

# TRUSTNEWS

1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER ISSUE – 2023

NEWS YOU CAN TRUST

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2** HYBRID STAKEHOLDER DAY WELCOMED ENGAGEMENT
- 4** KGODISO PROJECT IS ON THE MOVE – EMPOWERING SMMEs ACROSS SIOC-CDT's BENEFICIARY COMMUNITIES
- 6** SIOC-CDT COMMITS R1M+ IN FUNDING AS PART OF ITS CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR 'BIZNIZ IN THE BOX'
- 8** ENHANCING THE COMPETENCY OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE EDUCATORS THROUGH THE ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION (ADE) PROGRAMME
- 10** MATRIC RESULTS 2022 – AT A GLANCE
- 14** SIOC-CDT SPEARHEADS THE FUTURE FOR MULTIPLE LEARNERS WITH THE 'FROM LITERACY AMBASSADOR TO B.ED. STUDENT' PROJECT
- 17** CATARACTS PROGRAMME RESTORES VISION TO HUNDREDS
- 19** LANGBERG HOËRSKOOL HOSTEL PROJECT COMPLETED
- 21** LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMME WITH AN AGRICULTURAL FOCUS EQUIPS LEARNERS WITH CRITICAL SKILLS AND TRAINING



SIOC  
**COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
TRUST**



## EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2023. Whilst looking forward to rolling out our various programmes and projects this year, we'd also like to reflect back a bit on 2022. Our Stakeholders Day event, which laid out the various initiatives embarked on during 2022 as well as sharing the reviewed Community Development Strategy (CDS) and Vision 2030, was formulated to allow for interactive engagement.

**CONTINUES INSIDE**



We focused on a more visual presentation, with our first multimedia video summary, and were able to host physical attendees for the first time since 2020. It was a day that was hugely enjoyed by all of us, with interactive engagement from both physical and virtual attendees. 2022 laid a strong foundation for our 2023 initiatives and we are grateful to all stakeholders for their interest and engagement on the day.

In 2023, our Enterprise Development Programme initiatives are progressing in their projects to support our SMMEs and elevate them to become more viable business initiatives. In this issue, we share the progress of our business support initiatives, the Kgodiso Project and Bizniz in a Box.

On the Education front, we focus on our 2023 Bursary Fund Cohort, and take a look at how our matriculants fared in last year's examinations as well as our Educator Capacity Building Programme in the maths curriculum area (and more).

The Re a Fola Programme is continuing to enhance the health of our beneficiary communities in the Health and Social Welfare portfolio. This issue highlights the Cataracts Programme that has made great strides in the JTG and Tsantsabane areas in assisting individuals to regain their vision through access to cataract surgery.

We hope that you enjoy the content in this issue and look forward to another year of initiatives, programmes, projects, workshops and more.

Happy reading.

**Refilwe Sebogodi**  
Editor



## HYBRID STAKEHOLDER DAY WELCOMED ENGAGEMENT

The annual Stakeholder Day is one of the key annual events hosted by SIOC-CDT as it contextualises all strategic activities engaged in throughout the year and outlines future plans for SIOC-CDT stakeholders. This event is an opportunity to bring all stakeholders under one roof to engage in and interrogate SIOC-CDT's performance for the year under review.

In 2022, the event was hosted at the Kathu Country Club Hall in the Northern Cape. There was also a live stream of the physical meeting via a webcast, owned SIOC-CDT digital platforms and a live radio broadcast (KuraraFM). The event was interactive and attendees were able to ask questions and receive answers on various

issues using the platforms provided. The presentation made by the CEO, Mr Vusani Malie at the Stakeholder Day event was also recorded and made available on the SIOC-CDT website and social media platforms, with community members being given the opportunity to submit questions for 5 days.

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There were good interactions from community members where important questions around infrastructure development and other interventions were posed and answered. Clarity was also provided in terms of SIOC-CDT's supporting role to the provincial government and municipalities in the execution of their respective mandates (without assuming their role). It was further acknowledged where there are shortcomings, such as a lack of adequate visibility of SIOC-CDT in certain beneficiary communities and commitments were made to address this.

Questions raised at (and post) Stakeholder Day are being attended to and a progress report will be provided during community engagements throughout the year and at the 2023 Stakeholder Day.

Stakeholder Day was also an opportunity for SIOC-CDT to present the new Community Development Strategy, which adds EMERGENT NEEDS as an additional focus area to the established focus areas of Education, Training and Skills Development, Health and Social Welfare and Enterprise Development.



Stakeholder Day is aimed at facilitating an interaction between SIOC-CDT and its key stakeholders, and in so doing, strengthening relationships. The event brings Trustees and the Executive Management together with provincial and local government, development partners, community groups and civil society – with the common goal of advancing sustainable community development in SIOC-CDT beneficiary communities.



## KGODISO PROJECT IS ON THE MOVE

Empowering SMMEs across SIOC-CDT's beneficiary communities

Launched on 1 November 2022, SIOC-CDT's Kgodiso Project – an 'Intensive Business Development Support Programme', is well underway. With an investment of approximately R50 million, it seeks to empower up to 50 potentially scalable SMMEs across all five of its beneficiary communities.



investment of approximately **R50 million**

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**K**godiso Project will run for the next 12–36 months. The project forms part of SIOC-CDT's strategic objective to intensify its efforts in funding viable SMMEs across its communities. The project is executed in collaboration with the Small Development Enterprises Agency (SEDA), the Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA), the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), Anglo Zimele, loveLife and the Local Economic Development (LED) offices of all five beneficiary municipalities.

The application process, completed on 3 February 2023, saw no fewer than 769 applications received. All applications were ranked according to a pre-determined point scoring system, with the top 200 businesses undergoing a further review by SIOC-CDT's Enterprise Development (ED) Unit and its project partners. A further review and assessment was then conducted by a Business Development Support panel, after which the final 50 businesses were selected. This list is currently in the final consideration stage by the Board of Trustees and will be concluded before the end of the second quarter of 2023.

Support provided to the selected participants will include both a financial and non-financial element, with the final support provided determined by the exact requirements of each business. Over and above a financial grant or interest-free loan, in support of each businesses' growth, the non-financial support provided (in conjunction with the SEDA, NYDA and other development partners) will focus on several areas. These include market and feasibility studies, business planning and advisory services, mentoring, technical skills, licenses and permits, training and educational support, psycho-social support and any other interventions needed to increase market share, create access to new markets or generally assist with business growth.

An intensive monitoring and evaluation phase, over a period of 12–36 months, will form a key part of this project to ensure that all necessary support interventions are executed and that the set targets are achieved. By end June 2023, all 50 enterprises will be fully entrenched in this programme and receiving the necessary support.

**"We are extremely pleased with the progress being made in the implementation of this project. It is our commitment to expedite all necessary phases, as planned, to ensure the envisaged quality outcomes are achieved. Our sincerest thanks and gratitude to all our project partners, including Local Economic Development officials from all five beneficiary communities for their exceptional contribution and full participation since the commencement of this project. We believe the Kgodiso Project will ensure both sustainability and growth, leading to greater economic development for all our communities."** VUSANI MALIE – CEO, SIOC-CDT

## **SIOC-CDT COMMITS R1M+ IN FUNDING**

as part of its continued support for 'Bizniz in the Box'

SIOC-CDT's Enterprise Development strategy is based on three fundamental approaches in support of businesses across its beneficiary communities – access to funding, markets and business development support. This saw the launch of 'Bizniz in the Box' – a project aimed at supporting unemployed youth by providing an opportunity to develop and manage their own business.

In collaboration with Coca Cola Beverages South Africa (CCBSA) and the Thabazimbi Local Municipality, the 2017 launch attracted no fewer than 169 unemployed youth with matric qualifications (or equivalent) across seven local towns. After rigorous training that included a business development bootcamp, 27 aspiring entrepreneurs were identified and rewarded with businesses to the value of R 114,000.00 each (including container structures, equipment and start-up capital).

To date, 16 of the 27 businesses are currently operational and have continuously been provided with post-investment support by CCBSA through a service provider. However, although these businesses have managed to remain operational through various challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and community dynamics which resulted in dwindling markets, more can be done to provide access to markets for the businesses as this seems to be the major challenge.

A site visit of all businesses was conducted during February 2023 to identify the status of each one and the varying challenges faced.



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These range from lack of access to markets to competition, faulty equipment, limited capacity and no turnaround strategy (in some cases where it is needed). Insights gleaned clearly indicated an opportunity for support of these businesses across several different business units and functions, including:

- Marketing and branding
- Health and safety
- Governance and risk
- Financial management
- Mentorship and support

As part of its ongoing commitment to the success and long-term sustainability of these businesses, SIOC-CDT has undertaken to provide closer monitoring on a monthly basis. Further, a SIOC-CDT Enterprise Development member will dedicate the first week of each

month to conduct site visits to further monitor and support operations and to monitor revenue generated to gain deeper insight into the actual real-life impact thereof. In addition, a steering committee has been set up consisting of SIOC-CDT, a business advisor from the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) as well as a financial advisor from the SIOC-CDT Business Development Panel via the Thabazimbi Hub.

Based on the requirements of the operating businesses, adequate funding has been ring-fenced to support each business through grant funding. It is expected that each business, from the support supplied, will be able to perform to the maximum with the aim of making the businesses self-sustainable in the long run.

“We remain committed to further assisting these outlets as far as possible. Our Enterprise Development team and partners are heavily invested in ensuring the fruition of long-term sustainable businesses. This is for the benefit of not only of the business owners themselves, but the greater community as well.”

VUSANI MALIE – CEO, SIOC-CDT

# **ENHANCING THE COMPETENCY OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE EDUCATORS**

through the Advanced Diploma in Education (ADE) Programme

The quality of education in South Africa has been shown in several authoritative reports to be of the worst of all middle-income countries and even worse than many low-income African countries, with SA learners rated as the weakest in Mathematics<sup>i</sup>. This lack of quality education is particularly pertinent in disadvantaged communities, causing an uneven distribution of students entering higher education and succeeding at tertiary studies. The National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) report of 2014 shows that ‘poor subject knowledge on the part of teachers continues to be a critical problem’. However, as per Leu (2005) and ULEAD (2019), the way that teachers teach is of critical concern in any school development initiative designed to improve the quality of education. It is also generally accepted that competent, motivated teachers play a vital role in supporting, guiding, and motivating learners to attain good results.

<sup>i</sup> Mullis, Martin, Foy & Arora, 2012; Spaul, 2013; Bilbao-Osorio, Dutta & Lanvin, 2014

**S**IOC-CDT’s involvement with Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) is aligned with Education, Training and Skills (ETS) development focus areas as a contributor to employability.

In 2022, SIOC-CDT identified six high schools and 13 feeder primary and middle schools in the beneficiary communities for a pilot Schools of Excellence project, grounded in Principal-led School Development.

Building a pipeline of competent and capable science and mathematics teachers, and school management teams, for the ultimate betterment of learners, has been the main focus of the TPL initiatives implemented by SIOC-CDT. This has been done through professional, full qualification programmes, such as the Advanced Diplomas in Education (ADEs), aimed at strengthening the Pedagogical and Content Knowledge of practicing teachers.

It is against this background that opportunities to register for the Advanced Diploma in Education: Senior Phase Natural Sciences and the Advanced Diploma in Education: Senior Phase Mathematics were created for 30 teachers in each of the said subject areas.

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The Advanced Diploma in Education is a two-year part-time programme offered as a hybrid learning programme and consisting of contact sessions supplemented by on-line learning and support sessions.

These programmes are all grounded in a practice-based approach consisting of contact sessions, implementation in the

The ADE programmes are offered by Stellenbosch University and for this pilot project, the contact sessions will be presented in Kathu, Northern Cape. This removes inter-provincial travel costs for the Northern Cape beneficiary area's teachers (Joe Morolong, Ga-Segonyana, Gamagara and Tsantsabane) and lowers the inter-provincial travel costs, compared to traveling to Stellenbosch, for the Limpopo beneficiary area's teachers (Thabazimbi).

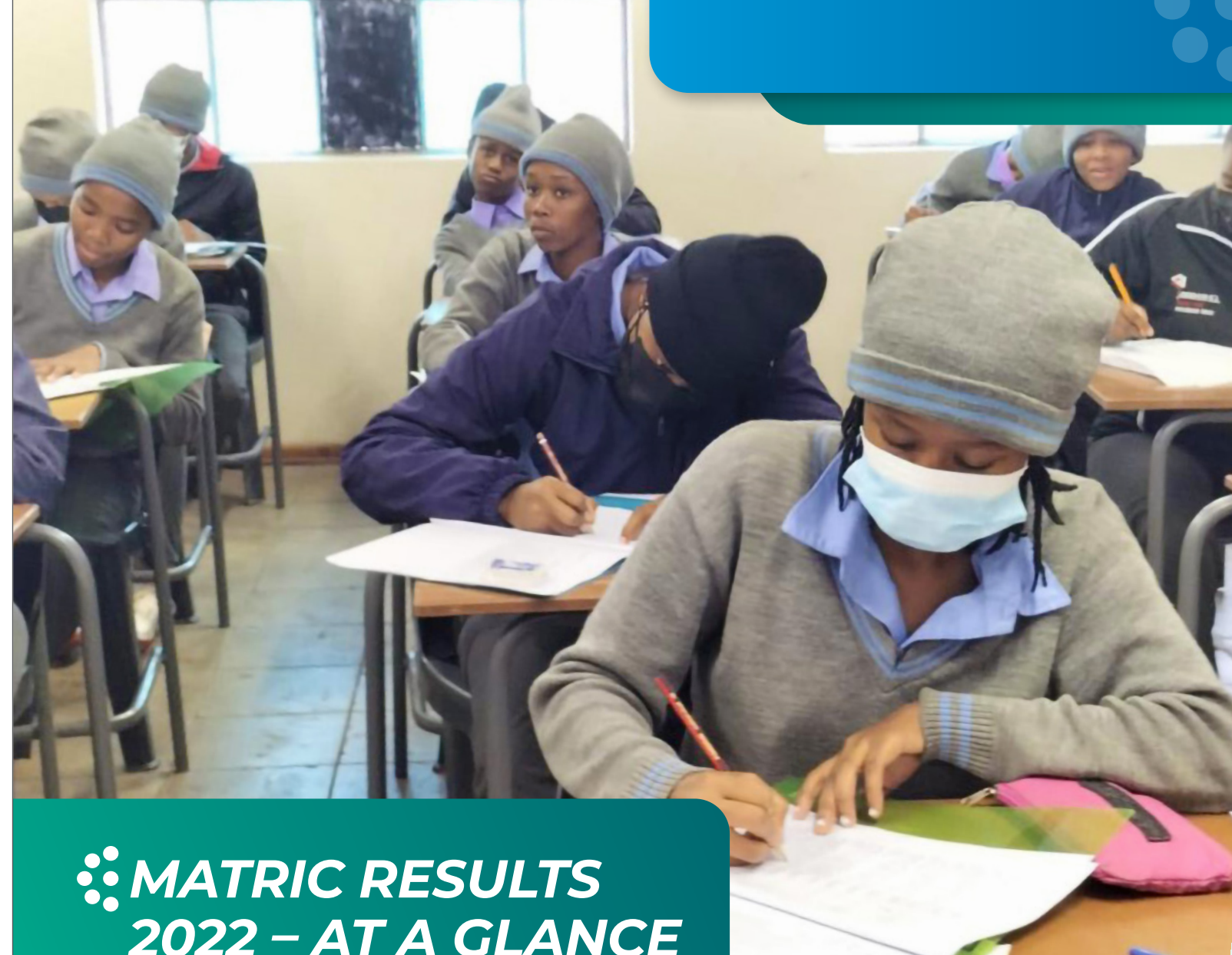
classroom and on-going mentoring support designed to bridge the gap between theory (training) and practice (teaching).

The aim of the Teacher Professional Learning initiative is to enhance teacher competence and in so-doing ensure a positive prognosis for enhanced learner performance. This should improve the number of learners that take FET phase Mathematics and ultimately improve Grade 12 National Senior Certificate Mathematics results.

A professional academic programme pipeline also aims in keeping those teachers with a passion for teaching and life-long learning in the classroom to improve South Africa's basic education sector learner outcomes, in contrast to the mainstream academic pipelines that take the teachers out of the classroom and into the higher education sector and academia.

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system is being set up to ensure that this programme is strictly monitored and that impact is able to be measured.

The first teacher cohort commenced end of March 2023 (after the first school term).



## **MATRIC RESULTS 2022 – AT A GLANCE**

SIOC-CDT's goal is to assist and empower learners across its beneficiary communities with the tools and resources needed to ensure as strong an academic result as possible and, with that, to open up opportunities that are otherwise not possible. The various projects undertaken by the SIOC-CDT Education, Training and Skills Development Team are formulated according to the preferences of the district offices of the Department of Basic Education and the results of the various interventions are closely monitored to ensure that the interventions are meeting strict targets.

**S**IOC-CDT support is supplied to public schools in the three beneficiary districts of John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality (JTG), ZF Mgcawu District Municipality (Northern Cape) and Waterberg District Municipality (Limpopo).

The 2022 results (national – 80.1%) have been plotted for these districts against relevant provincial and national performance levels.

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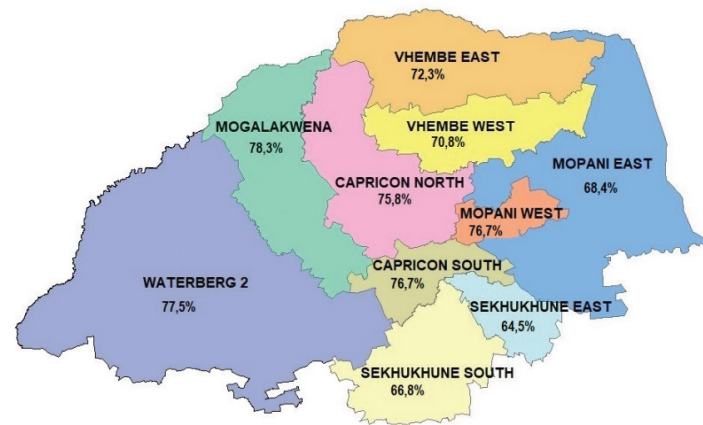


Figure 1: Limpopo NSC results

## ZF MCGAWU DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

ZF Mgcawu District Municipality achieved the highest matric pass rate in the province, having exceeded the national pass rate. The three Tsantsabane schools achieved an overall pass rate of 80.8% that was driven by improvements at Ratang Thuto and Postmasburg High Schools.

This was accompanied by an increase in 45 passes relative to the class of 2021.

Even though Blinkklip dropped 3.2% in their pass rate, their number of passes increased by 26 from the class of 2021.

## JTG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

The JTG District once again, and disappointingly so, obtained the lowest National Senior Certificate (NSC) pass rate in the province and amongst the lowest amongst districts nationally (alongside Sekhukhune East and Sekhukhune West (Limpopo) among others). Although there was a slight improvement from prior years, the rapidly increasing enrolment in JTG schools seems to be a challenge that the district struggles to overcome.

Whilst the percentage pass rate needs to be improved, the growth in the number of learners in Grade 12 and the increasing number passing the NSC demonstrates a positive trend that requires continuous support.

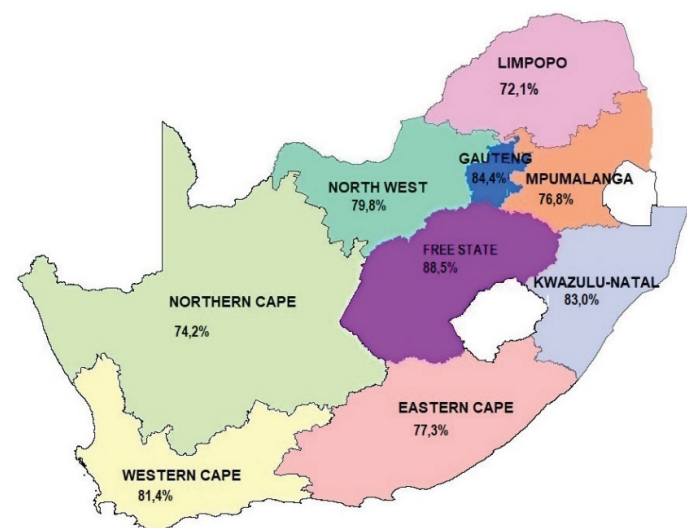


Figure 2: South Africa (National) NSC results



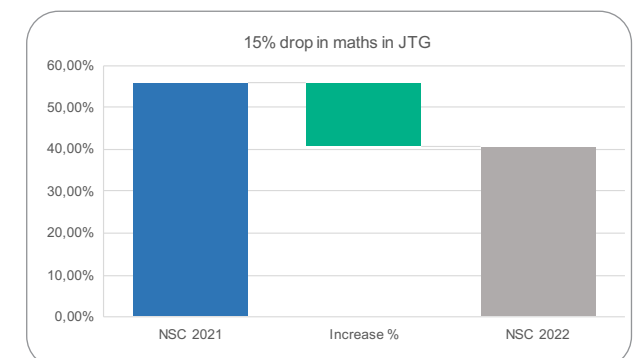
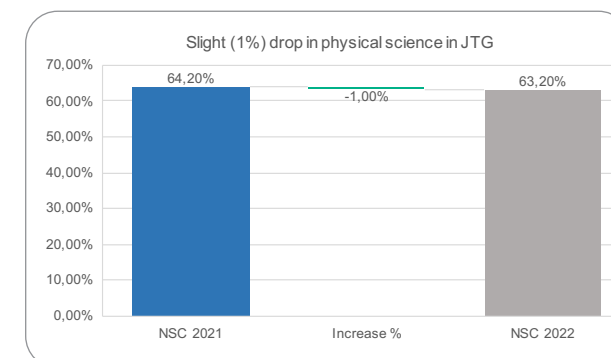
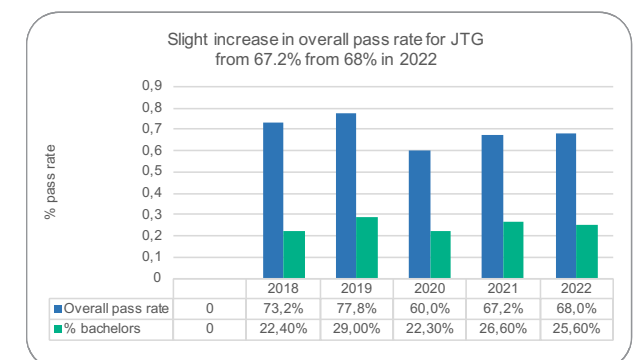
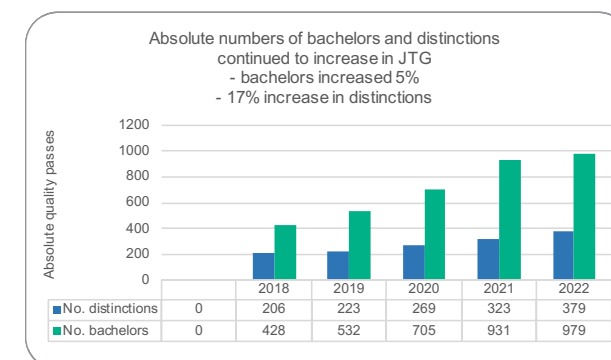
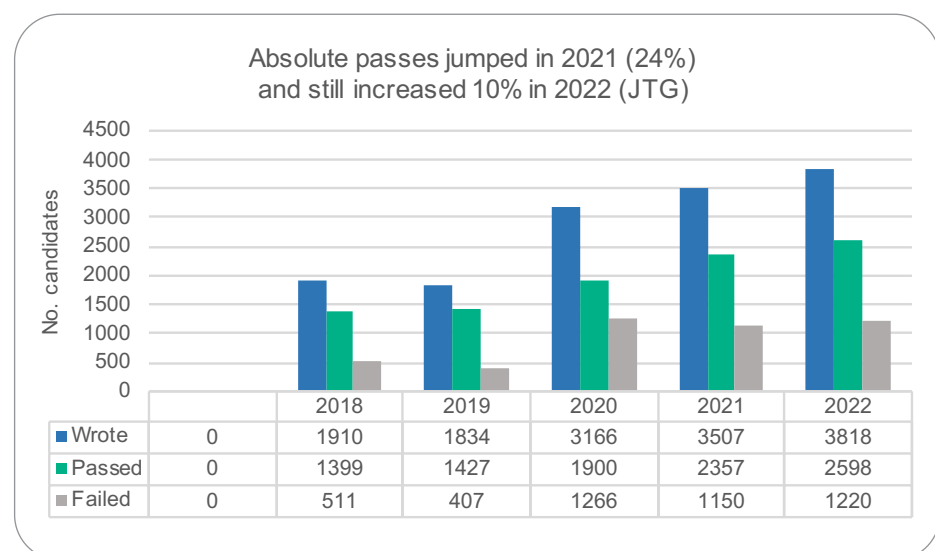
Figure 3: Northern Cape NSC results

## WATERBERG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

Despite a slight decrease from 2021, the average for seven Thabazimbi schools outperformed district, provincial and national pass rates.

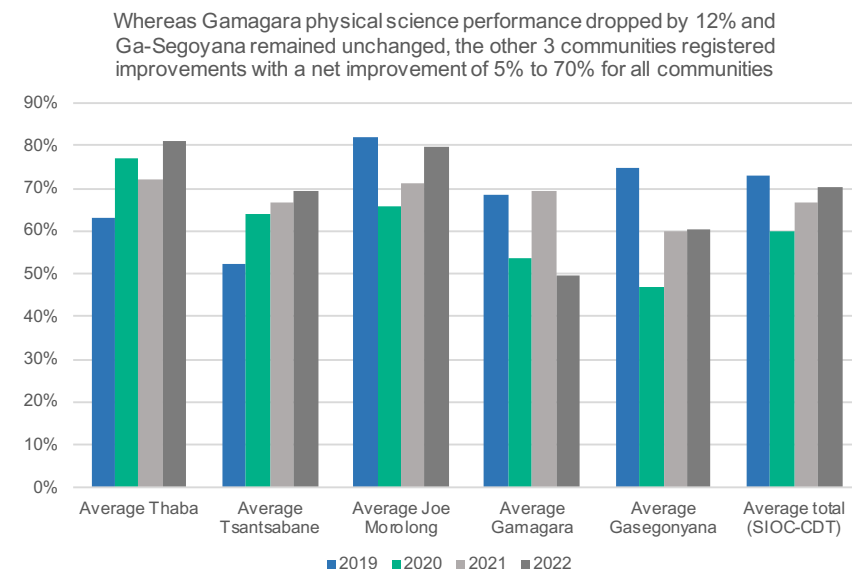
Itereleng has previously been a school with challenges and after significant improvements in 2021, unfortunately regressed again. Mabogopedi, too, has high enrolment figures with other challenges. Although the overall result of 61.7% is 15.8% lower than 2021, the number of actual passes has grown 28.4% (or 25 more learners getting a NSC certificate).

Against all odds, Groenvlei improved to 94.4%, although the school was a construction site in 2022 where learners had to be moved around many times to make way for builders.



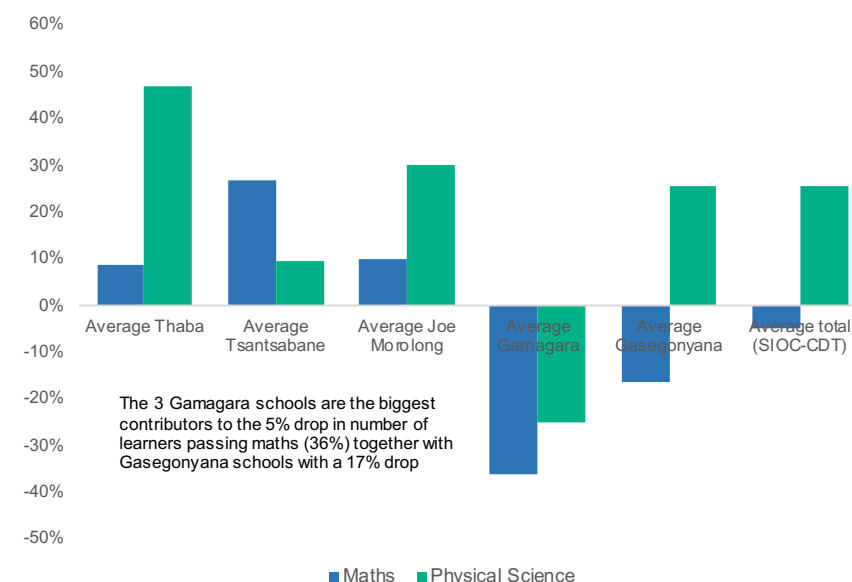
## PHYSICAL SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

Whereas Gamagara Physical Science performance dropped by 12% and Ga-Segoyana remained unchanged, Thabazimbi, Tsantsabane and Joe Morolong all registered improvements with a net improvement of 5% to 70% for all communities.



“Section 29 of the South African Constitution enshrines the right to education. We are committed to ensuring this, not only because it is every learner’s right but also as education is vital to ensuring sustainable and productive lives.”

VUSANI MALIE – CEO, SIOC-CDT



## SIOC-CDT SPEARHEADS THE FUTURE FOR MULTIPLE LEARNERS

with the ‘From Literacy Ambassador to B.Ed. Student’ project

During the course of 2023, 30 post matric students across SIOC-CDT’s beneficiary communities will form part of the ‘From Literacy Ambassador to B.Ed. Student’ project. At a cost of R2,408,679.00, this project aims to transition these students from their initial recruitment as literacy ambassadors (contributing towards increased literacy levels within beneficiary community schools), to helping them qualify to study a Bachelor of Education in 2024.

South Africa’s literacy crisis (evidenced by the 2016 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS)<sup>1</sup> that indicated 78% of our Grade 4s could not read for meaning), which was compounded by the impact of COVID-19, plus South Africa’s overwhelming unemployment numbers are serious challenges that threaten the future of our youth! SIOC-CDT’s ‘From Literacy Ambassador to B.Ed. Student’ project aims to simultaneously tackle both these challenges head on.

**In partnership with Rhodes University and the Northern Cape Provincial Department of Basic Education (NCDoBE), the project seeks to address the below recommendations from the 2016 PIRLS study, namely:**

1. To strengthen teachers in terms of teaching reading literacy and provide training on teaching content knowledge across all languages in the Foundation phase (and especially African languages).
2. To increase the proportion of time spent on reading in the Foundation and Intermediate phases as well as encourage extra mural reading and reading habits.
3. To increase efforts to attract younger quality candidates into teaching to address attrition and target interventions for high-risk populations including boys and learners living in remote rural areas and townships (with Limpopo, Eastern Cape and Northern Cape provinces identified as needing additional support).

<sup>1</sup> Howie, S.J., Combrinck, C., Roux, K., Tshela, M., Mokoena, G.M., & McLeod Palane, N. (2017). PIRLS Literacy 2016 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study 2016: South African Children’s Reading Literacy Achievement. Pretoria: Centre for Evaluation and Assessment.

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Unemployment remains a challenge particularly for young people, especially those from rural, remote areas. According to StatsSA, “The official unemployment rate among youth (15-34 years) was 46.3% in Quarter 1 2021. The rate was 9.3% among university graduates.” A youth unemployment rate of 46.3% is a staggering figure and one which foretells increased poverty and risk of political instability.

While a university degree is no guarantee of a job, having a degree does increase one’s chance of being employed by a significant 37%. Furthermore, not all degrees are equal, and a B.Ed. is a degree that is almost assured of leading to a permanent job role.

In addition, it was recently observed by Professor van der Berg of Stellenbosch University that, “the modal group of current

teachers is 50 years old hence in the next 10 years there will be a demand for teachers as a result of a retirement boom.” All of this is exacerbated by DBE projections in 2005 that predicted that the Northern Cape would have the third highest shortage of teachers by 2020.

**This project aims to address problems that, whilst general to South Africa, are heightened in the Northern Cape.**

**These include:**

1. The need to improve literacy levels in schools at Foundation phase especially post COVID-19 (as a short-term goal).
2. The need for passionate, dedicated, well-trained teachers with an understanding of literacy teaching (as a long-term goal).
3. The need to address youth unemployment through short-term employment (associated with the previous two goals).

Together with the Northern Cape Department of Basic Education, 30 participants will be carefully selected to become competent ‘Literacy Ambassadors’ capable of providing additional literacy support to Foundation phase learners. The upskilling will take the form of Rhodes University’s ‘Advanced Certificate in Foundation Phase Literacy Teaching’, recently acclaimed in an external review by Dr Nick Taylor from the Joint Educational Trust (JET) and the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

The 30 literacy ambassadors are expected to be placed at the pilot schools identified for the proposed ‘Principal-led School Development’ approach as it aims to

address one of the most critical challenges that South African schools are facing. Since principals are, more often than not, the champions of any school development initiative implemented at their school, they will be engaged from the onset to ensure they are fully informed of the detail of the reading initiative, expected outcomes and the importance thereof.

This upskilling of these 30 young people as ‘Literacy Ambassadors’ fits perfectly with the principles identified in the SIOC-CDT draft Skills Development Strategy. It creates the opportunity for students with no qualification to secure one.

**“This project is one that is very close to our heart as it brings with it enormous opportunity to make a very tangible difference by simultaneously tackling both South Africa’s literacy crisis and our dire unemployment situation. We are grateful to all partners and stakeholders for their support as we strive to positively shift the education and employment landscape within our beneficiary communities.”** VUSANI MALIE – CEO, SIOC-CDT

**Successful candidates will need to meet the following profile:**

- Have a passion for teaching young children.
- Have passed their National Senior Certificate (NSC) and be within a couple of Admission Point Score points of entry into a B.Ed.
- Have studied Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy during matric.

**The successful candidates will then:**

- Undertake the literacy support-person orientation/training.
- Render literacy support under the supervision of a teacher.
- Be supported to rewrite NSC subjects where improvement is needed to meet B.Ed. entry level requirements.
- Be supported to apply for a B.Ed.
- Be supported to apply for funding (NSFAS or Funza Lushaka).



# CATARACTS PROGRAMME RESTORES VISION TO HUNDREDS

This year marks the start of a third year of the SIOC-CDT Comprehensive Eye Care Programme for the John Taolo Gaetsewe (JTG) and Tsantsabane beneficiary areas. One of the focus areas of the programme is to alleviate the cataracts challenge experienced by many senior citizens. The cataract campaigns to date have seen well over 549 patients being operated on from across the three district hospitals.



Cataracts (the clouding of the natural eye lens) is a leading cause of vision loss in people over the age of 40. Loss of sight causes suffering to both the affected individual and their loved ones as well as far-reaching social and economic impacts as a person with restricted vision is less likely to easily find work and might require assistance to navigate everyday life.

Cataracts are treatable, but resource constraints have resulted in a high backlog of cataract operations in the Northern Cape. Despite efforts by the Departments of Health (DoH) and its partners, the burden of blindness is said to be growing exponentially, due to both the growing and aging population and restricted access to treatment.



Postmasburg Hospital in the Tsantsabane area and Tshwaragano Hospital in the JTG District are categorised as Level One District hospitals. This means that they are generalist facilities that do not have allocated specialists. Patients requiring specialist services (including cataract surgery) are referred to Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe Hospital (RMSH) in Kimberly. This poses a challenge to referred patients for operations at RMSH which already suffers a high-volume backlog for cataracts procedures. The referrals are also a great challenge for patients from the Tsantsabane and JTG beneficiary communities as they need to travel a long distance to the facility in Kimberly.

In 2021, SIOC-CDT facilitated a collaboration with the DoH and the South African National Council for the Blind under the Re a Fola Programme to implement the ‘Cataract Operations Project’ for a three-year period, to end in 2024. The main aim of this project is to help the Northern Cape Department of Health deal with the growing backlog of the cataracts operations that are being referred to RMSH, mainly from Postmasburg and Tshwaragano Hospitals.

Through this project, specialist ophthalmologists are contracted to undertake scheduled cataract operations at Tshwaragano and Postmasburg Hospitals. There are six operation dates planned at each of the hospitals for 2023. Beneficiary communities are alerted via local broadcast and social media campaigns.

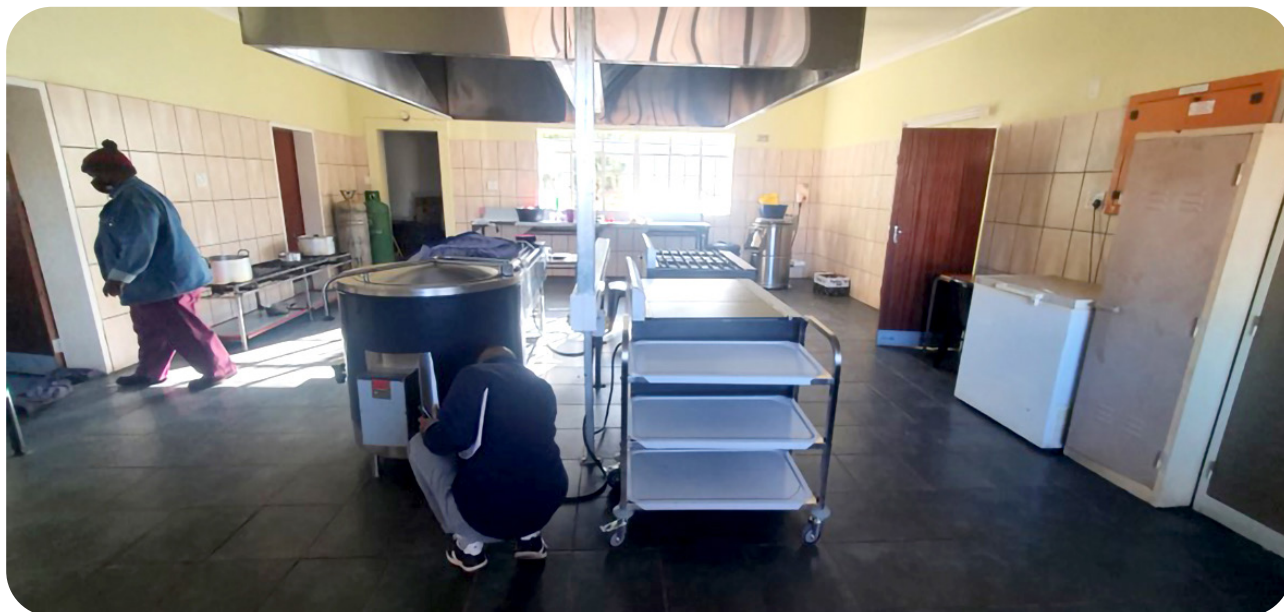
“So far, the project has shown a positive impact in helping to meet the ever-growing demand for this vision saving operation. The project provides access to vision-restoring surgery in the JTG and Tstantsabane areas; sparing cataract patients the long waiting periods to be referred and attended to at the distant RMSH in Kimberly.”

VUSANI MALIE – CEO, SIOC-CDT



# LANGBERG HOËRSKOOI HOSTEL PROJECT COMPLETED

Our Langberg Hoërskool hostel project has reached completion. This is one of the significant initiatives that SIOC-CDT undertook to contribute to uplifting the education of children from the JTG District, Tsantsabane and surrounding areas. The school hostel has now been fully furnished with all the necessary kitchen equipment and hostel furniture.



Langberg Hoërskool is the only secondary school in Olifantshoek, south of the Gamagara Local Municipality. The school is a very strategic secondary school for JTG District, Circuit 4 and is classified as a Quintile 3 no fee institution and serving learners from local Quintile 1 schools that are also no fee-paying schools. With a learner capacity of around 800 students; the school offers a mixed boarding facility for 350.

The school has risen from the ashes post the 2012 service delivery protests that disrupted many livelihood activities across the JTG District, where the protesting communities did not spare youth education in the

district from being disrupted to voice their disgruntlement.

This resulted in the school closing down for months and all learners having to repeat their grades in the following year.

As a result of the closure, both the school premises and hostels suffered some level of damage through lack of maintenance. Post an intervention by the Northern Cape Department of Basic Education (NCDoBE), the premises infrastructure was renovated at a cost in excess of R20mil.

However, for the premises to be fully functional and able to cater for boarding students, a further intervention was sought. SIOC-CDT agreed to aid the school with the required assistance.

A budget of R4 602 662.88 (excl Vat) was approved by the Board of Trustees for implementation of the project.

The Langberg Hoërskool hostel was supplied with and/or installed industrial kitchen equipment such as stoves, boiling pans, cold rooms and more; industrial laundry appliances such as washing machines, tumble dryers, ironing boards and more; industrial electric hot water tanks; bedroom furniture and linen as well as dining room furniture for both students and teachers; study hall furniture; learning materials; garden equipment; cutlery; and plumbing.

The scope was further extended to execute a bulk electrical supply upgrade (i.e. mini-substation, cables, distribution boards etc.) and the internal electrical reticulation of the hostel.

The mini-substation was connected to the Gamagara municipal supply line



and commissioned in August 2022. The equipment is now functional. SIOC-CDT have also included a 1-year service contract on kitchen and laundry equipment whilst the NCDoBE prepares to assign a budget for the new financial year for the maintenance plan.

The project implementation has seen a total of six local SMMEs and 18 labourers participating in the project. SIOC-CDT ensures that in one way or another, projects benefit the local SMMEs and the unemployed labour market.

“Enhancing the schools, facilities helps in creating a conducive learning environment. We focus on ensuring that we make impactful contributions to developing our communities in many areas, with education being one of our top priorities. We believe this effort will contribute immensely to the Northern Cape Department of Basic Education achieving a transformed quality education system and will produce positive results regarding matriculation pass rates.”

VUSANI MALIE – CEO, SIOC-CDT





# LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMME WITH AN AGRICULTURAL FOCUS

equips learners with critical skills and training

The Life Skills Programme at Thabazimbi Youth Centre, commenced during the third quarter of 2022, is now well underway in collaboration with loveLife and the AgriSeta Agricultural Programme (the statutory body responsible for the accreditation of agricultural learnership skills training). This programme forms part of SIOC-CDT's commitment to support the youth within its beneficiary communities through the provision of critical skills and training essential for the sustainability of their livelihoods and futures.

No fewer than 150 learners are enrolled in the eight-month programme, and have started with the practical element of this intensive agricultural skills training programme. The Learning Organisation (TLO) – suppliers of the programme and contracted to AgriSeta, are currently rolling out the placement phase to ensure that all learners will be provided with practical experience.

Space within the Thabazimbi Youth Centre as well as at the Deo Gloria Primary School have been identified as suitable for this purpose.

To ensure all learners are work ready for the practical element of this training, early February saw the provision of all necessary PPE, together with all of the required tools and a tractor by TLO.

## ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME INCLUDE:

- To create interest amongst the youth and to help guide them towards farming as a very viable career option and source of employment.
- To empower youth with the agricultural knowledge and skills needed to allow them to take advantage of employment opportunities, including that of potentially operating as small-scale entrepreneurs.
- To ensure that the participating youth receive the necessary accredited qualifications that are compliant with national SAQA standards. These skills and qualifications will enable them to receive funding loans for start-ups to enable them to run their own small-scale agricultural operations or businesses.

This will enable the 'soil turning element' of the practical training, after which learners will then receive the necessary experience on bedding prior to plantation.

Initially only available to learners in Grade 11 and above, future plans include an extension of this programme to include learners in lower grades. This project aims to help mitigate the rate of school dropouts in the Thabazimbi area.

“We are excited by the progress and smooth running of this programme and for that, as loveLife, our hugest thanks and gratitude goes to SIOC-CDT as our sponsor and to all parties who have made this programme a reality. This is one of our programmes with great potential to contribute in addressing the increasing unemployment challenge in the Thabazimbi area and ultimately insulating youth from engaging in wrong behaviours such as substance abuse.”

RAYMOND MOFOMME – LOVELIFE THABAZIMBI  
CO-ORDINATOR



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