



YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES SOUTH AFRICA

Reg. 2016/022961/08
PBO: 930067049
752 Metlatoe Street
Molapo, Soweto, 1818
South Africa
+27 63 071 2093
+27 76 118 6382

info@youthopportunitiesa.org
www.youthopportunitiesafrica.org

Programme Report: January 2025



Introduction

During the month of January YOSA staff spent considerable time doing baseline surveys for the school communities we will be supporting this year and conducting our implementation strategy review. Thus, we carried out an effective assessment of the challenges faced by the school communities and drew up an implementation plan that is commensurate with YOSA resources. The challenges faced by school communities far outweigh YOSA resources hence partnership development is integral to our programming. With generous support from FNZ Holdings, we have revamped our Sekwati Primary School computer lab and installed a new lab at Sekano Ntoane Secondary School. We have also received generous back-to-school support from Donna and Karen. Our Centre library is fully transformed.

Activities for the Month

1. Digital innovation

This is a YOSA flagship programme with dual purpose. Digital skills help learners to navigate through the learning support tools while preparing them for effective tertiary and occupational functioning. Thus, learners can use AI learning platforms for independent learning. The learning support programme is made easy with computer laboratories. The labs will benefit a definite figure of 2494 learners and other community people.

FNZ support has helped us to revamp one of our important community labs in Sekano Toane Secondary School. The lab was fitted with old and defunct computers, and we replaced them with the 15 old but-functioning computers removed from Sekwati Primary School. The new lab is now supporting 1600 high school learners, 52 teachers and unemployed youths from the community. We have received overwhelming requests for computer skills from the local community. We will certainly extend the services to the youths and school parents in the community after training teachers and learners. Most teachers in the school have no basic computer skills. They had no knowledge of the AI learning platforms like Udemy, Coursera, Khani Academy,

Skillshare or even YouTube. Learners were still totally reliant on the teacher and lack independent learning skills. However, the three computer labs and our equipped library are improving the situation.



The computers at Sekwati primary school and the new lab at Sekano Toane Secondary School

2. Centre Library Development

Learning support is made easy by the development of an effective library at the Centre. Mike Van Oerle installed the bookshelves for us. Donna and Karen have helped a lot with reading books for the library. It is now well stocked.



YOSA social workers Jane, Nomcebo and Witness sorting and packing library books



Learners helping Jane with sorting the books for packing on the shelves.



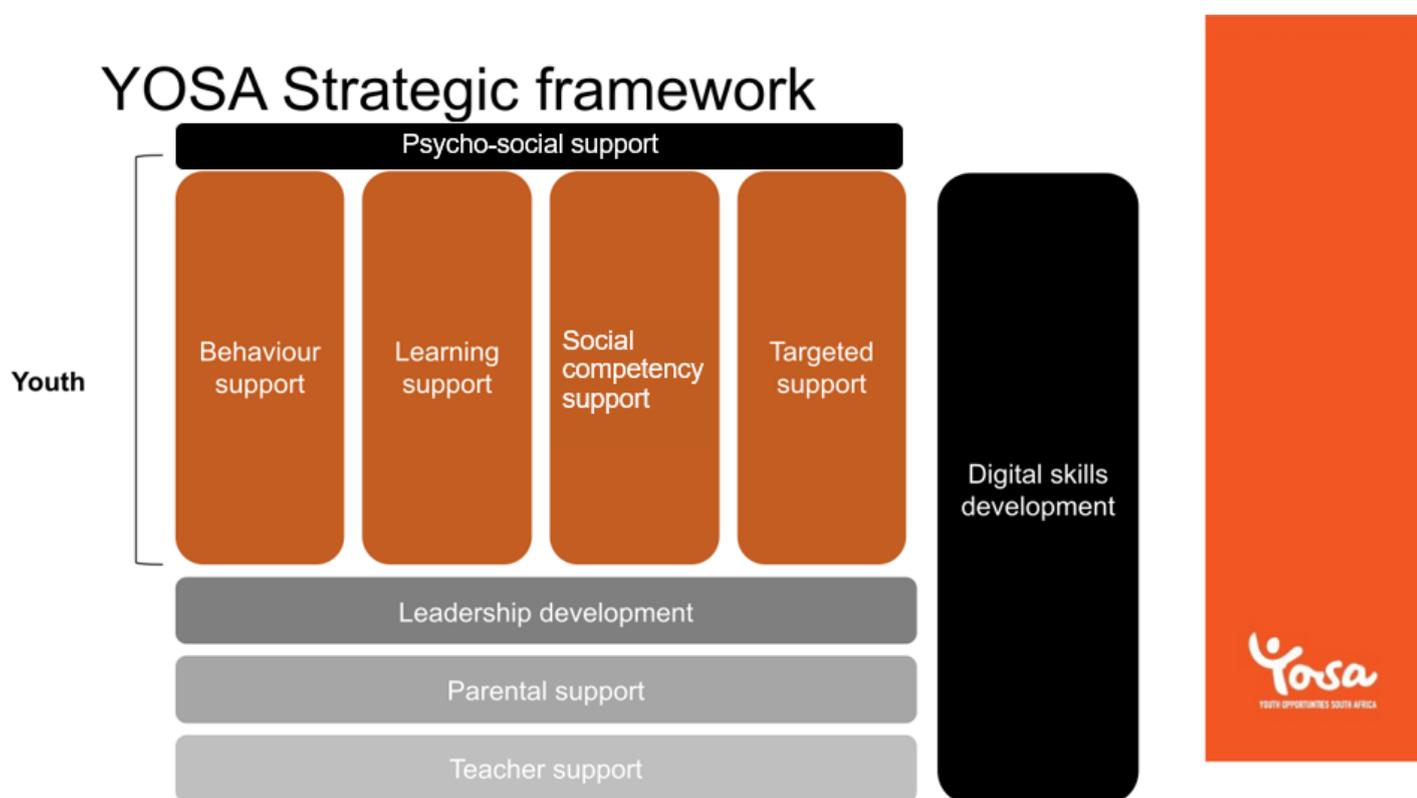
More and more learners are reading for interest. A culture of reading is surely catching up with most learners.

3. Identified learning barriers

The learners in township school communities experience a host of learning barriers that interfere with their education. These barriers interfere with school completion, effective participation in education and compromise pass rates. The dominant learning barriers in our school communities include, substance use, violence (bullying and gangsterism), teenage pregnancies, absconding, latecoming, lack of motivation to succeed, lack of positive role models, learners' lack of information regarding opportunities. Most of these challenges are compounded by parental disengagement in the education of their children, family breakdowns, lack of teaching resources and big class sizes that compromise learner individuation. There is an aggregate enrollment of 12 204 learners in ten schools supported by YOSA. Sixty-one percent (61%), 7 444, of these learners live in single parent families, 19% (2 319) in grandparents headed and kinship families, 15% (1 831) live with both parents and 5% (610) in child headed households. The family is in crisis in these communities.

4. YOSA strategy

Psychosocial support and digital skills development are the main programmes that drive learners' behavior support, learning support, social competency and targeted support. Change is inspired by partnerships and positive social connections. Sustainable and exciting learning is provided through digital tools with total buy-in from learners. Leadership development, parental engagement and teachers' support consolidate cultural transformation.



5. Psychosocial support

The social conditions of learners in our school communities demand that we help them feel cared for, accepted, and connected to significant adults who inspire them to achieve and model positive behavior. We administer psychosocial support through group-based interventions such as learner leadership development, scouts, public speaking, spelling bee, debating, netball, soccer, collective homework, local hackathons, music and dancing. We programme towards helping children to stay off the streets. Through group-based participation learners improve their academic and social competencies. We encourage cooperation and positive connections that build



mutual competencies.



Learner engagement during programme evaluation



Learner engagement, contributing to our strategy development

6. Merit Awards

The Annual Merit Awards Ceremony for the schools that we support was successfully held on 7 February 2025. The ceremony presented awards to learners who excelled in academics, behavior, sports and social contributions. We presented learners with certificates, badges, medals and gadgets (iPads and laptops) that were especially valuable for some of them who were transitioning to tertiary institutions. The support from FNZ and the South Turrumurra Uniting Church of Australia were helpful running this ceremony, setting a meritocratic standard in the supported school communities.

Acknowledgements

YOSA is eternally grateful for the support from **FNZ**, a global financial services and fintech company supporting us from their Africa headquarters in Sandton. The support is very important for the implementation of YOSA programmes. We are also exceedingly grateful for the sustained monthly debit order contributions made by **Jennifer Van Oerle**. Jen also contributed significantly to year-end motivation for staff. We also receive regular support from **Karen and Trevor, Mary, Donna, Rachael** and a generous supply of programme uniforms from **Barker College** in Australia. The material and financial support from these friends were significant in scaling up our implementation.

Conclusion

We are so excited about the value of our programmes in the communities we serve. Our digital skills



development programme is transforming communities. We are grateful to our funders for helping us to meet our staff costs and programme implementation. The combination of the digital innovation programme and the developing library is promoting independent learning and reading for interest among learners. The vulnerability of learners and the growing list of learning barriers demands a comprehensive battery of positive youth development programmes to nurture learner competencies, confidence and character. We are eternally grateful to our funding partners for helping us to drive the change.

