



**PEACE PLAYERS**  
SOUTH AFRICA

# Annual Report

1 JULY 2024 TO 30 JUNE 2025

USING THE POWER OF SPORT TO  
BUILD PEACEFUL AND THRIVING  
COMMUNITIES

024 -786 NPO . SECTION 18A  
PBO 93023713 . BBB-EE LEVEL 1

## OUR MISSION

To unite, educate and inspire youth from divided communities through sport.

## OUR CORE VALUES

Seeing people as people

Seeing the needs, wants, and desires of others as equally valid as one's own

Inside-outside transformation

Looking inward first to question assumptions and prejudices that lead to practising blame and dehumanisation that perpetuate conflict

A culture of collaboration

A commitment to finding solutions that meet the needs of both parties when faced with conflict

## PPSA THEORY OF CHANGE



### CHALLENGES

South Africa is rated by the World Bank as the most unequal country in the world. There are deep racial, socio-economic, and gender divides, and the majority are vulnerable to multiple stressors.



### PEACEPLAYERS INPUTS

Engaging children and youth from diverse communities in sustained Life Skills Through Basketball programming, led by committed local coaches grounded in leadership development and mentorship.



### INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Participants gain the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that enhance their ability to become leaders who make positive life choices, challenge stereotypes, and become advocates for peace and social transformation.



### IMPACT

Barriers to exclusion are dismantled, and physical, human and social capital rises in a more peaceful, prosperous and equitable society.





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# ▶ CHAIRPERSON'S LETTER

DR. MAIMOONA SALIM

Chairperson



It is with great pride and deep gratitude that I reflect on the achievements of PeacePlayers South Africa (PPSA) in 2025. This year marked a remarkable period of growth, resilience, and renewed commitment to transforming young lives and strengthening social cohesion through the power of sport.

Across our communities, PPSA continues to deliver high-impact programmes that equip young people with leadership skills, nurture cross-cultural relationships, and promote peaceful, united neighbourhoods. Our Leadership Development Program saw record participation, with young leaders emerging as confident advocates for

positive change. On the courts and in classrooms, our coaches and facilitators worked tirelessly to provide safe spaces for learning, dialogue, and connection. These achievements are a testament to the dedication and passion of our PPSA team.

We are profoundly grateful to our anchor donors whose unwavering support made this progress possible. The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, the SOL Foundation, the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, and the Victor Daitz Foundation each played a pivotal role in sustaining and expanding our programmes. Their belief in our mission continues to open pathways for thousands of young people across Durban and

beyond. We also extend heartfelt appreciation to our global partners at PeacePlayers International, whose strategic guidance, collaboration, and solidarity remain invaluable to our success.

*"Our Leadership Development Program saw record participation, with young leaders emerging as confident advocates for positive change."*

To our local and international donors, partners, and stakeholders, thank you for standing with us. Your investments not only fund activities—they fuel hope, opportunity, and social transformation.

My sincere appreciation also goes to the PPSA Board of Directors for their stewardship, wisdom, and continued commitment to good governance. Their leadership ensures that our organisation remains accountable, impactful, and forward-



ward-looking.

As we look ahead, 2025 stands as a powerful reminder that when we work together—across communities, countries, and cultures—we can inspire a generation of peaceful, empowered young leaders. PeacePlayers South Africa remains steadfast in its mission, and we step into the future with optimism, purpose, and gratitude.

Kind regards

*Mai*





## ▶ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

DR. ALISON MISSELHORN

Executive Director



### Dear PeacePlayers Family and Supporters:

I write this at the end of a tumultuous year in the NPO sector. Declining international aid - most glaringly the withdrawal of USAID - the weak economic climate, intense competition for limited resources, and significant governance and compliance challenges have combined to signal a death knell for many less fortunate non-profit entities in South Africa.

PeacePlayers South Africa has not gone unscathed in this landscape: we have certainly had a tough year that has necessarily included many honest and difficult conversations about our strategies for the future.

Amidst all this my team has been nothing short of incredible in their fortitude and commitment in the face of the fears and challenges. The new team structure put into place in February has seen team members lean into learning and embracing

new roles and responsibilities. Triumphantly, their synergistic energy has ensured our programmes have run unhindered to deliver the basketball and life skills mentorship that makes the world of difference directly to 500+ children and youth in some of the most vulnerable communities of Kwazulu Natal. Indirectly the impact goes far beyond the individual, creating positive rip-

*"... my team has been nothing short of incredible in their fortitude and commitment in the face of the fears and challenges..."*

ple effects that uplift their families, strengthen community bonds, and foster lasting generational change.

All of this has been made possible by the steadfast support of our an-



chor donors and our PeacePlayers International partners. Thank you for trusting in our mission amid the chorus of worthy causes; your belief fuels our resolve to keep showing up for the 500 children and the families who rise with them.

Our participating children and youth, growing up in South Africa's toughest corners, face daily challenges in a complex country. Yet they wake with fierce resilience, ready to learn, laugh, and dream. It is for them we keep our lights burning, and it is their spirit that keeps us looking ahead, turning every small victory into shared hope.

With gratitude and peace,

*Alison*

# ▶ OUR PROGRAMMING

## ▶ CORE LIFE SKILLS THROUGH BASKETBALL

AGE 9-18 YEARS



Sustained twice-weekly Life Skills Through Basketball sessions with 500+ primary and high school children from diverse communities across the programme year.

## ▶ LEADERSHIP FOR LIFE COACHES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

AGE 18-35 YEARS



20-25 coaches - most of whom are High School Programme graduates - are supported with a stipend as they further develop their youth mentorship skills.



## ▶ LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (LDP)

AGE 14-18 YEARS

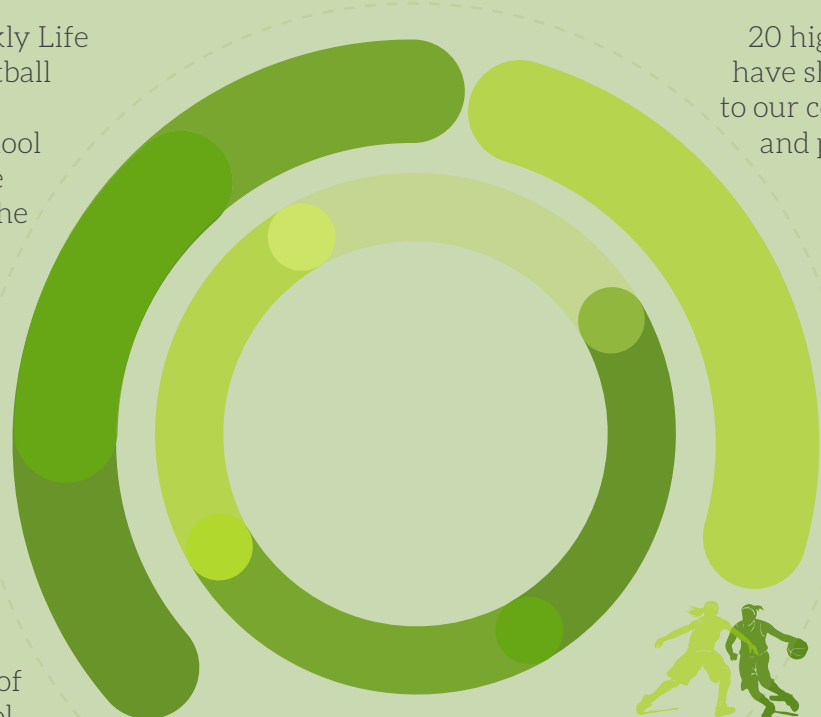
20 high school leaders who have shown their dedication to our core values of equality, and peace leadership meet monthly in sessions focused on equipping them with leadership and team-building skills that they can use throughout their lives.



## ▶ CROSS-CUTTING EVENTS AND TOURNAMENTS

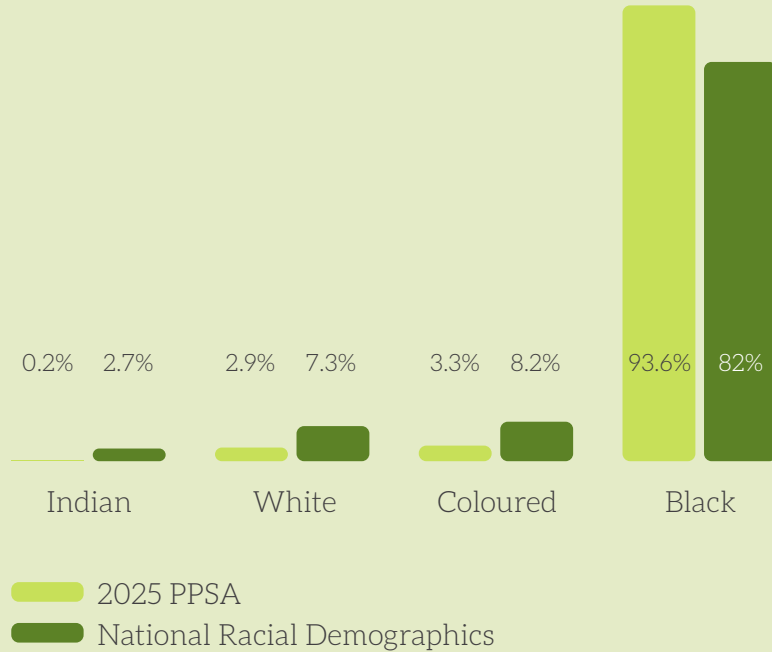
AGE 9-35 YEARS

Major events where all our participants get an opportunity to play competitive sports, including the bi-annual City Wide Tournament and the annual Girls Basketball Festival.

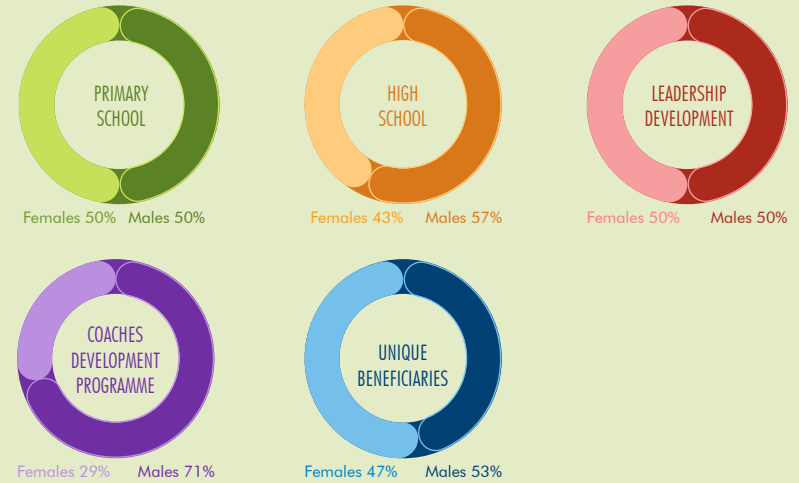


# ▶ 2025 AT A GLANCE

## DEMOGRAPHICS BY RACE



## DEMOGRAPHICS BY GENDER



## PROGRAMME INVESTMENT

**TOTAL SPEND**  
**R6,825,791**  
 in year-round primary and high school afterschool sport and lifeskills, leadership development, and leadership for life programmes



**PARTICIPANTS REACHED: 956**  
**CORE LIFESKILLS PROG PARTICIPANTS: 767**  
**LDP PARTICIPANTS: 26**  
**TWININGS AND EVENTS: 135**  
**COACHES JOBS CREATED: 25**  
**MALES: 435**  
**FEMALES: 383**

## "BEYOND THE COURT" PODCAST

SCAN ME TO WATCH



# ▶ 2025 AT A GLANCE

## PILLAR 1 HEALTH & WELLBEING

THROUGH SPORT

**Increasing Access to the lifelong benefits of sport for youth who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity.**

- Evidence indicates that only 20-26% of children in SA have access to organised sport participation.<sup>1</sup>
- Between July 2024 and June 2025 we gave 814 children and youth aged 9-18 years old weekly access to afterschool sport coaching and life skills mentorship they would not otherwise have access to

## PILLAR 2 EDUCATION & EMPOWERMENT

DEVELOPING LEADERS

**Leadership and life skill development on and off the court.**

- 40% percent of kids starting Grade 1 in SA dropout of school before completing matric, and less than 35% of South Africans 20 years and older have attained a Matric certificate.<sup>2</sup>
- Children and youth participating in our programming and receiving our mentorship are more likely to stay in schooling and grow in confidence. Each extra year of programme participation raises the odds of feeling confident in standing up for oneself by 24%
- 90% of our coaches are programme alumni
- 75% of our full-time staff are programme alumni



1. Naidoo R, Christie CJ, Nyawose Z, et al. *Healthy Active Kids South Africa Report Card (Long form) 2022*, November 2022.
2. *Stats SA General Household Survey (GHS) 2023; School Dropout: Advocacy to Action (2024/2025 Edition, based on 2024 matric cohort data)*
3. Bruce, D. (2023). *Murder trends in South Africa's deadliest provinces* Institute for Security Studies (ISS) Policy Brief No. 183 & Strauss, M. (2019).
4. See the full list of our partners on page 26

## PILLAR 3 PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES

BRIDGING DIVIDES & CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

**Safe & enabling environments to put skills to practice, foster conflict transformation, and leverage social change.**

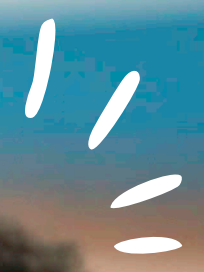
- "KwaZulu-Natal communities endure some of the highest levels of violent crime and conflict in South Africa."<sup>3</sup>
- Each extra year in PPSA raises the odds of feeling confident in resolving group conflicts by 17%.
- Currently over 85% of our participants express that they have developed the willingness to have friends of different races and classmates of different communities.
- Survey results show that after a year on our programme participants show improved engagement with individuals from diverse communities and racial backgrounds, and significant improvements in levels of trust and involvement in conflict resolution across groups

## PILLAR 4 COLLECTIVE ACTION

BRIDGING DIVIDES & CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

**We cannot do this work alone, we collaborate with diverse stakeholders to create this shared future where young people can play together, live together, and thrive together.**

- Our participants grow into confident young leaders who increasingly take **collective action**—organizing school initiatives, creating safer shared spaces, and collaborating as peace ambassadors
- As an organisation this year we partnered with 21 primary and high schools across local communities who entrust us with their children.
- We work with Departments of Social Development, Sports, Arts & Culture, and District Child Welfare as well as youth and sport development organisations and networks - including Sport for Social Change Network and the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation.
- Our invaluable donor partnerships extend beyond financial support to encompass mutual learning and collaborative growth.<sup>4</sup>



*...turning every small victory into shared hope...*

*By*



PEACE PLAYERS

## ▶ OUR TEAM

**Dr. Alison Misselhorn** ◀  
Executive Director  
& Board Member



▶ **Nasiphi Khafu**  
Director of Strategy and  
Partnerships & Board Member



**Noluthando Msweli**  
Programmes Manager



**Phindile Ndebele**  
Bookkeeper and  
Office Administrator



**Enicia Tshibanda**  
Programmes Administrator



**Sanele Zondi**  
Area Coordinator



**Thobani Ngubane**  
Area Coordinator



**Thandeka Mhlongo**  
Area Coordinator



**Maximilian Leimbach**  
Volunteer  
*whose time with PPSA was generously  
supported by the German International  
Volunteer Services Office*

We bid farewell to volunteer **Maximilian Leimbach** whose time with PPSA was generously supported by the German International Volunteer Services Office FIF and to our Programmes Manager **Sifiso Mthembu**, who relocated to the United States in December 2024. After an extensive candidate search and interview process we were delighted to move our former HR Manager and LDP Coordinator, **Noluthando Msweli**, into the Programme Manager position where she has flourished. We also created the new role in January 2025 of Programmes Administrator which has been taken up very successfully by our former Area Coordinator, **Enicia Tshibanda**. **Coach Thandeka Mhlongo** was the successful candidate for the vacant Area Coordinator role, who we have seen grow beautifully into this challenging position.

# ▶ OUR BOARD



## NON-EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS



**Dr. Maimoona Salim**  
Chairperson  
(Incoming)



**Ntando Phewa**  
Treasurer



**Clive Thinane**  
Board Member



**Sibongile Maputla**  
Board Member

## FAREWELL TO



**Rita Mizrachi**  
Chairperson  
(Outgoing)

We bid farewell to Rita Mizrachi in January 2025, who served over seven years as Board Chair, and welcomed Maimoona Salim as our incoming Chair



## ▶ COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

### THANDEKA MHLONGO - AREA COORDINATOR

*Umlazi, Upper Highway, Verulam & Scottburgh*

**Schools (total participants):** Imisebe Primary School (20), Sukuma Primary School (20), Sekelani Primary School (20), Emthethweni Primary School (20), Umlazi West Community High School Team (20), Cwebezela Primary School (20), Scottburgh High School (20), Highbury Preparatory School (48), LIV Primary School (20), LIV High School (20)



**Anele Nxumalo**  
Emthethweni Primary School



**Lungisani Mkhungo**  
Umlazi Community Team



**Sanele Lukhozi**  
Sukuma Primary School



**Buyelwa Qumbisa**  
Imisebe Primary School



**Philani Zondi**  
Scottburgh High School



**Fezile Hlongwa**  
Sekelani Primary School



**Menzi Ngidi**  
LIV Village

The programming in these areas has maintained energy and momentum in 2025, and adapted well to inevitable operational challenges such as inclement weather. Schools like Scottburgh, for example, initiated alternative training sessions instead of cancelling, which is illustrative of their recognition of the value of our partnership. Scottburgh participants have been deeply engaged during life skill sessions, despite being new to the programme in 2024.

**Sekelani Primary School and Scottburgh High School's participation in the British Council's Youth Connect has been a highlight**, with successful implementation and positive feedback from participants shared in a post-implementation survey in which nineteen participants from

Sekelani and eleven from Scottburgh participated.<sup>1</sup>



Cwebezela Primary School's legacy lives on. **The school's achievement in the peace league games was incredible**, with girls dominating the league and boys giving it their all

for second place. After 23 years as a close PeacePlayers partner, it was with sadness that we saw Cwebezela school compelled to close down at the end of 2024 due to the number of learners dropping. This did, however, open the opportunity for the addition of Imisebe Primary to our programming, which was a great opportunity for new beginnings.

Sukuma Primary School provided uMlazi West with access to their facilities to host games, **reflecting the strong and collaborative partnership between schools in the area**. They further went above and beyond by printing consent forms on behalf of uMlazi West, offering valuable practical support that greatly assisted the programme.



1. See more about our British Council work under our partnerships section on page 22



## ▶ COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

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*Umlazi, Upper Highway, Verulam & Scottburgh*

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ed results with three of his primary school girls participants having gone on to represent the KZN under-16 level in a basketball national tournament.

**The LIV Village under-18 girls did very well at the Val Fowler tournament last year (August 2024),** taking home 2nd place- a big achievement in facing competitive teams in a tournament open nationally as well as to other Southern African schools.

**Coaches Development Programme**  
The Umlazi area has been strengthened by the expertise of its coaches. Lungisani Mtshali, the lead coach of the Umlazi area, has received an additional opportunity to be a lead coach at Northwood High, one of the top ranked public schools in KwaZulu-Natal. Lungisani's enthusiasm and success at Northwood brings additional networking opportunities to the PPSA programme and has **opened doors for our participants, who were invited to Northwood in May 2025 for scholarship**

**trials.** His adaptability and dedication to developing young talent also made PeacePlayers proud through his teams' impressive performances. His boys' team won a triple-crown victory in the EBA League, and his U18 and U16 Girls' teams dominated their respective divisions, securing back-to-back championships.

Coach Thandeka Mhlongo made history by leading her team to victory in the Jr. NBA and EBA leagues, capping off an extraordinary season with the coveted Coach of the Season award. **Thandeka's leadership and dedication to her players' growth propelled her team to success.** Her Junior. NBA championship (24 August 2024) win marked the first-ever title for a female head coach in the league's history. After an open call for applications in 2025, Thandeka became the successful applicant in February for the Area Coordinator role for Umlazi. She has grown further in this position and well demonstrated her leadership capabilities.

Coach Anele Nxumalo, a FIBA-accredited table official, is sharing her skills with fellow coaches, enhancing their officiating abilities. This has opened doors for our coaches to work in external tournaments. Coaches Sanele Lukhozi and Buyelwa Qumbisa were amongst those invited to the Northwood tournament which took place on 26-29 September 2024. Coach Buyelwa Qumbisa





## ► COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

### THANDEKA MHLONGO - AREA COORDINATOR

*Umlazi, Upper Highway, Verulam & Scottburgh*

**Schools (total participants):** Imisebe Primary School (20), Sukuma Primary School (20), Sekelani Primary School (20), Emthethweni Primary School (20), Umlazi West Community High School Team (20), Cwebezela Primary School (20), Scottburgh High School (20), Highbury Preparatory School (48), LIV Primary School (20), LIV High School (20)

has made a significant impact on her team in just a few months, showcasing exceptional coaching skills and dedication. Her commitment, combined with support from the school body, has enabled Imisebe to achieve notable success in basketball and life skills. **With the principal and the school representatives on board, we were able to repaint the court at Imisebe on the 6th of March 2025.**



#### Impact story

This letter, sent to us by Zesuliwe Makhanya from Scottburgh, says so

much about our work. Zesuliwe has only been with the programme for six months, but she has already blossomed into a confident individual.

*"I remember the days before I started playing basketball. For various reasons, I always felt as if I never belonged in the sports field or in any sport that I joined. Because I wear really strong glasses, I have been dismissed as a fit for sports many times, which demotivated me. But you, Coach, saw past all that and continuously helped me get better and better at each practice, training me very calmly and patiently. You helped build my confidence when I had none, and that will stay with me forever. You also built a very awesome and welcoming team. You guys taught me to keep going even in times where things get tough, and that is a very valuable life lesson. I may not be good in this sport as yet, but I do believe that it has made me stronger and fearless, and it's all thanks to you, Coach, as well as PeacePlayers."*

*The most surprising part of this journey for me has been the sense of belonging and confidence I've gained. I never thought I'd find a place where I feel like I fit in, especially with a physical limitation like my glasses. But the coach and team accepted me for who I am, and that's been incredible.*

*I think this experience will shape my approach to challenges outside of sports in a big way. I've learned that with the right support and mindset, I can overcome obstacles and achieve*



*things I never thought possible. I'll carry this confidence with me into other areas of life, like school and future career goals. I'll also be more willing to take risks and try new things, knowing that it's okay to make mistakes and learn from them."*





# ▶ COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

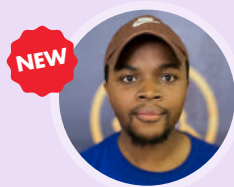
## SANELE ZONDI - AREA COORDINATOR

*Molweni, Wentworth & Lamontville*

**Schools (total participants):** Assegai Primary School (20), Ganges Secondary Team (20), Bhekaphambili Primary School (20) Excelsior Primary School (20), Lamontville Community High School Team (20), Lamula Primary School (20), Bazamile Primary School (20), Molweni Community High School Team (20)



**Thandeka Thusi**  
Assegai Primary School



**Asanda Mbhele**  
Ganges Secondary School



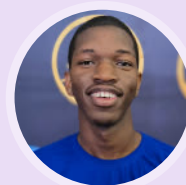
**Ntokozo Mchunu**  
Molweni Community Team



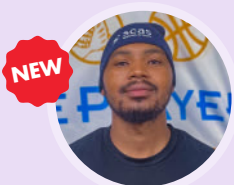
**Nduduzo Sosibo**  
Lamontville Community Team



**Sbahle Mkhize**  
Molweni Community Team



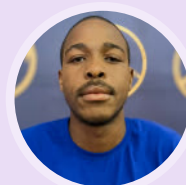
**Lungisani Jwili**  
Lamontville Community Team



**Siphesihle Hlophe**  
Assegai Primary School



**Xolile Langa**  
Laluma Primary School



**Olwethu Mtshali**  
Excelsior Primary School



**Themba Maphumulo**  
Bhekaphambili Primary School



**Siphamandla Sosibo**  
Bazamile Primary School

The community and leadership developments within the areas of Molweni, Wentworth, and Lamontville have made good progress. **The effectiveness of collaboration between schools, PeacePlayers and community organisations has been particularly evident.** Continued investment in infrastructure and talent development have enhanced these achievements, promoting a thriving environment for future growth and cohesion.

In Lamontville, Bhekaphambili Primary School successfully facilitated the new British Council development curriculum with 20 participants. On October 24, their male team reached the Peace League semi-finals, while the female team progressed to the finals. **A strong relationship has been built between Excelsior Primary School and PeacePlayers South Africa since March of the previous year, resulting in significant improvements in sports facilities.** Assegai Primary School was experiencing management transitioning

after the departure of the previous Principal and school representative, but the number of participants was never shaken, and the basketball and life skill sessions remained well supported.

Bazamile Primary school was donated a basketball court by the National Lottery Fund in October last year, which made an important contribution to the area of Molweni community development. Bazamile Primary School and Lamula Primary have engaged in cross-community Peace





## ▶ COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

### SANELE ZONDI - AREA COORDINATOR

*Umlazi, Upper Highway, Verulam & Scottburgh*

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League games, participating in the Highbury calendar with notable performances, which has raised interest within the community and participant numbers have grown.

At Lamontville High, the programme contributes significantly to community development, emphasising infrastructure improvements and promoting social cohesion with neighbouring schools, such as Ganges Secondary.

Molweni High School has partnered with Tholulwazi Secondary, leveraging their basketball court for community use. The local Municipality programme coordinator Mr Ntethelelo Ngcobo (Ward Nine Sport Coordinator & District For Treasurer of Sport) and Community Based Organisation Uvemvane Lwe Africa have been collaborating with the Molweni under-20 teams to organise local and away tournaments for the PPSA teams. This has created **opportunities for participants to experience healthy competitive relationships**

**with peers** from other areas at the Ethekwini Games, demonstrating the programme's appeal and its importance in creating opportunities for cross-community cohesion.



#### Coaches Development Programme

In Lamontville, local coaches have shown remarkable growth in management and coordination, successfully leading teams in the Ethekwini Games. This development reflects their **enhanced ability to digest curriculum content and facilitate key activities** during onboarding sessions. Two New coaches from Lamontville have been positively engaged since they joined our team; the results are showing, and their teams are exerting team collaboration and are very aware of gender equality.

Coach Lungani Jwili enhanced his skills with a Level Three Facilitator course made possible by the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, from which he will graduate at the end of 2025.

In Molweni, Coaches Sphamandla Sosibo and Xolile Langa exemplify the opportunities provided by PeacePlayers. Their participation as officials in the Highbury tournament highlights their ascending reputa-



tion and the positive environment fostered for sports and personal growth in Molweni, Lamontville, and Wentworth.

All Coaches participated in the Greystone camp for specific training around the new curriculum, British Council facilitation preparation, and team building.





## ► COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

### THOBANE NGUBANE - AREA COORDINATOR

City

Schools (total participants):

Glenmore Primary School (20), Carrington Primary School (20), Berea Primary School (14), Addington Primary School (20), Brettonwood High School (20), Inner-City Community HSP Team (20)



**Minenhle Mbanjwa**  
Glenmore Primary School



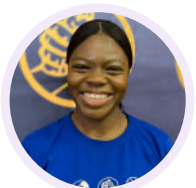
**Seneme Khanyile**  
Addington Primary School



**Patrick Malutshi**  
Inner-city Community Team



**Sibusiso Kunene**  
Glenmore Primary School



**Kamwanga Tshibanda**  
Carrington Primary School



**Skhumbuzo Mthembu**  
Brettonwood High School

The City schools comprise a vibrant part of the programme, enriched by inherent diversity and the cultural contributions of people from many different countries where we strive to develop positive leaders while promoting healthy competition among participants.

*Six young participants from PeacePlayers South Africa, representing Brettonwood High School and the Inner City Community Team, showcased their talent and determination at the prestigious Kearsney Tournament. Competing in the highly competitive U18 Division A pool, the team finished in 13th place, gaining invaluable experience against some of the region's strongest youth basketball programmes.*

While the placement reflects the challenges of competing at such a high level, the true impact lies in the growth and development of the players. Through rigorous competition, these young athletes **strengthened their skills, resilience, and teamwork**, while learning to navigate pressure and maintain focus on the court.

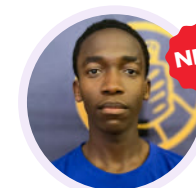
Beyond technical abilities, participation in the tournament fostered confidence, camaraderie, and leadership, empowering the students to apply these lessons in their schools, communities, and future sporting endeavours. **Experiences such as these reinforce PeacePlayers' mission of using sport as a platform for youth development, personal growth, and community connection.**



Berea Primary School has continued to make waves in youth sport, riding an exciting winning streak to secure 2nd place in the Peace-League Cross Community Games under the Female Division. This achievement, following their strong performance in 2024, reflects the



**Thabiso Sondezi**  
Berea Primary School



**Phelelani Zondo**  
Durban Primary School



**Siphesihle Mchunu**  
Brettonwood High School



## ► COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

### THOBANE NGUBANE - AREA COORDINATOR

City



Schools (total participants):

Glenmore Primary School (20), Carrington Primary School (20), Berea Primary School (14), Addington Primary School (20), Brettonwood High School (20), Inner-City Community HSP Team (20)



team's dedication, skill, and resilience on the court.

The impact of their success goes far beyond medals and rankings. Through consistent participation and high-level competition, the young athletes have **strengthened teamwork, discipline, and confidence, while building lasting relationships across communities.** Their journey demonstrates the power of sport to empower girls, encourage perseverance, and foster leadership



from a young age. Each game offers opportunities to push player's limits, learn from challenges, and inspire peers, reinforcing Peace Players' mission.

The stories of Florida Bakasu, Angela Tshibusu, and Yusuf Mbuyi vividly illustrate the profound growth and impact experienced by many PeacePlayers participants in the City Programme. Through basketball, these young athletes have not only honed their skills on the court but also developed essential life qualities such as determination, leadership, teamwork, and resilience. Florida Bakasu, a dynamic young talent, impressed at the 2024 City-Wide Tournament with his explosive agility and skill, earning a **basketball**



**scholarship** to Durban High School. This opportunity provides him with **advanced training, academic prospects, and a pathway to greater personal achievement**, while inspiring peers in the community to pursue their potential through dedication and hard work.

Angela Tshibusu, from the Innercity Community Team, demonstrated perseverance and collective spirit by helping her team secure seventh place in the competitive B Section at the 32nd Val Fowler Tournament, then leading them to a triumphant 1st-place finish at the 6th Basketball Girls Festival. Her journey underscores the value of unity, collaboration, and uplifting others, fostering a positive team culture that builds



confidence and strong relationships. Similarly, Yusuf Mbuyi's transformation stands out as he evolved from a promising beginner into a thoughtful leader who now patiently mentors teammates, drawing on the guidance he once received. His active involvement in inter-ward games and community tournaments reflects a deep commitment to self-improvement and community impact, embodying resilience, empathy, and service.

Collectively, these participant experiences highlight PeacePlayers' mission to use basketball as a powerful platform for nurturing talent, bridging divides, and empowering youth





## ▶ COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

### THOBANE NGUBANE - AREA COORDINATOR

City

#### Schools (total participants):

Glenmore Primary School (20), Carrington Primary School (20), Berea Primary School (14), Addington Primary School (20), Brettonwood High School (20), Inner-City Community HSP Team (20)



with transferable life skills. From individual breakthroughs and competitive successes to leadership that inspires others, their stories reflect the broader tenor of personal growth, opportunity creation, and positive influence that PeacePlayers fosters among young people in divided communities.

#### Coaches Development Highlights

The pilot work with our Northern Ireland partners in the **British Council Youth Connect Curriculum** marked an exciting step forward in youth engagement and cross-cultural learning. The pilot programme was implemented in two city schools, where it quickly demonstrated its effectiveness and relevance. Over the course of the pilot, the sessions achieved **an impressive 89% attendance rate, reflecting strong interest and active participation from students.**

By introducing the Youth Connect Curriculum, PeacePlayers provided young people with tools to build communication, leadership, and collaboration skills, fostering mutual understanding and respect in diverse communities. The successful pilot also demonstrated the curriculum's adaptability to local contexts, offering evidence that structured, interactive learning programmes can engage youth meaningfully while supporting

PeacePlayers' mission to use sport and education to promote social cohesion and personal development.



This year, PeacePlayers South Africa proudly welcomes **Seneme** as our new coach, bringing both experience and a proven track record of success. Since 2019, Seneme has been a standout player for UKZN, showcasing her dedication, skill, and leadership on the court. In 2024, she represented the Salga EtheKwini District, demonstrating her ability to compete at high levels and contribute to regional excellence. **Her selection for the KZN Marlins in the BNL 2024, South Africa's premier national basketball league, further highlights her talent and commitment to the sport.** Beyond her playing career, Seneme served as the UKZN Women's Team Manager in 2024, applying her organisational skills and leadership to support

team development and cohesion.

Seneme's multifaceted experience brings immense value to PeacePlayers South Africa. Her achievements as a player inspire young athletes to aim high and embrace hard work, while her leadership roles equip her to mentor and guide the next generation both on and off the court. Her presence strengthens the programme's competitive edge, fosters teamwork, and reinforces Peace Players' mission of using sport to build confidence, leadership, and unity in the community.





*Through basketball, these young athletes have not only honed their skills on the court but also developed essential life qualities*



## ▶ LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Leadership Development Programme (LDP) at PeacePlayers South Africa is a two year journey designed to nurture young people into confident, thoughtful, and community-minded leaders. Working with youth between the ages of 14 and 18, the programme blends basketball, personal development, and leadership training into an experience that challenges and inspires participants to grow both on and off the court.

At its heart, the LDP is about transformation. Young people enter the programme with curiosity and potential, and through a series of workshops, leadership camps, cultural exchange opportunities, and practical facilitation experiences, they gain a deeper understanding of who they are and the kind of leaders they want to become. The programme creates a safe space for participants to explore their strengths, build confidence, and learn to take responsibility for their choices. They also develop communication and facilitation skills that allow them to express themselves clearly, work with different groups, and take initiative in meaningful ways.

Because PeacePlayers works across diverse communities, the LDP intentionally focuses on cultural awareness and understanding. Participants engage in conversations and activities that help them learn to see people as people, appreciate differences, and collaborate respectfully across racial, social, and cultural lines. These experiences strengthen their ability to navigate conflict, build trust, and work as part of a team, skills that are essential for any young leader.



As the programme progresses, participants begin to extend their learning beyond themselves. Through community outreach projects, they are introduced to the basics of project management, problem-solving, and social responsibility. They learn how to identify needs in their own communities and design initiatives that create positive change, giving them a sense of agency and purpose. By the time they complete the programme, many participants emerge with a clearer vision for their fu-

ture. Career guidance sessions, guest speakers, mentorship, and exchange opportunities open their eyes to new possibilities, academically, professionally, and personally.

Overall, the LDP aims to shape young people who are confident in who they are, skilled in working with others, and motivated to make a difference. It is more than a leadership course; it is a developmental experience that equips youth with the mindset, abilities, and values they



# ▶ LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



need to lead in their communities and beyond.



### LDP Success Story

One of the strongest reflections of the LDP's impact can be seen in the story of Fathima Fall, a young participant whose confidence

and leadership skills blossomed through the programme. In her own words, she shares:

*“Coach, the major reason I was able to achieve this is because of the skills I gained at LDP. Even when speaking to people I've never met, I was able to confidently share a video of myself, earn votes, and step out of my shell. Being part of PeacePlayers helped me grow in working with different people, in different settings, and taught me that putting myself out there with a positive attitude really opens opportunities.”*

This growth has translated into remarkable achievements.

After a nationwide application process, Fathima was accepted into the South African National Children's Rights Coalition (SAN-CRC), a national advisory board led by children, focused on advocating for and protecting children's rights. Building on this accomplishment, she has now been nominated and selected to represent KwaZulu-Natal at the G20 Summit 2025, as part of the SAN-

CRC delegation and the pre-C20 Summit preparations. Her journey is a powerful testament to how the LDP equips young people with the confidence, skills, and courage to step into meaningful leadership spaces, both locally and globally.





## ▶ CROSS-CUTTING EVENTS/TOURNAMENTS

### Val Fowler, Kearsney, Highbury, and Northwood Basketball Tournaments

Our All-Star Teams participated in four international invitational tournaments in the last half of 2024. The All-Star Teams are made up of participants from all the seven communities we facilitate year round core programmes in. These tournaments afford an incredible opportunity for our participants to explore the competitiveness in basketball, challenge their skills, and interact with youth from different socio-economic backgrounds. It also opens up exposure for especially talented players to be selected by recruiters for sports scholarships to more affluent schools.

- On 8-10 August 2024 PeacePlayers High School Programmes Girls All-Star team participated in the Val Fowler Basketball Tournament Pietermaritzburg Girls High hosted, the team did well and finished number seven for the national girl's high school basketball ranking.
- From 3-6 September our PPSA

All-Starts primary school boys participated in the Highbury Prep Basketball Festival.

- On the 27-29 September 2024 PPSA High School Programmes Boys All-Star team participated in the Kearsney College Independent Schools Basketball Tournament, the team did well and finished number 10 for the boys' high school basketball ranking.
- On the 27-29 September 2024 PeacePlayers Primary School Programmes Boys team participated in the under 15 Northwood Tournament in preparation for the Highbury Prep School Tournament that took place in October 2024. The boys won most of their games which was positive for their team chemistry, and they finished number five on the rankings.



### Girls Festival

On August 31, 2024, PeacePlayers South Africa hosted its 6th Annual Girls Festival in Durban, drawing nearly 200 young athletes from high schools throughout KwaZulu-Natal.

The event carves out secure spaces where girls can compete, grow, and simply enjoy being kids. In South Africa, safe venues for girls to play sports remain scarce; violence affects everyone, yet women and girls face heightened risks—more than one in three report experiencing gender-based violence at some point in their lives. Girls' Festival is one of our efforts in actively shifting that reality.

Kicking off at 7:00 am, the gathering celebrated Women's Month while equipping participants with tools for success in sports and beyond. Buses shuttled attendees from communities like Lamontville, Umlazi, Umbilo, Durban City, Molweni, Cotton Lands, Port Shepstone, and Pietermaritzburg, guaranteeing no one missed out.

A standout panel of local businesswomen shared hard-won insights,

motivating the girls to chase their dreams amid obstacles. PeacePlayers Coaches guided team-building sessions that strengthened bonds and mutual respect. The action peaked with round-robin basketball matches, ending in a thrilling championship where a unified PeacePlayers South Africa High School squad edged out Pietermaritzburg Girls High School for the crown.



Click here/ Scan QR code to watch the video highlight of the 6th Girls' Festival



# ▶ CROSS-CUTTING EVENTS/TOURNAMENTS



*“In PeacePlayers, we’re taught about gender equality as well as seeing people as people. And what I’m doing, I’m breaking the gender barrier for most people who also grew up in households and communities where they’re taught that men can and women can’t. I am an example to the young ones in my family as well as the community. So they really look up to me and they want to change their lives around and 14 focus on their dreams and make them come true. Without PeacePlayers, I would have never gained the courage to bring new knowledge to people around me.”*  
 - Noma, PeacePlayers South Africa Alumna



## City Wide Tournaments

On July 27 and October 26, 2024, PeacePlayers South Africa proudly staged its 38th and 39th City Wide Tournaments, uniting roughly 500 dedicated participants from primary and high school core programmes in a vibrant celebration of commitment to our foundational values. These

gatherings honour the transformative journey of building athletic prowess, life skills, and health and wellness. As always for our programming, all of this is fueled by the unifying force of sport and the shared PeacePlayers path toward self-leadership, guiding others, and fostering peaceful, uplifted communities. Joined by enthusiastic volunteers, PeacePlayers coaches, staff, and supporters, the July event marked a historic milestone in our 23-year legacy: for the first time, we welcomed Leadership Development programme (LDP) participants from PeacePlayers Global sites, swelling the ranks to 550 athletes, 100 volunteers, and 30 Global Exchange members. The mid-year tournament shone brightly with youth competing in mixed, co-ed teams drawn from diverse schools, sparking meaningful connections throughout the day while advancing gender equity and social cohesion through exhilarating basketball matchups. We also had the immense privilege of hosting U.S. Consul General Josie Ratcliffe, who delivered a keynote address at our Global Exchange Opening Ceremony and attended the City Wide Tournament.

*“In South Africa -- sport is more than just a pastime; it’s a crucial element of the national identity. I am excited to see how PeacePlayers South Africa leverages this by using a more emerging sport in South Africa like basketball to bridge divides and develop leaders in communities affected by inequality and violence.”*  
 - Consul General, Josie Ratcliffe speaking at the Global Exchange Opening Ceremony 10 days before our

July City Wide Tournament.

*“I have gotten so much meaning and gained so many values from the programme and PeacePlayers itself. Being here in South Africa just shows the opportunities that PeacePlayers offers for our kids.”*  
 - Marc Wilmot, PeacePlayers Northern Ireland Alumni & Coach



**Click here/ Scan QR code** to watch the video highlight of the 41st City Wide Tournament



## ▶ CROSS-CUTTING EVENTS/TOURNAMENTS

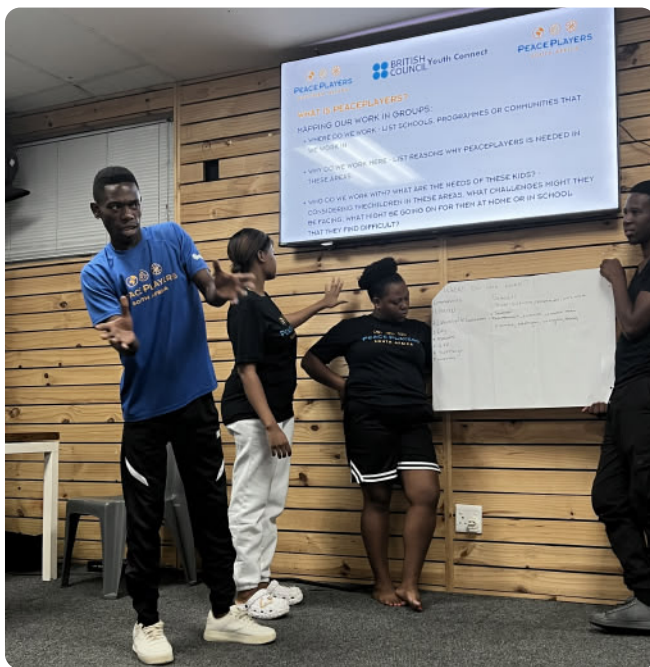
### Friendship Games

From 5th July to the 6th of August 10 Leadership Development Programme participants and three staff members travelled to Detroit for a 9-day international exchange, “the Friendship Games”. This was a transformative experience amongst LDP participants across PeacePlayers International Sites, funded by the Ed and Penelope Peskowitz Foundation and the Detroit Pistons. Participants engaged in workshops, shared meals, and collaborated on projects, discovering both the similarities and differences that make each culture unique. The South African contingent demonstrated outstanding adaptability, teamwork, and confidence, reflecting PPSA’s developmental impact. There was visible growth among youth who had previously been shy or reserved, highlighting the effectiveness of the LDP framework in fostering leadership and personal development.



### British Council Curriculum Development

We partnership with PeacePlayers Northern Ireland and the British Council on the Youth Connect Project which kicked off towards the end of 2024, aimed drawing on 22 years of curricula and life skills practice to collaboratively develop and pilot a renewed sports-based leadership training and curriculum. The ‘Bridging Borders: Leadership and Peacebuilding Through Sport’ project that has seen close collaboration between the two PeacePlayers sites as we seek to leverage the unifying power of sport to foster leadership, under-



standing, and peaceful coexistence among young people from diverse communities in Northern Ireland and South Africa. The project sought to break down cultural, racial, and sectarian barriers, promote mutual respect, and equip youth with the skills to become agents of positive social change. Connecting participants across continents, the programme also nurtured a growing global network of young peacebuilders committed to using sport as a powerful tool for reconciliation and unity.



# ▶ CROSS-CUTTING EVENTS/TOURNAMENTS



## Marathon in partnership with Brand SA

In partnership with Brand South Africa #PlayYourPart, we invited 50 volunteers to help hand over refreshments and cheer on the runners at the Comrades Marathon #TheUltimateHumanRace, on Sunday, the 8th of June 2025. Most of our volunteers had never witnessed the magic of Comrades, and hearing how this experience inspired the lives of our high school participants, leadership development programme participants, coaches, staff, and alumni's lives as a testament to our true belief in the power of sport to amplify the journey of being human.

Special thanks to the Brand South Africa team, Comrades Marathon Association, and all the volunteers that helped us fly the South Africa flag high.



## Infrastructure Development

In early 2025, we secured the generous support of the Victor Daitz Foundation to renovate the basketball courts in two of our partner schools in eThekweni that were in dire need of repair; Carrington Primary in Umbilo and Excelsior Primary in Mobeni Heights. We were also able to replace the collapsed multi-sport hoops at Addington Primary.

Infrastructure is sorely needed in so many communities in South Africa, yet very difficult to get funding for. Our 25-year legacy of impact, our strong network of local stakeholders, together with donor support from NMCF and our other anchor donors, attracts the investment of donors such as Victor Daitz who seek to support sustainable interventions in KZN communities.

The warm welcome and deep appreciation of both Carrington and Excelsior is truly indicative of the pivotal role that infrastructure development plays for our partner schools. These courts are in fact multisport facilities, and offer children, who often have minimal access to sports facilities, a vital opportunity to engage in physical activity, fostering enthusiasm for play and teamwork. These upgraded courts provide a rare space for healthy recreation, promoting physical fitness, social bonds, and personal growth where few such opportunities exist.



*"I have gotten so much meaning and gained so many values from the programme and PeacePlayers itself."*



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*Without PeacePlayers, I would have never gained the courage to bring new knowledge to people around me*

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# ▶ FINANCIALS FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 2025



## INCOME & REVENUE

REVENUE	2025	2024
Donations received - Peace Players International US	1,580,541	1,658,453
Grant income - FHI360	703,562	320,639
Grant income - Laureus Sport for Good	139,367	228,358
Grant income - Nelson Mandela Children's Fund	706,668	-
Grant income - PeacePlayers Northern Ireland (British Council)	143,750	-
Grant income - The SOL Foundation	1,510,235	653,633
Grant income -Stevens Initiative (The Aspen Institute)	127,801	80,044
Grant income - Victor Daitz Foundation	317,716	65,292
Other donation income	631,951	688,193
Programme and coaching fees	7,100	15,100
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>5,868,691</b>	<b>3,709,712</b>

## ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

EXPENSES	2025	2024
Accounting fees	(28,811)	(27,625)
Auditors remuneration - Fees	(26,500)	(28,528)
Bank charges	(13,461)	(9,592)
Subscriptions	(38,766)	(8,636)
Telephone and telecommunication	(43,150)	(10,218)
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES</b>	<b>(150,688)</b>	<b>(84,599)</b>

## PROGRAMME & OPERATING EXPENSES

EXPENSES	2025	2024
Business licences and fees	(10,778)	(13,250)
Consulting fees	(192,980)	(10,014)
Depreciation - property, plant & equipment	(100,068)	(91,108)
Employee costs - members	(1,478,275)	(1,162,000)
Employee costs - salaries	(2,435,161)	(1,662,467)
Facility Rental	(79,965)	(36,621)
Insurance	(153,042)	(79,023)
Lease rental on operating lease	(50,011)	(45,344)
Motor vehicle expenses	(78,265)	(43,957)
Office expenses	(14,490)	(1,488)
Other programme costs	(472,697)	(23,557)
Participant uniforms	(152,922)	(25,632)
Photography and video	(94,500)	(17,520)
Postage	-	(105)
Printing and stationery	(61,255)	(16,220)
Programme car rental/lease/tracker	(304)	-
Programme hotel	(123,150)	-
Programme meals	(348,752)	-
Repairs and maintenance	(28,387)	(5,580)
Sports equipment	(31,139)	(53,876)



# ▶ FINANCIALS FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 2025

## PROGRAMME & OPERATING EXPENSES

EXPENSES	2025	2024
Sports events and refreshments	(10,991)	(30,775)
Staff development	(1,500)	(52,081)
Staff uniforms	(75,632)	(26,300)
Technology	(59,417)	(28,908)
Transport	(506,682)	(174,232)
Travel - Local	(114,740)	(13,572)
<b>TOTAL PROGRAMME AND OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>(6,675,103)</b>	<b>(3,613,630)</b>

## OTHER GAINS AND LOSSES & INCOME

	2025	2024
Gain or loss on sale - property, plant & equip	18,983	-
Gain or (loss) on foreign exchange differences	-	(32,220)
Finance income interest received	19,536	20,909
<b>TOTAL OTHER INCOME, GAINS &amp; LOSSES</b>	<b>38,519</b>	<b>(11,311)</b>
<b>TOTAL (DEFICIT)/ SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>(918,581)</b>	<b>172</b>

## FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT END JUNE

ASSETS	2025	2024
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	172,133	239,336
<b>Current assets</b>		
Trade and other receivables	40,817	572,429
Cash and cash equivalents	687,185	814,522
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>728,002</b>	<b>1,386,951</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>900,135</b>	<b>1,626,287</b>

## EQUITY AND LIABILITIES

	2025	2024
<b>Equity</b>		
Accumulated surplus	482,247	1,400,828
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	32,029	50,533
Deferred income	385,859	174,926
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>417,888</b>	<b>225,459</b>
<b>TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>	<b>900,135</b>	<b>1,626,287</b>



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*In South Africa -- sport is more than just a pastime; it's a crucial element of the national identity*

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# Thank you

Merci. Grazie. Xièxiè. Gracias. Obrigado. Siyabonga. Ke a leboga. Shkran lak. Sas efcharistó. Teşekkür ederim. Go raibh maith agat

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KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE  
SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



### Special Awards

We were the Recreational Body of the Year Award Finalists at the KwaZulu-Natal Province Department of Sports, Arts and Culture

### Individual Donors

We would like to highlight all the individual donors who helped us raise a total of **R297,450.00** this year!

Adebanke Lesi, Catherine Greenberg, Ann Bosson Greenberg, Ann Curry, Ron Shapiro, Babby Family Fund, Justin Kidwell, Donna Murphy, Karen Greene, Richard Eaton Foundation, Chris Clunie

▶ **WAYS TO GIVE**

**AND CONNECT WITH US**

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“We would like to invite you to become a PeacePlayers SLAMbassador and deepen your impact with a monthly donation- big or small every cent counts!”

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**THANK YOU**



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