

September 2022

Impact of the Social Employment Fund (SEF)

ASSITEJ SA Case Study



PRESIDENTIAL
EMPLOYMENT
STIMULUS



WESTERN CAPE
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP



This case study illustrates the scope of the Social Employment Fund's impact and reach through the lens of one Strategic Implementing Partner. ASSITEJ SA is one of the 28 Strategic Implementing Partners contracted to disburse the Social Employment Fund to participants. In addition, this case study demonstrates the value of the Social Employment Network, a peer-to-peer support and learning network that supports the 28 Strategic Implementing Partners in the rollout of the Social Employment Fund across South Africa.

List of Acronyms

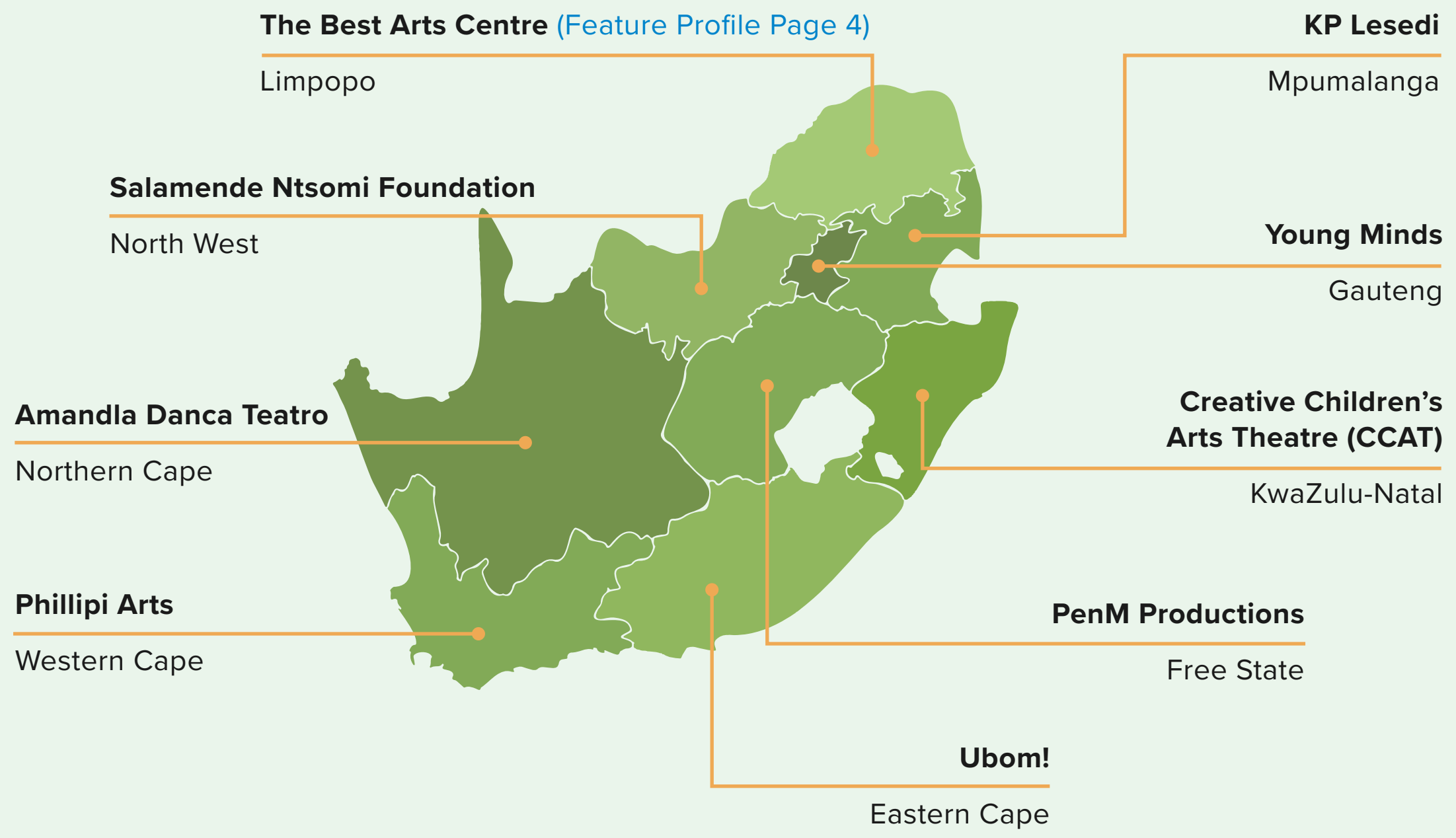
SEN	Social Employment Network
SEF	Social Employment Fund
SIPs	Strategic Implementing Partners
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
EDP	Western Cape Economic Development Partnership
DGMT	DG Murray Trust

About

ASSITEJ (International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People) members come from nearly 100 countries around the world, of which ASSITEJ South Africa (ASSITEJ SA) is one.

ASSITEJ SA supports theatre practitioners, companies, organisations, institutions, and schools who believe in the transformative power of theatre for children and youth. The organisation empowers artists, teachers, children, and youth via the arts.

ASSITEJ SA selected 132 organisational partners across all 9 provinces to implement the rollout of the SEF, including:



Arts4Youth

ASSITEJ SA Social Employment Fund Project

Why the Arts?

The state of the arts reflects the state of the nation's health. While arts and culture have not been directly identified in the 17 SDGs, they are embedded in goals 3, 4, 11, and 16. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the value of the arts to individuals and communities has been rediscovered as essential to overall wellbeing. The arts transform teaching and learning, and the outcome of what is taught, yet most South African children and young people do not have access to quality arts experiences. The SEF funded Arts4Youth project works towards this vision.

Many ASSITEJ SA members do extensive social outreach work with children and

youth. They run after school arts programmes, support teachers in classrooms, create productions and other artistic experiences in schools and communities, often for no commercial return, and in difficult circumstances they provide community arts exposure.

The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the arts sector has been catastrophic. Many artists can no longer survive. Arts4Youth builds on ASSITEJ SA's www.theatre4youth.co.za programme which connects schools and communities with artists to ensure access to the arts across the country.

ASSITEJ SA's organisational partner activities, as part of the SEF funded Arts4Youth project, include:

- Supporting the Creative Arts as a subject in schools
- Supporting the Creative Arts as a method for learning other subjects
- Using the arts to support children's health and wellbeing
- Running after-school/holiday/weekend programmes for children which range from film/media, dance, drama, music, visual arts, DJing, modelling and debating
- Running arts-based literacy programmes including reading that is linked to storytelling and performance
- Supporting early childhood development through the arts

Impact

The SEF enables ASSITEJ SA to support 1650 participants with a stipend working in 132 partner organisations spread across all nine provinces of the country. Participants are locally based artists who run activities as part of the SEF funded Arts4Youth project. As a result of their efforts, 50,000 children and young people nationally benefit from the work of ASSITEJ SA and its partners.

“We believe that the SEF can be a powerful aggregator of efforts in the arts sector to ensure that marginalised children have access to the empowering skills they need to be innovative, creative and competitive citizens.”

- ASSITEJ SA



The Social Employment Network (SEN)

The SEN is a peer-to-peer learning and support network and community of practice that supports the 28 SIPs across South Africa who are contracted to disburse the SEF. The learning network, which is convened by the [EDP](#) and [DGMT](#), facilitates the space for SIPs to address common challenges and collaborate around opportunities, while sharing and documenting learnings that are fed back to government as structured input to inform the design of future iterations of the SEF.

ASSITEJ SA reflections on the SEN

“The process of reflection and learning has been very rich and has certainly made us look at our own ways of working, both recognising our strengths and seeing areas where we can improve and bolster our practice. ASSITEJ SA was able to reach out to other SEN partners, in particular the National Arts Festival, with whom we have a longstanding relationship, and who managed to get people working in the programme ahead of the rest of the partners.

They were able to share valuable lessons around the onboarding process and point out some of the challenges that we needed to think through, regarding the IDCs Administrative Application Software (Kwantu).

They were very generous in sharing possible solutions and looking at how they might support the work of our consortium partners on the ground in Makhanda. We also had some detailed exchange with the Learning Trust,

which shares with us the experience of working in After School Programmes.

We were able to explore methods of Monitoring and Evaluation, as well as approaches to onboarding and rolling out the programme with our consortium members. We have found the input of other SIPs through the SEN process very valuable, as it has allowed us an opportunity for reflection and internal review and for us to forge connections across sectors, which we believe will have a powerful impact in the future.

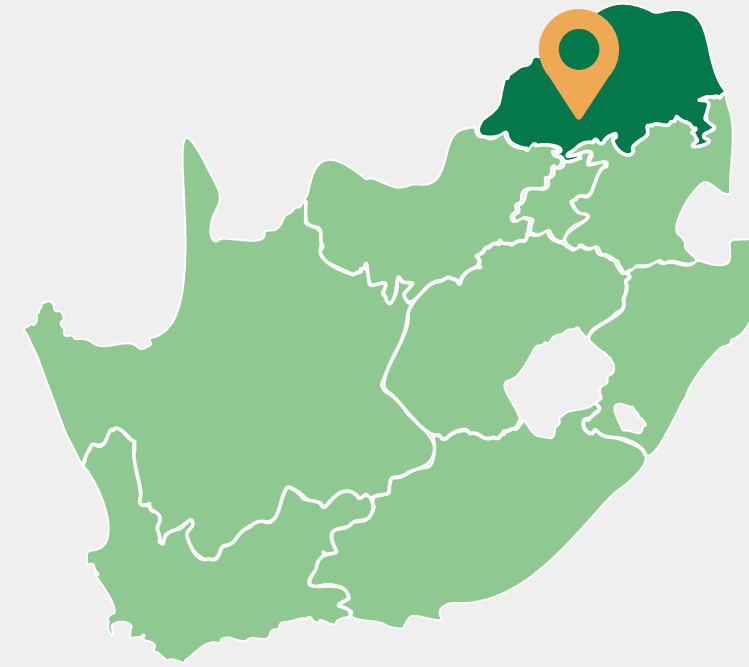
The level of connectivity and exchange between SIPs is high, and rather than this being a space in which we are competing for resources, as is so often the case, we are building a supportive framework which can only serve the sector well into the future. This is a real social compact in action!” Yvette Hardie, Director of ASSITEJ SA

The Best Art Centre

Limpopo Province: Waterberg District

Municipality: Bela-Bela Local Municipality

Pienaars Rivier Community



- The Best Art Centre is an accredited training provider established in 2007 as a Non-Profit Company (NPC) and is located in the Pienaars Rivier township in the Bela-Bela Local Municipality in the Waterberg District Municipality, Limpopo Province.
- The purpose of the Best Art Centre is training, and skills transfer as well as the development of youth and aspiring artists within the various communities of the Waterberg District and neighbouring provinces.
- The Best Art Centre offers programmes in crafts, visual and performing arts. The accreditation is for Performing Arts and Crafts Enterprise training programmes which are both on level 4 and is equivalent to matric.
- The Best Art Centre has produced thriving artists with entrepreneurial skills within the creative industry since its inception.
- The Best Art Centre is the only organisation in the area that is directly working with the youth and children yet has found it difficult to accomplish its mission and purpose due to a lack of support.

The Arts4Youth social employment initiative arrived at the most crucial time in our lives when the creative industry is still crippled from the impact of the COVID-19 crisis. The initiative has given more children and youth access to The Best Art Centre's various programmes such as Crafts, Performing and Visual Arts. From 60 youth and children who have been benefiting, the centre has managed to reach 451 young people in the entire Waterberg District. This initiative has enhanced more collaborations and partnerships with other arts organisations.

- THE BEST ART CENTRE, Limpopo Province

Social good has been achieved by nurturing and enriching children and young people. In schools where some principals have embraced this programme wholeheartedly, our assistance is made available in classrooms during creative art lessons. ASSITEJ SA has supported some of our programmes immensely by partnering with us as the implementing partner. We can proudly say we have managed to create employment for 14 facilitators and one team leader which resulted in 451 young people accessing the arts in our District Municipality. This is a milestone of our time!

- THE BEST ART CENTRE, Limpopo Province

Voices of participants

The SEF pays participants a minimum wage stipend for a two-day work week over a period of nine months.

“I am Moloi Maitse Dennis, the leader of Free State Arts Production. Since we started the ASSITEJ SA Arts4Youth Project in June 2022, it has brought a big positive energy in me because I am doing what I like. I mean my career today, I am pushing it! I've created a new family with my cast and my involvement in the project has also brought back the hope that one day the seeds of my work will bring change in my community.”

Local artists Thato Lelosa, Thobeka Tshaya and Tshepang Matebesi run the Arts4Youth project activities for the CBO, Maraba a Diarts.

“SEF made me grow artistically in terms of creating and performing. It also affected me positively, because I am able to meet my daily needs.” Thato Lelosa

“Being involved with SEF has made me as an individual to be more active and persistent towards my art work. In addition, SEF has helped me in balancing my financial struggles.” Thobeka Tshaya

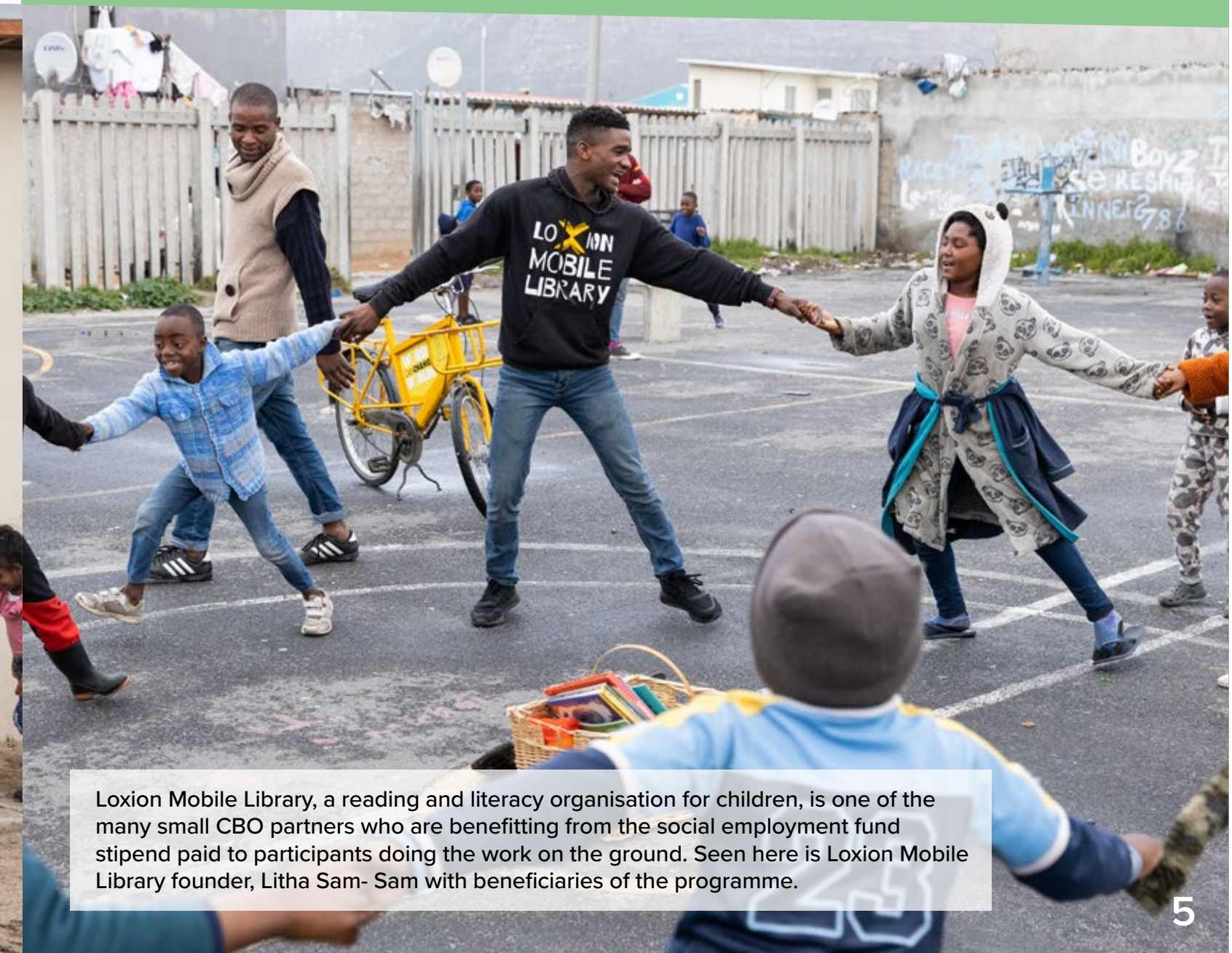
“This project has impacted my life and the other people who are involved in it. I can say it's positive due to the fact that this project created employment for us and financially it has a huge impact in each and every person involved in it.” Tshepang Matebesi

Conclusion

Social employment promotes community development by empowering local grassroots agency. Instead of delivering from the top down, social employment involves the state supporting bottom-up work for the common good. This signifies a significant shift in the relationship with the state toward one of co-creative partnership with communities.

Acknowledgments

The Western Cape Economic Development Partnership (EDP), the DG Murray Trust, and Strategic Implementing Partner, ASSITEJ SA contributed to making this case study possible.



Loxion Mobile Library, a reading and literacy organisation for children, is one of the many small CBO partners who are benefitting from the social employment fund stipend paid to participants doing the work on the ground. Seen here is Loxion Mobile Library founder, Litha Sam- Sam with beneficiaries of the programme.