“Children who manage to survive malnutrition continue carrying the harm in their bodies, minds and spirits for the rest of their lives. And it doesn’t stop there: by attacking our children, malnutrition erodes our national development. The nation that starves its children is also starving itself.”

Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng
Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Town
Vision and Mission

The Lunchbox Fund provides a nutritious daily meal in school to children who would otherwise go hungry. We work in townships and rural areas across South Africa, helping children get the education they desperately need to build a life free of poverty for themselves and their families. All education efforts are wasted if a child is too hungry to focus, participate and learn. We believe no child should be kept from learning by hunger.

Lunchbox Fund supports children at all stages of education; in preschool, primary, secondary and after-school settings. We work in urban, peri-urban and rural settings. Our meals provide nourishment for physical health and growth, aid mental concentration. They offer an incentive for a child to attend school daily, and for their families to support their educational progress.

The schools and preschools we serve are situated in vulnerable communities, home to the most food-insecure children in South Africa. Our schools are either ineligible for government support or require additional support to alleviate food shortages.

Improving food security and educational attainment for children in poverty cannot be approached in isolation; the two issues are integrally related. We believe nourishment and education can help children grow to be healthier young adults, equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to build secure futures for themselves, their families and their communities.
Child Hunger in South Africa

Though viewed as a major Sub-Saharan African economic hub, South Africa experiences the highest levels of inequality in the world. The dual economy yields wealth for a few, and unemployment and precarious livelihoods for the majority. [1]

Poverty and food-insecurity prevent South African children from enrolling in school and attending daily. Hunger stops children from concentrating and learning when they do attend. As a result:

- 90% of preschoolers (six years old) present as school unready
- 97% of 15 year olds are innumerate
- 78% of 10 year olds are not able to read for meaning
- 67% of 18 year olds fail final year maths
- 50% of children will never complete their schooling

[1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

Girls are more deeply affected than boys, with nearly 20% of school non-attendance among girls being accounted for by family commitments. [3]

School nutrition provides considerable higher returns on education investments; encouraging enrolment and attendance in schools, and overcoming children’s endemic hunger to enable them to participate, absorb information and learn.

The Importance of Early Childhood Development

90% of the human brain develops by age six

80% of young children in Lunchbox Fund’s targeted communities, do not have access to toys

71% of South Africa’s children under six are not on track to meet developmental milestones

50% of a child’s cognitive capacity is influenced by their environment

48% of South Africa’s children are not enrolled in any early learning programs

30% of the country’s poorest are stunted due to early childhood malnourishment [1, 2, 3]

Quality Early Childhood Development (ECD), preschool education, is globally recognised as the most impactful investment in human capital that a country can make. Research shows a return on investment of between 7% and 13% when investing in early learning. Despite this, only 52% of South African children from informal, tribal and the rural areas attend any form of ECD Centre. Additionally, only seven million out of an estimated twelve million children in this age group are being fed every day, leading to 30% of children being physically and mentally stunted by malnutrition.¹ ² ³

Many caregivers, already living in vulnerable and impoverished communities, often cannot afford the basic household necessities of food and clothing; let alone the small fees asked by Early Childhood Development Centres. Often the only form of preschool education the child receives is at home, and often from a parent with low levels of education themselves.

By the time the child presents in the reception grade at primary school – they are considered ‘school unready’; a deficit from which they never recover. By the time that child is in Grade 4 (11 years old) – she and 78% of South African children will not be able to read for meaning in any language. This, along with economic factors, results in 50% of learners dropping out of the education system before they finish high school.⁴

Research has proven that quality ECD bridges the inequality gap. Guaranteed in-school nutrition provides a compelling incentive for caregivers to send children to school. When nutrition and education are combined, they ensure children are on par with their classmates when starting school.²

With this goal in sight, Lunchbox Fund has built strategic partnerships with non-profit organisations offering early childhood education to the country’s most rural, under-served and marginalised children. Children are provided with high quality, structured learning programmes in a variety of settings – mobile education units, “Come and Play” buses and toy libraries and in early learning play and home groups.

Each child derives maximum benefit from small-group focus, age-appropriate lessons, educational toys and learning equipment. Their facilitators are well-trained and experienced, and their caregivers are involved. The addition of Lunchbox Fund meals guarantees that previously unreached children are no longer further excluded from learning by hunger.

In addition to our focus on their preschool years, Lunchbox Fund also continues to reach children in Primary and Secondary schools with essential breakfasts. After-school programs that situate children in safe spaces, help them with homework, facilitate sport and offer access to mentors when school is out. We guarantee an essential, end of day meal. Our Relief Program has scaled down but need persists, and Lunchbox Fund provided 2,1 million meals to 16,700 families across South Africa during 2021.

I am proud of our resilient, creative and agile staff who meet the challenges thrown at them, head-on. They have shifted gears a number of times over the past two years, addressing the urgent and continually changing requirements of a post-Covid environment. Through creating resource-stacking partnerships and meeting children where they are, Lunchbox Fund has ensured that South Africa’s children are equipped both educationally and nutritionally to thrive – putting them on a trajectory for a brighter future.

— Topaz Page-Green
During 2021 Lunchbox Fund had a three-part School Nutrition focus.

Preschool education was profoundly impacted by lockdowns, pandemic capacity restrictions, cost of PPE and parental fears around children’s exposure to the coronavirus. Schools had closed (some permanently), principals and teachers had died from the virus and leases on buildings, shacks and land had been rescinded or lost.

When schools reopened, Lunchbox Fund assured them of ongoing nutritional support if they were able to re-establish themselves. 80% of our schools did, an enduring testament to the tenacity of Africa’s Women.

Primary and Secondary schools were hit hard by the lockdown, job losses, provincial rioting, unusually inclement weather and geographic isolation. Alternate day attendance mandates, implemented to prevent overcrowded classrooms, meant many children were denied daily meals.

Lunchbox Fund provisioned schools with sufficient fortified breakfast porridge to ensure a meal to any child who arrived, whether pupil or sibling. It worked – schools within the expanded breakfast program reported sustained attendance and an improvement in learner’s attitudes, optimism, outlook and desire to continue with their education.

A restructured lunch menu focused on providing children with healthy but interesting and varied options throughout the month. Schools and children were happy with their new meals. Lunchbox Fund will continue to discover ways to deliver optimal nutrition and taste within the provision of a single meal during the child’s school day.
What’s in a Lunchbox?

- Rice & Vegetable Biryani
- Baked Beans
- Porridge
- Maize Meal
- Soya Mince
- Samp & Beans
- Peanut Butter
- Tomatoes
- Wholewheat Macaroni
- Rice & Lentils
- VitaDrink & VitaMilk
- Spices
- Sunflower Oil
- Fresh Vegetables

Lunchbox Fund’s NutriBright Soya, Porridge, Maize Meal and VitaMilk are fully fortified with vitamins and minerals. Peanut Butter is provided to schools that have access to fresh bread. Schools are required to add fresh, seasonal, locally sourced vegetables to lunch meals at least three times a week.
2021 School Feeding Achievements

5.4 M school meals served

30 518 children fed each school day

919 educational interventions reached

58 Staff, Food Mama and Fieldworker jobs sustained
Where We Worked

919 schools
30,518 children
5,403,545 meals

Northern Cape
- 16 schools
- 350 children
- 70,000 meals

Eastern Cape
- 135 schools
- 6,323 children
- 1,115,160 meals

Western Cape
- 97 schools
- 4,393 children
- 892,060 meals

Gauteng
- 72 schools
- 3,582 children
- 766,625 meals

North West
- 29 schools
- 1,504 children
- 306,640 meals

Free State
- 179 schools
- 2,367 children
- 305,450 meals

KwaZulu Natal
- 211 schools
- 6,516 children
- 1,037,640 meals

Limpopo
- 85 schools
- 2,097 children
- 382,400 meals
## Financial Summary and Sustainability

Lunchbox Fund maintains separate income accounting to differentiate between funds received for School Nutrition Provision and those intended for 2021’s Relief Feeding Program. This income allocation reflects independently on the table (right).

Lunchbox Fund’s core administration and staffing costs are covered by donations, grants and funding designated specifically as being for operational costs.

100% of all other funds raised: via trusts, private donors, foundations, grants and corporate social investment programs, is channelled directly into the provision of nutrition programmes for children in educational settings.

The Lunchbox Fund’s Nutrition Program fundraising strategy in 2021 included:

- Grants and Donations by Legacy, Privately Held, Community or Family Trusts
- Corporate Partnerships and in-kind donations
- Strong, sustained relationships with Private Donors and Funders
- Monthly private donations via website, electronic funds transfer, SnapScan and PayPal

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### Administrative/Operating Expenses

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School Nutrition Program Funding

**South Africa**

**FUNDERS, TRUSTS AND GRANTORS**


**INDIVIDUALS**

School Nutrition Program Funding

United States

DONORS

$100,000 — $1,000,000
Emmanuel Roman
IHS Markit Foundation
Kraft Heinz Foundation

$10,000 — $50,000
Balthazar Getty
Bernard and Anne Spitzer Charitable Trust
Christopher Pinkham
Craig Saks
Mala Gaonker
Sony Music
Thomas Kelleher
In 2021 Lunchbox Fund continued to meet the needs of families who had lost their livelihoods during the pandemic by providing a curated box of provisions designed to feed a family of four a main meal each day for a month. With the assistance of both long-term and new funders who donated into our dedicated COVID-19 Relief Program, we provisioned over 16,700 boxes of critical food relief for families across all provinces and settings in South Africa — remote rural areas, peri-urban settings, informal settlements, and metros. In all, our Relief Programme reached 67,000 vulnerable people with over 2.1 million meals.

**FUNDERS, TRUSTS AND GRANTORS:**
- Albany (in kind)
- Ball Foundation
- Bingo Vision
- Click Foundation
- Harry Crossley Foundation
- HCI Foundation
- Karoshoek Solar One
- KFC/Add Hope
- MegaFreight
- Maria Marina Foundation
- R van Nieuwenhoven
- Rotary (eThekwini)
- Siemens Mobility
- Sizani Foods

**INDIVIDUALS:**
- A Cloete
- B Kennedy
- Keartland
- Louise Rapley
- Mills
- Mia Kruger
- Mohamed Jhatham
- P Kenyon
“Better health and nutrition allow children to learn and perform better, broadening their educational opportunities. School feeding programmes act as an incentive for families to enrol and keep children in school. Relieving parents from having to budget for lunches, they boost incomes and help to alleviate poverty—school meals represent 10 percent of the income of poor and vulnerable households, a significant saving for families with more than one child.”

United Nations World Food Program
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Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

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Liana du Toit

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Pienaar Motabene

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SA FIELDWORKERS
Phumelani Khumalo, Lerato Mafeny, Chikumbutso Maluwa, Gcina Mondi, Mthuthuzeli Qambela, Thandeka Twala

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/thelunchboxfund

INSTAGRAM
@thelunchboxfund

CHARITY REGISTRATION INFORMATION
SOUTH AFRICA
Enterprise Type: Non-Profit Company
Registration Number: 2012/168298/08
Tax Exemption Status: Section 18A (SARS)
PBO: 93004275

UNITED STATES
Enterprise Type: Registered Public Charity
Registration Number: 2653536
Tax Exemption Status: 501 (c) 3

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