



United  
Through  
Sport

2023  
ANNUAL REPORT



Transforming Lives  
Through Sport



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# A MESSAGE FROM United Through Sport's Chairman

Dear family, friends and supporters,

Reflecting on my 17-year journey with United Through Sport as Co Founder and Board Chairman, I am reminded of the responsibility and privilege we hold to transform lives, families and communities.

I am deeply grateful for our village of supporters, partners and staff whose unwavering commitment ensures the delivery of critical sports for development programmes where they are most needed. Together, we reached an astounding 12,415 participants across our Pathways to Success model in 2023. Additionally, we have continued to deepen our impact in the community all the way from early childhood, teaching over 800 children to read to young adulthood, assisting more than 200 youth with their pathway into employment.

This year, we intensified our ongoing commitment to sustainability by hosting the inaugural United Through Sport's Charity Dinner. A resounding success, this event marked a significant milestone in our mission to raise community awareness, recognizing the pivotal role of community engagement in fostering holistic child development through sports. The audience heard the testimony of two of our participants who have been supported through our programmes for more than 12 years from childhood to adulthood and into successful careers - a reflection of the length and depth of our interventions.

I invite you to join us on the road ahead as we work towards creating a brighter, more inclusive future for all. In 2024 we will continue to open up our programmes to more participants at every stage of our Pathway to Success and will be showcasing our activities during a number of stakeholder visits.

In the words of the late former president, Mr. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela,



**"Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand."**

Enkosi (Thank you)!

**Qondakele Sompondo,**  
Board Chairman, United Through Sport

# Empowering Children And Youth On Their PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## EARLY INSPIRATION 5-9 years

### 2. Learn to Move

**2838**

children's gross motor skills improved, boosting coordination and confidence.



### 1. Read to Lead

**809**

children accessed literacy sessions, fostering their passion for reading.

## ASPIRING ADOLESCENCE 10-14 years

### 3. Keep Active

**8807**

children received direct sports coaching and physical education, promoting movement and life skills development.



### 4. Girls Unite

**63**

girls were empowered to navigate life challenges confidently and reach their full potential.

### 4. Boys Unite

**52**

boys became advocates for gender equity while developing essential skills for holistic development at home, school, and in their communities.



## FUTURE GENERATION 13-19 years

### 5. School of Excellence

**93**

students received scholarships to attend high-level academic and sports-focused private high schools.



## YOUTH RISING 18-35 years

### 6. Higher Learning

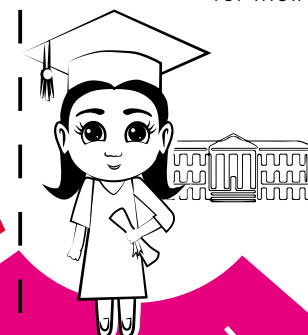
**67**

youth obtained tertiary qualifications from higher education and vocational training institutions.

### 7. Equipping Entrepreneurs

**30**

young entrepreneurs gained mentorship, guidance, and funding for their businesses.



### 8. Ready to Work

**139**

youth secured meaningful employment opportunities.



# A TWELVE-YEAR JOURNEY

## to becoming Dr. Bronwyn White

After a 12-year journey with United Through Sport, Dr. Bronwyn White has achieved her dream of graduating as a medical doctor, and is currently completing her community service.

Reflecting on her journey, Bronwyn shared, "We are allowed to make five choices, and then get placed at one of the hospitals of our choice for our community service period. My parents would love for me to come back to Gqeberha. They are very proud of me."

Dr. Bronwyn White joined our Junior School of Excellence (now the Girls & Boys Unite programmes) in 2012, when she was just 12 years old, becoming one of the first participants in the programme. Recognised for her exceptional sporting and academic abilities, she progressed to the Senior School of Excellence (now, the Aspiring Adolescence Programme) and received a scholarship at Pearson High School where she achieved an impressive four distinctions in her final year.

**"United Through Sport gave me such an amazing opportunity, allowing me to attend a school such as Pearson. This made me realise that I am capable of following my dreams and becoming a medical doctor," said Bronwyn.**

Continuing as a participant in our Youth Rising programme, Bronwyn received funding for her MBChB degree at Free State University in Bloemfontein, South Africa, a journey of over 650km (about a 7-hour drive) from her hometown, Gqeberha.

**Bronwyn becomes our first medical doctor graduate. We are immensely proud and credit this achievement to her hard work and the generosity of our community of supporters.**



**"UNITED THROUGH SPORT GAVE ME SUCH AN AMAZING OPPORTUNITY... MADE ME REALISE THAT I AM CAPABLE OF FOLLOWING MY DREAMS AND BECOMING A MEDICAL DOCTOR."  
Dr. Bronwyn White**



# LEARN TO MOVE

For the past three years, our **Learn to Move** programme has been steadily growing.

We have expanded it to eight partner schools and received positive feedback from teachers. They have noticed improved concentration and better behaviour in learners thanks to engaging in physical activities.

**Learn to Move** focuses on both gross and fine motor skills, which are crucial for coordination and staying active. These skills also enhance cognitive function, aiding in learning. Our sessions are enjoyable and interactive, featuring games that promote skill development alongside positive social interactions.



**2,355**  
PARTICIPANTS REACHED



**↑ 83%**  
IMPROVEMENT IN GROSS MOTOR SKILLS





# READ TO LEAD

Reading for meaning and comprehension continues to remain a challenge for the majority of under 10 year olds in South Africa.

**Read To Lead** has provided high-quality literacy support to project participants this year, with an average of 25 sessions per participant.

Our literacy coaches work individually with children aged 5 to 10, breaking down literacy barriers in their learning path. When kids master reading, writing and understanding, they gain crucial tools for life. Throughout the programme, their literacy skills significantly improve.



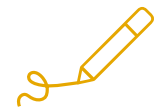
383

PARTICIPANTS REACHED



↑ 94%

IMPROVEMENT IN READING ABILITY



↑ 88%

IMPROVEMENT IN WRITING ABILITY



6,374

LITERACY SESSIONS PROVIDED



# KEEP ACTIVE

**Keep Active** empowers early adolescents with life skills, critical information and promotes an active lifestyle.

This year, we have partnered with 30 primary schools, positively impacting the lives of 5,978 participants. Our sessions are interactive and fun, offering a safe and supportive environment.

We focus on topics like sexual health, gender awareness and life skills, ensuring our participants have the knowledge and confidence to navigate early adolescence and thrive.



**8,807**

PARTICIPANTS REACHED



**↑ 90%**

IMPROVEMENT IN EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING



**↑ 100%**

IMPROVEMENT IN SEXUAL HEALTH KNOWLEDGE



**↑ 87%**

IMPROVEMENT IN PHYSICAL HEALTH





# GIRLS UNITE

**Girls Unite** offers a nurturing space where girls aged 10 to 14 years can freely express themselves and boost their self-esteem.

Partnering with two primary schools, we empower girls to enhance their self-development and advocate for gender equality. Through our girls-only sessions, participants improve their English skills, foster positive peer connections and develop into confident individuals. We assist them in accessing top-quality high schools, opening doors to academic opportunities on their pathway to success.



63

PARTICIPANTS REACHED



↑ 100%

IMPROVEMENT IN SELF CONFIDENCE



↑ 100%

IMPROVEMENT IN RESILIENCE



↑ 100%

IMPROVEMENT IN LEADERSHIP SKILLS

5 GENDER EQUALITY

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

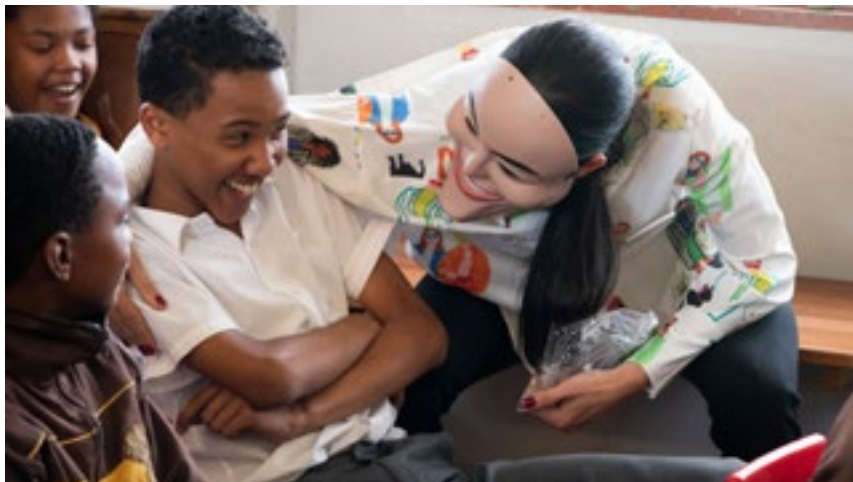
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

# BOYS UNITE

**Boys Unite** offers a safe space for boys to explore gender perceptions and advocates for girls.

Here, boys challenge stereotypes learned at home and school, fostering empathy for their female peers. Through emotional growth and positive role models, boys develop self-awareness and healthy relationships.

Our programme cultivates respect and equality, reducing gender-based violence and promoting positive interactions between genders.



52

PARTICIPANTS  
REACHED



↑ 100%

IMPROVEMENT IN  
GENDER SENSITIVITY



SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

5 GENDER  
EQUALITY



3 GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING





# SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

We have had another successful year with our **School of Excellence** project, partnering with 8 top performing high schools and providing full scholarships to 93 participants, an increase from last year (85 participants).

They received transportation, after-school tutoring, and mentorship. In 2023, our participants excelled academically and in sports, receiving awards for Academic Excellence and Top Sports Performance.

Many were chosen as prefects and captains, highlighting their leadership skills.



**93**  
HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS ON FULL  
SCHOLARSHIPS



**24**  
STUDENTS AWARDED  
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE OR  
SPORTING EXCELLENCE



**↑98%**  
ACADEMIC  
PROGRESSION RATE



**↑100%**  
HIGH SCHOOL  
COMPLETION RATE



4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

# YOUTH RISING

This year, we supported 282 participants through **Youth Rising**. Our focus is on helping youth find employment, start businesses and pursue higher education.

We offer mentorship, create support networks and help them access opportunities. Our workshops cover essential skills like interview techniques and CV writing.

In the past year, our impact has been significant. We have seen a substantial increase in youth employment, with 139 young people finding jobs compared to 53 the previous year. Additionally, the number of youth graduating from tertiary institutions rose from 26 to 67. These numbers reflect the tangible difference we are making in the lives of young people, providing them with opportunities for meaningful employment and skill development.



294

YOUTH IMPACTED



64%

FEMALE YOUTH IMPACTED



139

YOUTH EMPLOYED



125

YOUTH ENROLLED IN OR GRADUATED WITH TERTIARY QUALIFICATION



30

YOUTH OWNED BUSINESSES



# United Through Sport's IMPACT IN PARTNER SCHOOLS

Since its establishment in 2005, United Through Sport has become an integral part of Gqeberha's most under served communities. In 2023, we celebrated nearly two decades since the inception of our flagship programme, Keep Active, at our longstanding partner schools - Astra Primary and Isaac Booi Primary.

Today, we remain an integral part of the schools' educational framework and offer a variety of programmes and services. This aligns with our commitment to providing comprehensive and meaningful engagement opportunities that offer all learners the chance to partake in our programmes while addressing the needs of their developmental stage. These initiatives seamlessly integrate into the curriculum, enhancing the educational journey of every participant.

In 2012, we launched our Girls and Boys Unite clubs at Astra Primary and Isaac Booi, serving as host sites for the programme. Today, both schools also host our gardening and recycling projects, contributing to the school feeding scheme to ensure that every child receives nourishment for both body and mind.

Through collaboration with school leadership, we have invested in transformative infrastructure projects. At Astra Primary, the establishment of a library, literacy centre, hockey turf, and multipurpose court has transformed the school's environment, fostering physical and academic growth. Similarly, at Isaac Booi Primary, our contributions, including literacy centres, library facilities, a computer room, two prefab classrooms, cricket nets and a multipurpose court empower students along their journey to success through sport.

**Together, these initiatives reflect our shared dedication to nurturing thriving communities and empowering the next generation.**



# CHARITY GALA

On November 1st, United Through Sport hosted our inaugural charity fundraiser dinner, marking a significant milestone in our mission to enhance community awareness and engagement.

The evening featured South African personality and presenter, Dan Nicholl, as emcee, and a soul-stirring performance by South Africa's multi-award winning and globally accomplished artist, Zolani Mahola-Klemp, formerly of Freshly Ground. Highlighting the event were two remarkable success stories from our programmes.

Kaylin Fourie, a participant since 2011, excelled in our Junior and Senior School of Excellence, earning a full scholarship to our partner school, Pearson High School. Excelling in hockey, she secured a partial scholarship to the University of Pretoria, with United Through Sport bridging financial gaps. Today, Kaylin is a passionate English teacher at Sanctior High School.

Mfundo Mpothula, a participant since 2007, transitioned from our Keep Active Programme to earning an Electrical Engineering diploma. After COVID-related unemployment, he re-engaged with United Through Sport, receiving capital and mentorship to establish his IT hardware and training business, where he now employs 12 other youth from the communities.

**The evening's centrepiece was our auction, showcasing a coveted 2023 Rugby World Cup jersey signed by Siya Kolisi. With 137 attendees, our auction raised a monumental R227,000 towards our programmes.**

In the spirit of community involvement, a follow-up initiative will take place in 2024, inviting stakeholders on an immersive half-day tour to experience the impact of our programmes first-hand.



# VISION 2024, AND BEYOND

Since launching in 2022, the Siyaphakama project (our collaboration with the Kolisi Foundation, Ubuntu and KaziBantu) has been a transformative contribution towards our Pathway to Success model.

In 2023, we reached 3,829 children across six schools and employed 24 previously unemployed youth. Feedback from schools and participants underscores the project's impact.

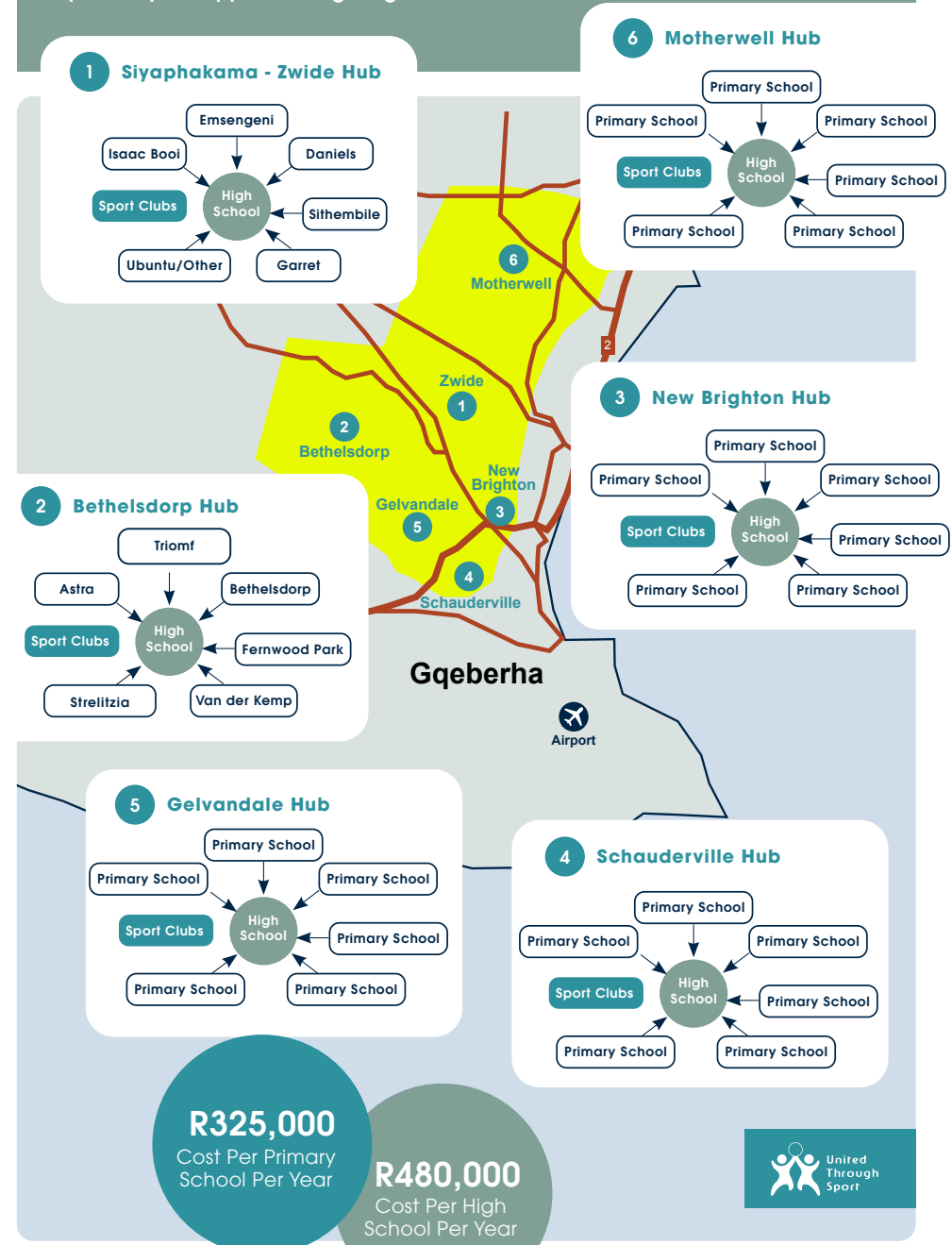
Reflecting on our programmes and the feedback from participants, schools, and staff, we continually strive to identify areas of opportunity and improvement.

**We are excited to share that we will be ushering in a new Hub Model as part of our Pathway to Success. We have identified six hub networks across Gqeberha, including additional Primary and High Schools.**

This model will guarantee continuous service provision for participants transitioning to high school from our programmes and will allow us to reach a broader range of children, with a deeper impact.



AIM: to provide the extra mural support and development currently provided by the Siyaphakama Programme in more primary schools across Gqeberha's disadvantaged communities, while also providing a clearer pathway of support through high school.





# ENKOSI!

(Thank You)

We express heartfelt gratitude to our supporters, partners and staff for their invaluable contributions to transforming lives through sport in Nelson Mandela Bay!

Thanks to your support, 12,415 participants, including individuals like Bronwyn, are progressing along their own Pathway to Success.






**We eagerly anticipate journeying with you in 2024 as we continue to impact lives, families and communities.**



**PLUS ALL VOLUNTEERS, CHARITY CHAMPIONS AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS,  
WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**



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