“School meals are an effective safety net, helping to ensure every child has access to education, health and nutrition. In the fight against hunger, school meals are a sound investment in the future of the next generation.”

World Food Programme
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Founded in 2005, The Lunchbox Fund responds to the poverty and hunger crisis faced by millions of undernourished and underserved children within the South African school system.

Lunchbox Fund started simply by feeding 100 children most in need at a high school in Soweto and has since grown to feeding over 25,000 school children, ranging from 2 - 18 years old, each school day, nationwide across South Africa.

Overwhelming scientific evidence attests to the tremendous importance of the early years for human development and to the need for investing resources to support and promote optimal child development from conception through school-going years. Lack of opportunities and interventions, or poor quality interventions, during early childhood can significantly disadvantage young children and diminish their potential for success.

LBF seeks to address both Stimulation for Early Learning and Nutritional Support by offering fortified Nutrition into Educational interventions. Our primary goal is to uphold a child’s right to a basic education.

We believe that no child should be kept from learning by hunger or household food insecurity.

It is universally recognised that children cannot be educated, learn, thrive or grow with insufficient nutritional intake. In providing a hot meal at school, LBF offers targeted in-school, fortified nutrition support to early childhood development centres (ECDCs) and early learning playgroups (ELPS), primary and secondary schools, and after-school programmes in areas which have been empirically identified as being home to the most vulnerable and food insecure households.

Lunchbox Fund’s meals offer a behavioural incentive for children to attend and stay in school, and a nutritional advantage to enable them to concentrate and learn while there. These are important steps for children in reaching their full potential as adults. An education increases a child’s potential to develop viable livelihood strategies, and contribute economically and engage civically. This helps break intergenerational cycles of poverty and vulnerability and builds true sustainability.
Achievements 2005 to Date

- 100 children at one school in Soweto at foundation
- 19,4M nutritious breakfasts and lunches served since launch
- 97 000 children reached
- 894 non-fee paying schools and Early Childhood Development Centres supported
- 9 provinces served
- 55 jobs sustained for the community as Food Mamas and Fieldworkers
- 5 core staff members based in USA and SA
- 10 000 quarterly evaluation and monitoring visits undertaken
The 2018 African Report on Child Wellbeing recognises poor nutrition as the single most important challenge facing Africa's children. According to the authors - in little more than 30 years' time, Africa will be home to a billion children – an unprecedented growth that represents both a challenge and an opportunity. The report identifies two key areas ringing bells of an unfolding human development crisis: the persistently high levels of stunting and child malnutrition on the continent and the intellectual and economic consequences of substandard education that a large number of Africa's children are receiving.

UNICEF estimates that nearly two in every five children leave primary school without learning how to read, write or do simple arithmetic. UNESCO believes that 85 percent of boys and nine out of ten girls of primary school age in Africa are not learning. In South Africa 90% of children in the poorest schools present as school unready in the reception grade, 78% of those children will not read for meaning by Grade 4.

In other words, the majority of our primary school children will never have the required skills, knowledge, understanding and competencies expected for their age. And, without determined and sustained intervention, they will never catch up. But it is more than just the pre-school years that are impacted by under-nutrition and sub-standard education, the crisis in early childhood development (ECD) is a burden the child carries for a lifetime. In South Africa 50% of children who start school never complete their education - and in their lifetimes they will face unemployment rates of between 40 and 70%.

Addressing the situation requires that Government and civil society work together to adopt integrated strategies that combat child undernutrition, especially in a child’s early years. Along with extensive provision of school and community-based feeding programmes, we need to fill the information gap of what constitutes dietary diversity. South Africa has a ‘double burden’ of widespread stunting due to insufficient nutrition, and obesity due to poor quality diets. These occur side by side in the same community and even in the same child. Both are associated with poverty. Food high in fat and sugar but low in essential nutrients is often more affordable than healthy food and is easy to access.

Lunchbox Fund is privileged to work increasingly with funders as well as community partners who have made the link between nutrition and education; who understand that the task of facilitating youth development requires co-investment in a holistic approach. In 2018 LBF served over 5,14 million meals as daily school meals to 25,727 children throughout the country. Our ongoing investment in ECD (through the provision of breakfast into educational playgroups for preschoolers) — showed dividends, with attendance improving by 29%. This addition of Lunchbox Fund nutrition support to beneficiaries receiving education from specialist NGOs is an essential means to ‘resource stacking’; leveraging more profound child development outcomes than can be achieved through organisations disparately.

Applications for nutritional support continue to flood in; reminding us that there are a lot more schools to reach, many more children to feed. This knowledge drives LBF’s momentum and focus and I want to thank our remarkable and committed team who move mountains every day. But, while we are proud of what we have achieved this year, we are very aware that this is the tip of a billion child iceberg. A meal served at school is more than just a bowl of food. It is an incentive to participate in gaining an education. An education that will ultimately provide employment and ensure South Africa’s ability to participate effectively in a increasingly competitive and technologically driven global economy.

– Topaz Page-Green
2018 Accomplishments

5,14M meals
25 727 children
669 schools
49 food mamas
Where We Work

In 2018 Lunchbox Fund served 25,727 children nationally each school day.
“For the growing number of countries with a “double burden” of undernutrition and emerging obesity problems, well-designed school meals can help set children on the path towards healthier diets as dietary habits developed in childhood are likely to persist throughout adulthood.”

What's in the Lunchbox?

Maize Meal
- Riboflavin, Folate, Thiamine

Biryani
- Protein, Folate, Magnesium, Iron, Vitamin B5, Zinc, Carotenes

Samp & Beans
- Complex Carbohydrate, Protein

Soya Mince
- Isoflavones, Pytate, Phytosterols, Soy Protein, Omega 3 Fatty Acids

Rice & Lentils
- Protein, Fibre, Folate, Magnesium, Iron, Amino Acids, Vitamin B5

Porridge
- Manganese, Selenium, Dietary Fibre

Peanut Butter
- Protein, Monounsaturated Fats, Vitamin E, Magnesium, Iron, Antioxidants

Gravy Mix
- Retinol, Riboflavin

VitaMilk & VitaDrink
- Potassium, Folic Acid, Zinc, Iron

Vegetables
- Schools add locally sourced vegetables three times a week, yielding additional fibre, vitamins and minerals
Meal Costs

Average Meal Cost*
R3.00 / $0.21

Breakfast**
R2.36 / $0.17

Lunch**
R3.54 / $0.25

* Averaged across: age of child, portion size, meal served.
** Inclusive of VAT & Last-mile national delivery to School/partner NPO. Delivery is monitored via an interactive vehicle tracking system and on-the-ground signing protocols.
Community Empowerment: Food Mamas

Lunchbox Fund believes that community involvement and ownership is the key to sustainable Non-Profit interventions. We enable schools with over 80 children to hire a previously unemployed woman, preferably a mother or grandmother from the community, to prepare and serve the food. We currently have 49 women across South Africa working as a dedicated Food Preparers, affectionately known as “Food Mamas”.

A Food Mama prepares the food on-site each day. She receives a monthly stipend, calculated against hours/days worked and regional recompensing norms, paid by LBF directly into her bank accounts. Each woman is taught transferrable skills, such as: meal preparation, stock management and audit, register maintenance and quarterly reporting. Food Mamas are contracted to the school and their employment is managed by the Principal of the school in which they work.

Hiring from within the immediate community creates an ‘on-the-ground’ monitoring network that assists the school in identifying children at risk, in need of nutrition and those not attending school. The women working with LBF through the schools are economically empowered, able to provide for their own families and spend their salaries locally — supporting small community businesses. Schools are able to redeploy money they would have spent on small salaries - allowing them to upgrade facilities, pay teachers and buy education materials. This sustains and encourages community involvement, making the school a source of both education and community upliftment.
“Studies show that every US$1 invested in school meals programmes brings a US$3-10 economic return from improved health, education and productivity.”

– Two Minutes On School Feeding, World Food Program
2018 Financial Summary

100% of The Lunchbox Fund’s core operational costs (salaries and running expenses for US and SA entities) are covered by donations and grants made for and designated as being specifically for this purpose. This allows Lunchbox Fund to ring-fence all other grants/donations for utilisation in the provision of nutrition programs in schools.

Lunchbox Fund is able to assure corporate funders, grantors, donors, partners and sponsors that every cent they donate is channelled directly into providing a hot meal each school day to a child.

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<th>Grants</th>
<th>LBF SA</th>
<th>LBF US</th>
<th>COMBINED LBF</th>
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** Includes a payment of $27,637 for 2015 & 2016 audit expenses.
Sustainability

The Lunchbox Fund’s consistent fundraising strategy in 2018 included:

Corporate Partnerships

Grants and Donations by Privately Held, Community or Family Trusts

Solid and long-term relationships with Private Donors

Consistent private donations via website and marketing

High-return fundraising Benefit Event

SA

FUNDERS AND GRANTORS

DONORS


US

DONORS

$100,000+

Emmanuel Roman — Ed Eisler — TCI Fund Management (US) Inc. — Anonymous

$40,000 – $99,999

Litowitz Family Foundation — Prada USA Corporation

$10,000 – $39,999


$5,000 – $9,999


TRAVEL PARTNER

Cecil Jowell Family Trust

Molteno & Sterkstroom Community Trust

HCIFoundation

The Cape Wine Auction Trust

Cecil Jowell Family Trust

ED Platform

Wartenweiler Charity Trust

Shoprite Charity Trust
“Time and time again, our experiences show that health and education are two sides of the same coin, and investing in one requires simultaneous investment in the other. …When we improve the health and nutrition of schoolchildren, we transform the rest of their lives. Children who are well-nourished learn more, and as adults they earn more and are more productive. That transformation carries through to the next generation with the improved health of their own children, creating a long-term cycle of economic growth and progress.”

PATRON
Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

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Brian Moore  Nutrition Supplier, Sizani Foods

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Pienaar Motabene, Mthuthuzeli Qambela, Thandeka Twala

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TWITTER
@thelunchboxfund

CHARITY REGISTRATION INFORMATION
SOUTH AFRICA
Registration Number: 2012/168298/08
Enterprise Type: Non-Profit Company
Tax Exemption Status: Section 18A (SARS)
PBO: 930038205

UNITED STATES
Registration Number: 2653536
Enterprise Type: Registered Public Charity
170(b) (1) (A) (vi) / 2370ld
Tax Exemption Status: 501 (c) 3

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