

At SEED Educational Trust, we strengthen South African education by building leadership capacity and implementing high-impact, scalable programmes that enhance teaching and learning — from individuals to entire provinces.

Our work empowers educational leaders to drive their own change — sustainably, strategically, and systemically.

What follows is an outline of our outputs and outcomes for the financial year ended February 2026.

Annual Report 2025-26



SEED Educational Trust:
Developing Leaders in Education since 2006

Trustees' Overview

FY26 was the year SEED transitioned to its new strategic approach of building institutions' capacity to develop their own leaders. This approach focuses on the middle tier of the education system and enables SEED to strengthen the system at scale. The potential of this shift is already evident. In previous years, SEED could reach the principals of no more than 100 schools each year, at a cost exceeding R4 million. The recently developed Visiting Faculty of the Mandla Makupula Education Leadership Institute (MMELI) will reach the School Management Teams (SMTs) of more than 100 schools annually, with more than 300 SMT members being developed as school leaders. The Eastern Cape Department of Education is funding the training in full and utilising its Teacher Development campuses to deliver it. This is still in the pilot phase. As the Faculty becomes more confident and proficient, it will be able to reach many more SMTs through smaller facilitation teams and by taking workshops closer to the schools.



Trustees' Overview (continued)

Funding our research and development work has always been a challenge for SEED. Our partnership with Curro helps us address this need. The School Leadership Programme and other initiatives that we are running with Curro provide platforms for developing best-practice resources and programmes. We are also able to divert some of the income from these projects towards our discretionary research and development budgets. This represents a shift towards social entrepreneurship and contributes to a more diversified income model for SEED.

SEED has always worked collaboratively within the education sector. Historically, many of these collaborations have arisen through funder-led initiatives. In this financial year, we have shifted towards taking greater initiative in developing collaborations with selected partners in the education sector. This has proved complex and challenging at times, but it has also enabled us to grow and deliver a richer offering to the sector.

SEED continues to adopt a highly professional organisational structure while remaining flexible and adaptive. As we continue to grow, we envisage moving towards a more blended structure that will include a small number of full-time posts to provide the additional stability, while continuing to contract highly specialised individuals to deliver the high-quality programmes and services for which SEED is known.

In the coming year, we will begin preparing for our 20th anniversary, which we will celebrate in August 2027. It has long been our intention to publish a book that not only tells SEED's story but also serves as a leadership development resource for the sector. We look forward to sharing more about this in the coming months.

David Newby, Managing Trustee

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: IN COLLABORATION WITH THE EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



The School Leadership Development Facilitation (SLDF) Programme is a system-wide initiative designed to strengthen leadership across the Eastern Cape by equipping provincial and district officials with the skills to design and deliver high-quality, contextually relevant training for principals, School Management Teams, and School Governing Bodies. Initiated by SEED in partnership with the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDOE) in 2022, the programme focuses on capacitating the Mandla Makupula Education Leadership Institute (MMELI) as a central hub for sustainable, internally driven leadership development. This approach directly addresses systemic challenges, including weak alignment between policy and practice, limited instructional leadership, inconsistent training quality, and fragmented stakeholder collaboration.

Programme	Area	Total duration	Registered	Completed	Completion date	Overall result
SLDF Year 1	Eastern Cape	12 months	38	38	Sept'25	100% pass rate. Class achieved an average of 73% for their assessments
SLDF Year 2	Eastern Cape	12 months (from November 2025)	38	Ongoing	End of 2026	At least 300 SMT members from the Eastern Cape's underperforming (Section 58b) schools will be developed with the School Leadership Programme (SLP) by the newly established Visiting Faculty during the 2nd half of 2026

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: IN COLLABORATION WITH THE EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CONTINUED)

The first (formal) phase of the programme was completed, culminating in September's graduation and establishing a cohort of trained facilitators within the system. Delivered by SEED and accredited by Stellenbosch Business School Executive Development (SBS-ED), the programme achieved a 100% pass rate, including 17 distinctions and an average score of 73%, with consistently high levels of participation. Nearly half of the participants performed in the top band, demonstrating the ability to apply research-informed facilitation and leadership practices in real-world contexts, while the remainder showed strong progress in developing practical leadership approaches. Qualitative evidence points to a meaningful shift towards more reflective, facilitative leadership, alongside measurable improvements in data-informed decision-making, including full uptake of the Data-Driven Districts (DDD) tool and its sustained usage among Circuit Managers.



TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: IN COLLABORATION WITH THE EASTERN CAPE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CONTINUED)

The number of participants who are repeat users of DDD increased sevenfold midway through the programme. While there was a drop-off in regular DDD usage at the end of the calendar year, there is sufficient evidence to show that a well-designed adult learning programme can shift behaviour and practices. The overall usage of the DDD tool increased from 58% at its baseline to 100%. Among the Circuit Manager group alone, repeat DDD users have increased nearly threefold, from 28% at the inception of the programme to 72%, 6 months after the completion of this 'academic' component of SLDF. Key enablers included real-world assignments, the tool's relevance to the role within the system, provision of practical assistance, and a supportive, non-shaming environment. The qualitative evidence of change having taken place comes from their assessments and coaching documents, for example:

"I made a conscious decision that my future role will be to use my facilitation skills at all possible engagements with the Circuit Managers in my team."

"I no longer assist people in their work but assist them to produce their own work through deliberate facilitation."

Enabling the education system's middle tier (e.g. Circuit Managers, Subject Advisors) is one of the features that sets SEED Educational Trust apart and has been independently established to act as *a critical lever for change in the delivery of teaching and learning outcomes*¹. Through working alongside the underutilised Provincial Teacher Development Institutes, SEED Educational Trust is driving the systemic shift to strengthen the educational system's capacity to develop its own leaders. Building on this foundation, the second 'applied' phase is underway and will see the MMELI Visiting Faculty deployed to deliver targeted Schools Leadership training to underperforming schools across the Eastern Cape. This SLDF phase will embed sustainable capacity within the system and drive improvements in teaching, learning, and provincial learner outcomes at scale.

① de Kock, T., Paterson, A., Shishenge, N., Godwin, K., Cameron, C. 2025. Dynamics of middle tier support in the South African education system: Contextual and institutional influences. Waltham, MA: The Learning Generation Initiative at Education Development Center

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WITH CURRO'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



The School Leadership Programme (SLP) supports School Management Teams in leading meaningful, context-driven change. The programme places human development at the centre of leadership practice, recognising that sustainable improvement in schools depends not only on technical capability, but on the growth of leaders as reflective, self-aware practitioners. Designed and implemented by SEED Educational Trust, the programme supports leaders to understand themselves better, their contexts, and their relationships with others. Through a structured yet deeply reflective learning process, participants develop both their professional practice and their personal leadership identity, shifting from compliance-driven approaches to more intentional, values-based leadership.



"What a privilege it was to be part of the first Leadership Development Programme in Curro. This course challenged me to think more deeply about how I lead, gave me practical tools I can apply daily, and, most importantly, built lasting connections with leaders across the country."

CURRO

SLP is accredited by Stellenbosch Business School
Executive Development (SBS-ED)



**Stellenbosch
Business School**
EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WITH CURRO’S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (CONTINUED)



The programme integrates workshops, coaching, peer learning, and applied assignments to build leaders’ capacity to support and develop others. Evidence from the programme highlights meaningful shifts in leadership behaviour, including greater self-awareness, more consultative and relational leadership styles, and stronger, more cohesive teams. The first and second intakes of the SLP were completed, culminating in April graduations, and establishing a growing network of leaders equipped to embed human-centred leadership practices that strengthen teaching and learning and contribute to improved learner outcomes.

Programme	Area	Total duration	Registered	Completed	Graduation	Overall result
Curro SLP 1	Western Cape	12 months	30	30	Apr'26	100 % pass rate and an average of 77% achieved for assessments
Curro SLP 2	Western Cape	12 months	28	28	Apr'26	100 % pass rate and an average of 76% achieved for assessments

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: WORKSHOPS

In November 2025, SEED Educational Trust facilitated a 3-day school leadership workshop in Winterton, led by Dr Al Witten, with 27 participants and four senior officials from READ Educational Trust. The workshop drew on SEED's structured repository of modular leadership development sessions, covering areas such as instructional leadership, strategic planning, organisational culture, and resilience. While effective as a standalone engagement, the workshop reinforced a key insight: meaningful and sustained impact in school leadership is best achieved through ongoing professional development rather than once-off interventions, enabling more coherent and context-responsive system strengthening.

Programme	Area	Total duration	Completed
READ workshop	Kwa Zulu Natal	3 days	31



TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



SEED operates an intentionally agile model, with no permanent staff or office infrastructure. Its cost structure therefore expands and contracts in line with the project pipeline, making the timing of individual projects and the availability of their funding particularly important when interpreting the financial results. SEED ended the year in a healthy financial position despite delays in the approval of funding for two projects. These delays resulted in lower income being recognised during the year and, consequently, lower project expenditure. By FY26 year-end, funding for both projects was in the final stages of approval, and we therefore anticipate improved income streams during FY27 as these projects progress.

The Curro School Leadership Development projects remain an important source of income and provide stability to SEED's operations. This income forms part of SEED's self-generated revenue within its social enterprise framework, helping to strengthen the organisation's financial resilience while supporting its broader education-focused work.

Most projects were delivered within budget, while Trust expenses were below budget for the year. This reflects positively on SEED's budgeting processes and the financial controls in place. It also demonstrates the organisation's ability to manage its resources while maintaining the flexibility required by its project-based operating model.

	FY26	FY25
Assets	R627 266	R1 830 125
Equity & liabilities	R627 266	R1 830 125
Revenue	R3 422 225	R5 428 548
Operating expenses	R4 163 176	R4 916 100
Surplus / (Deficit)	(R675 992)	R628 095

Refer to the full Audited Financial Statements for more detail.

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION THROUGH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: PARTNERSHIPS



South Africa's education system faces deep, systemic challenges — from gaps between policy and practice to a looming leadership crisis. At SEED Educational Trust, we are committed to transforming the system from within.

We would not be able to do this without the financial contributions from our partners: Curro Holdings, The Susan & Michael Dell Foundation, and The Get It Done Foundation.

Systemic response also means hands-on, ground-level presence. We have co-created and collaborated with the New Leaders Foundation, Dinaledi Educational Coaching, Columba Leadership Academy, Leap Institute / the Ubuntu Maths Institute, Reflective (formerly Reflective Learning) and the READ Educational Trust.

Thank you for being a part of the solution!

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SEED Educational Trust is a registered Public Benefit Organisation under Section 30 of the Income Tax Act 58 of 1962 and approved under Sections 18A(1)(a) and (b), making qualifying donations tax-deductible within the limits of the Act

Level 1 BBBEE service provider

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