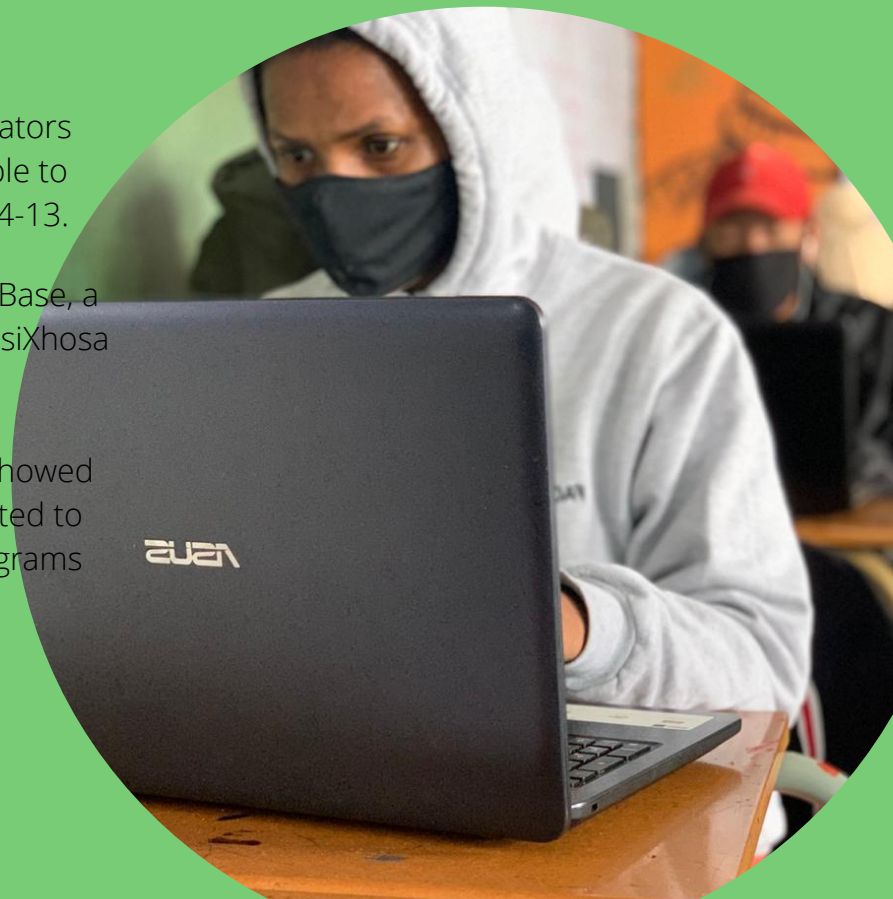


Thanks to our partner Siyakhula, all our facilitators received one month tutoring training to be able to facilitate academic activities for children aged 4-13.

In July 2020, Project Playground introduced FunBase, a program aimed at providing maths, english and isiXhosa classes for our participants.

In December, the assessment of the program showed that more than **90% of the participants** wanted to keep FunBase as an integrated part of the programs that Project Playground offers in general.

They spoke, we listened.



BEING HOLISTIC IN COVID

For Project Playground, working with a holistic approach means we take the child's mental and physical well-being into consideration. And even though we work based on a long term model to child development, we also acknowledge that there are those times we have to consider short term interventions; the period of the hard lockdown was one of them and we took our responsibility seriously.

In collaboration with businesses and government, Project Playground handed out over **2000 masks** to staff and community members, provided over **15,500 meals** as well as a **one month food hamper** to each staff member.

We also sent out daily posters via whatsapp to staff and families with information on Covid and how to stay safe.



Face
masks,
please!

At Project Playground, we're committed to everyone's safety. Let's all make sure that we wear our face masks and practice social distancing.



One of the many campaigns and posters we created to remind staff, children and families how to stay safe

PLAY ON WHEELS

The children at Play on Wheels returned to our centers in August after being at home for five months. A few had deteriorated but thanks to our carers daily phone calls and messages with activities and reminders, most kids were ok.

45% (11 participants) of the participants returned to the center when we opened. We therefore started a mobile service to ensure all of our participants were being seen to; we brought school to them; each child received two hours of 'class time' daily and the family received instruction on how to continue working on the goals that were set during this time.

Play on Wheels received **39 one-month food hampers** from our partner Western Cape Forum for Intellectual Disability which were delivered to the participants.



CELEBRATIONS DESPITE A PANDEMIC

On the 1st of September 2020, Project Playground **turned ten years**. Its been a decade of realising hopes and dreams, of ups and downs and of making a true impact on the lives of thousands of families. We had a big celebration planned, which of course had to be postponed.

True to our ability to adjust, we set up a virtual event "**Safe Space**", aimed at both celebrate our accomplishments but also to raise much needed funds. Artists and sports profiles joined the cause; GoldFish, Kaka, Malin Akerstedt, Quincy Jones, and former UN Deputy Secretary General Jan Eliasson and more all participated.

This was also the year we went **completely digital**, meaning no more petty cash and no more wastage of paper. Everything, from leave applications to registrations and screenings, is done online.



PROJECT
PLAYGROUND
Safe Space

THURSDAY, SEP. 17TH
7 PM to 9 PM

YOU'RE INVITED TO OUR ONLINE FUNDRAISING GALA SAFE SPACE

Help us ensure that more children and youth at risk of exclusion grow up in a safe space by registering for our Safe Space fundraising gala: www.project-playground.org/safespace



OPPORTUNITIES IN DESPAIR

Almost **80% of all Grade 4 learners** in South Africa cannot read for meaning. Before students get to Grade 10, a whopping 50% of them have dropped out of school. Yet, our country spend 6.5% of their GDP on education, one of the highest in the world. Almost 95% of all children are enrolled in Grade R. So why is the investment not paying off?

Project Playground believes it is because children need to be holistically regarded in order to learn. In our mission to improve the quality of the foundation phase for children, we decided to open a creche. **33 children** were enrolled in March 2020 at our new initiative in Gugulethu.

All children were thoroughly assessed and **30% needed intervention** from our Occupational Therapist in order to put measures in place for the children to catch up to the level they were meant to be at for their age.



Our creche in Gugulethu accepts children between 3-7 years



FINANCIALS

Lockdown had a devastating impact on many individuals and businesses; in an effort to ease this pain, government stepped in and subsidised salaries for those applying for relief. Project Playground benefitted from TERS during four months which assisted greatly with our expenses since fundraising became increasingly harder.

To all those who supported Project Playground during lockdown, you have shown the true meaning of Ubuntu. Thank you for lifting up your neighbour in need. Thank you for helping our kids stay safe.

Anna Luies – Fundraiser



Income

Total: 7 371 169

Private Donors: 0.6%

Government: 2.1%

Grants: 12.6%

PPG Sweden: 84.7%

Expenses

Total: 6 358 747

Salaries: 73.6%

Rent: 4.5%

Transport: 4.3%

Telephone & Internet: 2.5%

Food: 1.8%

*5 largest expenses only. For full report please see AFS on our website



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Thank you to everyone who has in any way contributed to the journey of Project Playground during 2020, we wish everyone a continued safe and healthy year.

Project Playground, 100-676-NPO

Trust IT57/2011

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