

PARTNERS FOR POSSIBILITY SOUTH AFRICA



8

school principals receive training in change management from skilled business leaders.

12

months of leadership training to drive change in under-performing schools.

Leadership training for school principals by business leaders

Partners for Possibility (PFP) is the flagship programme of Symphonia for South Africa, a nation-building social enterprise whose mission is to reduce inequality and strengthen the fabric of the South African society. This institution mobilises business, government, and civil society to work together to generate sustainable improvements in the country's basic education system, which is characterised by very poor academic outcomes, primarily due to South Africa's legacy of inequality of opportunity. Research shows that the type of leadership of school principals is a key determinant of student achievement. Still, most principals in South Africa are not being sufficiently equipped to lead the change that is desperately needed in their schools. The PFP programme develops the leadership capacity of school principals in under-resourced and consequently under-performing public schools by partnering them with leaders from the

business sector, who have been well-equipped to lead change and manage teams.

The Julius Baer Foundation enabled principals from eight schools in rural Polokwane, in South Africa's Limpopo Province, to participate in the PFP programme. The effects of inequality are particularly evident in Limpopo, where the levels of poverty are among the highest in the country. The principals who lead schools in this area face formidable leadership challenges including poor school infrastructure, under-qualified and demotivated teachers, as well as pupils who do not have proper clothing and lack parental support. These principals are partnered with wealthier and experienced business leaders. They work alongside them in their schools as part of a structured 12-month leadership development programme designed to achieve the following four key outcomes: the principals attain the confidence and energy to lead change in their schools, the teachers are energised and teach with



Julius Baer Foundation

For more than fifty years, the Julius Baer Foundation has dedicated itself to making meaningful and impactful contributions to society. The grant foundation of the Julius Baer Group was founded in 1965 by Walter J. Bär to support all forms of art and culture, various sciences, and carefully selected charitable causes within Switzerland. The Foundation's reach has extended along with the growth of the Group, and, today it collaborates with partner organisations worldwide in the core areas of Vocational Training, Recycling PLUS, and Wealth Inequality.

How you can contribute

Clients and employees of Julius Baer can support the Foundation.

Your donation will be used specifically for the core area of your wish. IBAN: CH 94 0851 5072 8789 4200 9

Contact

Julius Baer Foundation
Bahnhofstrasse 36, P.O. Box
8010 Zurich, Switzerland
Tel.: +41(0)58 888 4422
foundation@juliusbaer.com
www.juliusbaer.com/foundation

enthusiasm, school management teams are aligned and cohesive, and parents as well as community members are actively engaged with schools.

Creating qualified school management and engagement

Through the PfP programme, 684 schools across South Africa received training in change management and team leadership, impacting over 547,000 students and their families as well as 20,000 teachers. An external evaluation conducted by the Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation of South Africa concluded that PfP's impact had been profoundly positive in participating schools:

- School principals had become better at listening, organising, delegating, adapting to new challenges, managing people and resources as well as engaging with stakeholders. Further, they had become more assertive, nurturing, and open to new ideas.
- School management teams had become more cohesive and were managing schools more effectively.
- Crucially, morale and motivation among teachers had risen and teachers reported feeling a greater sense of ownership over important school matters. Some schools had seen a marked reduction in teacher absenteeism.
- In most schools, parents and community members had become more involved in school life and their children's education.

Additionally, PfP is having a profound impact on the way that business leaders (represented mostly by privileged members of South African society) view South Africa's marginalised and under-resourced communities and the huge challenges faced by schools in those communities.

Facts and figures: South Africa

According to the World Bank, South Africa has a dual economy and one of the highest inequality rates in the world. In 2017, youth unemployment in South Africa reached an all-time high of 56%. The OECD points out that the poor performance of the country's education system denies many people access to a job and thus perpetuates poverty and inequality. The following statistics illustrate the extent of South Africa's education-system crisis:

- South African children are consistently ranked at or near the bottom in international tests of reading, literacy, and numeracy.
- Results from the 2016 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) revealed that after four full years of education 78% of South African children cannot comprehend what they read (if they can read at all).
- In the same study, South African children scored lowest out of 50 countries for reading ability and lagged far behind children from other middle-income countries.
- Research shows that early reading deficits cause most children to fall further behind over time, helping explain why around 50% of South African children drop out and never graduate from secondary school.
- South Africa is the only country in the world to have two Nobel Peace Prize Laureates who had houses on the same street. The street in question is Vilakazi Street in Soweto, and the Nobel Prize winners were Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

For more information about Partners for Possibility, please visit: www.pfp4sa.org

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate