

# NET VIR PRET

## ANNUAL REPORT

### 01.04.2020 – 31.03.2021

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Registered Non Profit and Public Benefit Organisation

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#### MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

##### Executive

Shane Petzer - Chairperson

Hermanus Bron - Deputy Chair

Nolan Klaassen - Treasurer

Suzette Plaatjies – Secretary

##### Additional Members

Renaldo Claassen - Mariane Kortje - Johan Majola - Fanny Nortje - Hendrik Plaatjies

### Staff

Youth & Community Director - Peter Takelo  
 Youth Development Co-ordinator -Sudonia Kouter  
 Sports Co-ordinator - Angelo Endley  
 Project Hope Co-ordinator - Herman Witbooi  
 Arts & Craft Co-ordinator - Clarisa Jonas  
 Admin Co-ordinator - Nataniël Pokwas  
 Assistant Project Hope - Daylon Pienaar  
 Assistant Youth Worker - Selanvor Platjies  
 Assistant Bike Programme - Anwill Speelman  
 Chef - Fabian Krause  
 Administrator - Derek Joubert

### Part-time Tutors

Gari Crawford – Music                      Charl Koch - Music                      Jean Bittkau - Pottery  
 Cherie Dirksen - Art & Craft                      Charl van Zyl - Filming

### Interns

#### 2020

Hazlin Fortuin - Jeandre Jambo - Sylvia Jambo - Nicole Kortje - Julio Malan - Samantha Takelo

#### 2021

Cerjoh Carolus - Jeremy Hartnick - Sylvia Jambo - Anchen Jansen - Lee-Anne Kees

### Volunteers

Michelle Berry - Flora Cameron - Fleur de Wet - Ren Engelbrecht - Sandra Fullard - Reuben Hart – Denel Honeyball  
 Lisa & Dave Hooley - David Halkett - Leslie Howard - Katya Lovegrove - Mickey Mentz – Inger Murrish  
 Richard Panaino

## The Covid Challenge

When the year under review opened on 1 April 2020, our country had just spent its first week under Lockdown Level 5 which brought closure of our centre and suspension of all activities.

Our immediate concern was for those youngsters who depend on us for a daily meal and we sought permission from the local Disaster Committee to prepare and deliver food to them. At the same time the

**Lunchbox Fund**, who had for some years provided nutritious foodstuff to help with feeding during our Holiday Schools, notified us that they were sending 60 food hampers to us for distribution, each hamper supplying a family of four.

Within a few weeks we were authorised to deliver essential services and were given permission to open our Centre to staff and Interns who all returned to work, but without our youngsters. In the months of lockdown that followed we provided the following services:



**MASKS** the production of the all-important protective face masks for distribution in our community. We produced over 2,500.

**SOUP** the distribution of nourishing soup to 50 needy families on a daily basis. In this we were helped by volunteers **Lisa** and **David Hooley**, **Ren Engelbrecht** and **David Halkett**. Most employment in our community is on a casual basis and many people lost their jobs during the lockdown placing the food security of their families at risk. We were identified by the Cape Town charity **Ilitha laBantu** as a distribution point for donated food and their support has continued into 2021.



Delivering soup

**FOOD GARDENS** In a further effort to address the problem of food security **Herman Witbooi** and his **Project Hope** team embarked on a project to help families establish their own vegetable gardens so they could feed themselves. **KaapAgri** donated much appreciated gardening equipment and the **Joubert Tradauw Cellar** kindly gave us over 500 sturdy poles which helped to provide secure fencing both for the gardens and also for our Centre. After some months of work our team had established food gardens at no less than 32 different sites in the township. Our Director, **Peter Takelo**, shows viewers around the gardens created at the Gwarrie informal settlement camp at this link:

<https://youtu.be/oVWjjNzSfeo>

**ACTIVITY PACKS** Our Youth Development Co-ordinator, **Sudonia Kouter**, and her team put together 200 activity packs containing crayons, colour-in books, puzzles and reading material which were distributed to our youngsters stuck at home under lockdown.

## Capacity Building

With no youngsters allowed to attend our Centre and all our regular programmes on hold, the months of lockdown provided us with the opportunity to embark on capacity building for staff and Interns which took us in new and very rewarding directions.

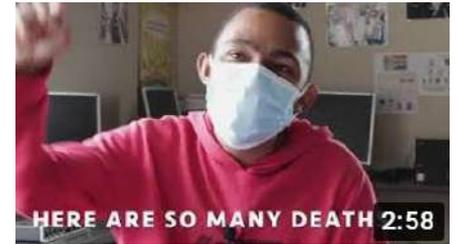
- **Mickey Mentz** ran a cadet journalism programme with Interns and they later conducted interviews during the **Barrydale Blooms Festival** in October which they wrote up and posted to Facebook.
- **Herman Witbooi** had been able to spend a week in Cape Town working with **Handspring** puppet master **Adrian Kohler** earlier in the year and following on the Redfin Puppet Fish he made for them last year, he and his **Project Hope** team were commissioned by the **Grootvadersbosch Conservancy** to design and build a giant puppet to represent their tiny indigenous Chameleon under threat of extinction.
- After attending training last year provided by **ASSITEJ** (the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People) where they learned new skills to take into the Aftercare Programme, **Sudonia Kouter** and **Interns** were able to participate in the **Assitej 2020 Winter School** which took place online. Sudonia made a presentation on the impact the pandemic was having on our community and how our Centre was functioning as a true anchor for many people in these difficult times.
- Audio-visual specialist **Charl van Zyl** provided extensive and ongoing



training in audio-visual recording which brought valuable new skills to staff and Interns and this resulted in 5 lockdown productions:

**Virus !!!** a video rap about Covid written and performed by **Selanvor Platjies** which can be viewed at this link <https://youtu.be/VFDxR5iK434>

**Get Tested !** a video about the pandemic featuring giant puppet and human characters, devised and performed by our Interns and filmed by **Nataniël Pokwas** which we sent to an online puppetry festival at the **University of Tehran**. Link - <https://youtu.be/All68abJqdQ>



**Barrydale Time Capsule** a video featuring our Young Leaders describing their hopes and fears for the future which was part of a project organised by the **Reina Sofia Museum** in **Madrid** which gathered teenage participants from around the world. All submissions were buried in a time capsule in the garden of the museum to be unearthed in 2050 when everyone will be contacted again. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D26jU3Y-fDk&authuser=0>

**Imaginary Futures** video performances by staff and Interns on a national online project co-ordinated by the **University of the Free State** with 35 participants from around the country.

**Remembering Liezl Booyen** a memorial video commemorating the tragic short life of a 14 year old who was brutally murdered in our village during the lockdown. Liezl had attended our Aftercare Programme and her two younger siblings, a boy and a girl, have been on our Children at Risk watch all year. <https://youtu.be/FnYStuHxd-w>

## Reopening the Centre



The easing of the lockdown to Level 3 in June allowed us to reopen the Centre and it was a great pleasure to see our youngsters again. We were of course obliged to comply with all the safety protocols – deep cleaning before youngsters arrive, before we feed them and again after they leave for home,

temperature checks, hand washing and social distancing. The latter requirement forced us to restrict the number of youngsters who could attend on any day and we had to work out a rota system to accommodate everyone.

The **Eco Warriors** with volunteer **Reuben Hart** and resumed their activities by tackling the pollution which had gathered under the bridges over our Huis River. See them at work at this link - [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VXyVon-mo70CgEkJ\\_dByClikYTpr0q8h/view?usp=drivesdk](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VXyVon-mo70CgEkJ_dByClikYTpr0q8h/view?usp=drivesdk)



As part of our **Heritage Day** celebrations on 24 September we took youngsters to visit the forgotten graves where their ancestors are buried in what later became the “white” cemetery under Apartheid.

They were also treated to a presentation on traditional Khoi medicinal herbs by a knowledgeable community member.



Youngsters in the Bike Programme were delighted by a donation from our **EDSA** friends in the **UK** who sent funds for the purchase of three new bikes.



The Bike Programme is often the point of entry to our Centre where youngsters later move on to participate in other activities.

### Reboot Eden

With the help of our partners at the **Centre for Humanities Research (UWC)** and the **Ukwanda Puppetry Collective**, we set about trying to re-imagine the end-of-year **Giant Puppet Show** on the **Day of Reconciliation**. The event has usually taken the form of a huge show with upwards of 150 participants performing before a capacity crowd of hundreds. This clearly could not happen under the Covid lockdown.

The first show took place in 2010 when **Adrian Kohler** and **Basil Jones**, founders of the renowned **Handspring Puppet Company** offered us a 7-year partnership during which they would train us in developing world-class puppetry skills and in consequence we had 10 years of performance behind us. Our idea was been to celebrate this achievement by reviving puppets from the past and developing four 20-minute shows which would we would film and stream online.

The annual show has provided a focus each year for work across the spectrum of our different programmes, sparking creativity on every side and our staff and youngsters have developed skills in story-telling, script-writing, acting, dance, puppetry design, construction and manipulation, costume, mask and set design and construction and musical composition and performance.



Large questions about social justice, environmental responsibility and endangered species have been tackled and the Parade has also become an instrument in preparing our youth for responsible citizenship by raising their awareness of the issues in the world around them, prompting them to investigate and research, seek solutions, and plan strategies

for intervention.

**Herman Witbooi** and the **Project Hope** team were tasked with restoring the puppets which had been lying in storage for some time and were soiled and damaged. The restoration took several months of hard work but in the end everyone agreed that the restored puppets looked better than ever. The



Ukwanda team brought the giant Elephant and the Redfin Fish puppets up from Cape Town.

The shows were directed by four of our staff members (**Sudonia Kouter, Angelo Endley, Peter Takelo, Selanvor Platjies**) each assisted by an intern (**Julio Malan, Nicole Kortje, Hazlin Fortuin**) with our regular puppeteers manipulating the puppets and youngsters, Young Leaders and Interns taking part. **Gabriel Buis**, who grew up at Net vir Pret and is

now studying acting at the **Magnet Theatre** in Cape Town, came to help.

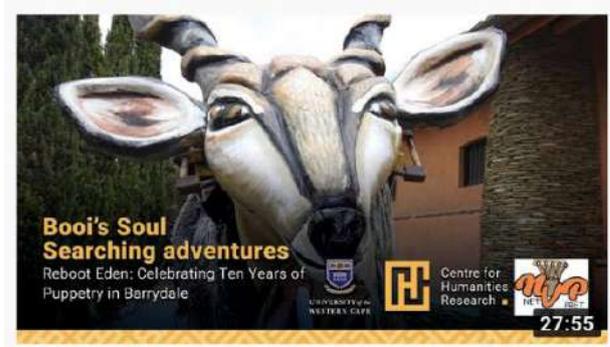


**Jane Taylor** and **Aja Marneweck** from the **Centre for Humanities Research (CHR)** and the **Ukwanda** team were on board to act as mentors. Filming and editing was done by our Media Officer, **Nataniël Pokwas**, and film tutor **Charl van Zyl**.

The **Reboot Eden** blog can be viewed at <https://barrydaleparade.wordpress.com/>



<https://youtu.be/ESJ7qE2XIQ>



<https://youtu.be/jUfq0XDjWxc>



<https://youtu.be/OU8g858qZIM>



<https://youtu.be/osTMGvp8bjQ>

In a further development our elephant show was invited to participate in the **Boschendal Harvest Festival** in **Franschhoek** in February. **Herman Witbooi** and **Clarisa Jonas** went through on the Friday to run a puppet building workshop with the children of workers on the estate and **Angelo Endley** and his puppeteers followed the next day for a performance featuring **Mnumzane**, the giant elephant puppet, and the baby, **Alfie**, with the **Dassie** (rock rabbit) and the **Eland** in attendance. It must be said that our young puppeteer **Anwill Speelman** who played the Baby Elephant stole the heart of everyone present.

## Prayer Flags of Hope



In mid-year we adopted an idea from **Michelle Berry** to launch a project which would aim at lifting the spirits of our community in the troubled Covid times by stringing up **Prayer Flags of Hope** for the Christmas season across both parts of our divided village. We decided on two themes – images from our past shows which have often portrayed the plight of endangered animals, and also images which show laughter, joy, celebration and hope.

Our youngsters and Interns guided by craft tutors **Cherie Dirksen** and **Clarisa Jonas** surpassed their target of 1,000 flags and these were strung up with the help of **Richard Painano** and **Reuben Hart** in the week before the Day of Reconciliation when our puppets strolled around the village and the township to the delight of all.

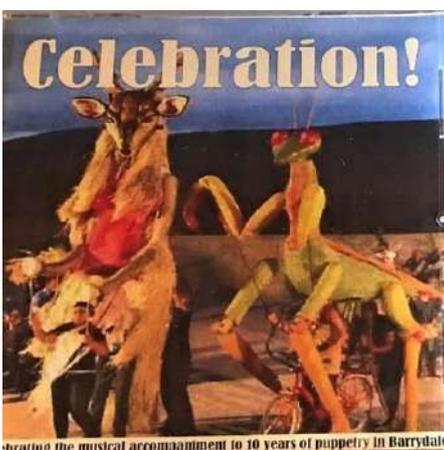
Generous donations of cloth came in, especially from **Barrydale Weavers** and **ColorScreen Cape** donated a substantial amount of fabric paint.

Special flags decorated by local artists were flown from the 12 flagpoles of the **Karoo Art Hotel**.



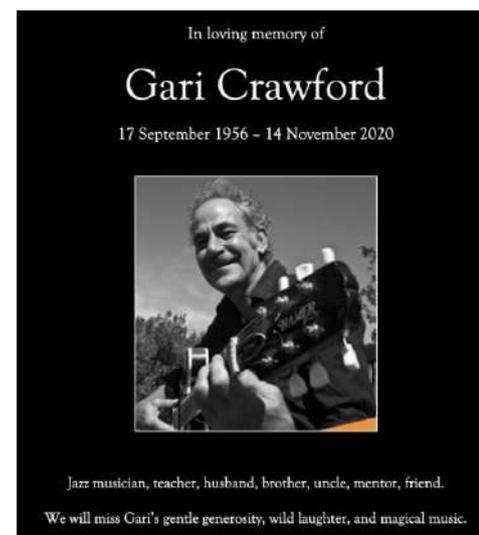
Secretary Bird admires the Flags of Hope

## Celebration!



Under lockdown, our original jazz group, the **Jazz Monkeys**, were back in town from their tertiary studies in Cape Town and our music tutor, **Gari Crawford**, seized the opportunity to get them together to revive and record the many songs they had composed for past shows.

After three months of recording and re-recording, mixing and re-mixing, the result



was a **CD** which celebrated the musical accompaniment to 10 years of Barrydale puppetry.

It is with great sadness that we have to report that shortly after completing this work, Gari suffered a massive stroke which took his life. Gari was a wonderful teacher and made a huge contribution to our work. We miss him sorely.

Two of the songs, **Arise!** and **River**, can be heard at these links

<https://netvirpret.bandcamp.com/track/arise>

<https://netvirpret.bandcamp.com/track/river>



arise .mp3



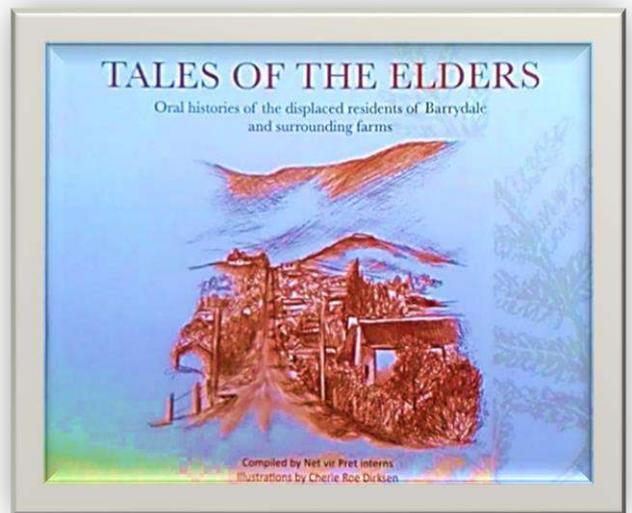
river .mp3

In early 2021 we appointed **Charl Koch** to take over as music tutor.

## Tales of the Elders

As part of an oral history project, our various Interns over the years have assembled a fascinating collection of stories told by elders in the village and on surrounding farms about their past experiences, including their forced removal from the village and displacement over the hill under the Apartheid Group Areas Act – a process they describe as “**Steek my weg**” (Hide me away).

To make them more widely available, Barrydale author **Leslie Howard** translated them into English from the original Afrikaans as a labour of love and we brought them out in December in a handsome bi-lingual publication with illustrations by our art tutor, **Cherie Roe Dirksen**.

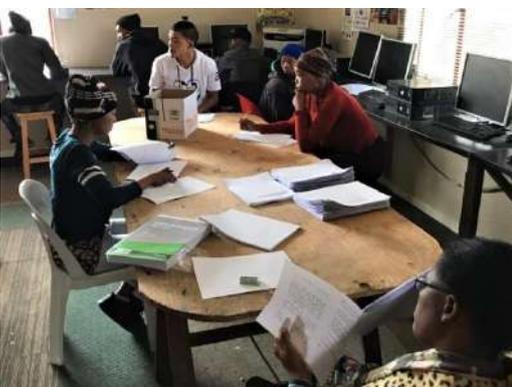


**Riekie Harm** and **Rina de Villiers** helped with editing the early stories. **Sandra Fullard** assisted by **Selanvor Platjies** edited the final Afrikaans version. Interviews conducted by **Shirley Marx** were also included.

Publishing costs were covered through a crowd-funding appeal launched by Cherie.

## Community Learning Programme

We were entering into negotiations with the **Breede River Community Learning Centre (CLC)** based in Robertson to establish a satellite campus at our Centre when the lockdown brought everything to a halt.



CLCs are a new type of institution falling under the National Department of Higher Education and their role is to provide opportunities for anyone over the age of 15 to upgrade their academic level for employability or progression to further study.

We are delighted to report that the partnership revived when the lockdown eased and has continued into 2021. A total of 25 students ranging in age from 16 to 34 registered and **Nolene Schoeman** and her team come up once a week from Robertson to teach. On the other days the students are able to access the interactive Eduplay educational software programme in our computer lab and to work on their assignments.

## Shawco

In an exciting new development, the **University of Cape Town's** student organisation **SHAWCO** has located a **Dell Technologies ComputerAid** converted container at our site. This state of the art facility houses 10 solar-powered computers and an overhead projector and provides a substantial boost to our ability to offer computer access to our community.

Shawco personnel, Director **Jackie Stewart**, President **Jaymo Reynolds** and IT Co-ordinator **Marco Charles** came up on a visit and we were able to discuss ways in which our relationship can be strengthened.



## Matric Outreach

The **Matric Outreach Programme** counselled youngsters in their final school year on options for further study and provided assistance with applications to institutions, for financial support, and finally with procedures on registration day, including the all-important transport to and from Cape Town in the Net vir Pret bus. No public transport is available.

The following table gives details of the 48 young people from Barrydale who have progressed to further study with Net vir Pret's help in the past seven years. It would be true to say that before we initiated this intervention, virtually no youngsters from our village were going on to tertiary study.

### TERTIARY ENROLMENTS & GRADUATES 2021

New & Continuing students	Institution	Course
1. Buis, Gabriel	Magnet Theatre	Actor Training Programme 2
2. De Wet, Sue Leigh	Huguenot College	B Soc Work 2
3. Ferguson, Ida	Huguenot College	B Soc Work 2
4. Hess, Dylan	University Western Cape	BA (Hons) MA
5. Kees, Ashwin	University Western Cape	BA 3
6. Kelly, Fatima	Huguenot College	B Soc Work 2
7. Michaels, Carmen Leigh	Varsity College	B Ed 2
8. Michaels, Rensche	University Western Cape	B Ed 4
9. Plaatjies, Lloyd	Huguenot College	B Soc Work 1
10. Scheepers, Jay Marie	University of Stellenbosch	BA Drama 1
<b>Graduates</b>		
11. Afrika, Franco	University Western Cape	BA (Hons) STD
12. Afrikaner, Chandre	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Management
13. Braaf, Sonja	South Cape College	Nat. Dipl. Educare
14. Britz, Charleen	Cape Peninsula Univ of Technology	B Ed
15. Britz, Darren	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Business Management
16. du Toit, Christiaan	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Marketing
17. du Toit, Davina	West Coast College	Nat. Dipl. Management
18. Ernest, Simonia	Cape Peninsula Univ of Technology	B Ed
19. Esau, William	University Western Cape	BA PGCE (Post Grad Cert Educ)
20. Europa, Micaela	Boland College	Nat. Dipl. Educare
21. Filton, Imran	University Western Cape	B Ed

22. Hendricks, Romano	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Marketing
23. Jonas, Charne	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Human Resource Management
24. Jooste, Mickhyle	University Western Cape	B Com
25. Joubert, Benjamin	College of Cape Town	Nat. Dipl. Graphic Design
26. Joubert, Fiogen	Cape Peninsula Univ of Technology	B Tech (Tourism)
27. Koppies, Nuroshaan	West Coast College	Nat. Dipl. Management
28. Le Roux, Chriselda	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Management
29. Levendal, Cecil	University Western Cape	B Com
30. Marthinus, Devona	South Cape College	Nat. Cert. Hairdressing
31. Michaels, Shayne	University Western Cape	B Ed
32. Moses, Clarence	University of the Free State	B Admin
33. Neethling, Chilton	College of Cape Town	Nat. Dipl. Graphic Design
34. Nel, Grace	South Cape College	Nat. Dipl. Safety & Security
35. Nel, Patrick	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Management
36. Pekeur, Deslin	West Coast College	Nat. Dipl. Office Technology
37. Pieterse, Sheryldine	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Tourism
38. Ruiters, Ethan	Boland College	Nat. Dipl. Sport Management
39. Scheepers, Elroy	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Civil Engineering
40. Snyman, Ethan	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Office Administration
41. Snyman, Rowann	Cape Peninsula Univ of Technology	Nat. Dipl. Management
42. Swart, Herschelle	University of the Free State	B Admin
43. van Rooi, Henrico	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Human Resources
44. van Wyk, Ellestine	Northlink College	Nat. Dipl. Early Childhood Dev.
45. Windvogel, Tay-Lea	University Western Cape	BA
<b>Apprenticeships</b>		
46. Bronn, Earl	TMS International	Diesel Mechanics
47. Botman, Gurshim	TMS International	Diesel Mechanics
48. Davids, Macwin	TMS International	Boilermaking

## Building Extension

For some time space limitations have prevented us from embarking on new ventures at our Centre and we have longed for the opportunity to extend our premises.



We are delighted to report that a substantial award from **Allan & Gill Gray Philanthropy, advised by Richard Rosenthal** has now made this possible. Work started on the foundations for three new workshop/classroom spaces alongside our existing building in March as the year under review ended.



## New Website

With our new skills we have been able to construct a new and much-improved website at [www.netvirpret.co.za](http://www.netvirpret.co.za)

## Community Outreach

During the year we embarked on three ventures to support families in the community under particular stress.

The first was to provide a spacious three-roomed wendy house for the family of the murdered girl Liesl Booyesen to relieve pressure in their severely over-crowded home.

The second was to rebuild the home of Selanvor Platjies and his grandmother which had been destroyed in a fire caused by an electrical fault some years ago. Selanvor was patiently waiting to access an inheritance from his grandfather which was being held in trust by the Guardians Fund administered by the High Court until he came of age and which he was planning to use to start rebuilding their home. A woman turned up claiming to be from the Dept. of Social Welfare and said her job was to help young people claim their inheritance. She persuaded him to open a new bank account and she left with the card and the pin promising to deposit his money as soon as it came but advising him to be patient and not to talk to anyone about it. When some months later Selanvor did eventually tell us what had happened, we found that the Fund had indeed paid R80,000 into his account but that every cent had been withdrawn at ATMs in the Eastern Cape over a two-month period. We laid a charge of theft with the police but there has been no progress in the case.



The third endeavour was to bring dignity back to the lives of 16 families living in the informal Gwarrie Camp by building 8 toilets for them and linking these to the municipal sewerage system. They were previously having to use the bush as their toilet.

Net vir Pret initiated and supervised all three ventures but they were funded directly by our UK partners, EDSA.

**Funding**

None of the above work could have been achieved without the support of our donors, large and small, whom we wish to thank for their kindness.

**Donors: 01.04.2020-31.03.2021**

**Subsidies**

Department of Social Development
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**Foundations, Trusts & Corporate**

Allan & Gill Gray Philanthropy Boschendal Hospitality Education for Democracy in South Africa (UK) ELMA Foundation King Baudouin Foundation (BE)	Rand Merchant Bank Rolf-Stephan Nussbaum Foundation Stichting Projecten Zuid Afrika (NL) University of the Western Cape
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**Private donors**

Rosemary de Waal Anne Page Chris Beer & Rene Weinum Geoff Budlender Jan-Willem Witte Susan & Colin McAllister Jane Taylor	Greg Viljoen Lynn Aschman Zoë Wicomb Ulla Mussnug Stefan van Niekerk In memory of Dave Shackley
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Gordon & Sue Browning, Brian & Joan Wides and David & Philip Brodie all donated generously through our UK partners, EDSA.
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