

ANNUAL REVIEW 2017/2018

Transforming the culture of schools
to change the trajectory of youth



Omidyar Network sponsored lean data research conducted by a team from Acumen indicates high levels of satisfaction amongst our education stakeholders.

Anything above 50 is considered excellent.

Net promoter score out of 100

Educators: 90

District Department of Education Officials: 69

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

It was Nelson Mandela who stated 'Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world'. Yet the current education system in South Africa, and in particular the education provided to the majority and poorest of South Africa's youth is not designed with character, purpose, leadership and employability in mind. Rather, it is a system which encourages rote learning and restricts the understanding of a quality education to how well youth perform in examinations. The current education in South Africa fails to develop some of the essential skills which the World Economic Forum has identified for the 21st Century. These skills include communication, collaboration, critical thinking and problem-solving.

There is also inadequate engagement of youth as partners in change processes and an over-reliance on top-down approaches to change, denying youth many opportunities to develop their leadership abilities.

There is a need to reimagine education which puts the holistic development of youth and the preparedness of them for life after school more in focus. Youth are future employees, future professionals, future entrepreneurs. They are also future leaders in society, communities and businesses. At Columba we believe education should prepare youth for a successful future. Embedding values and effective youth engagement into a school's culture offers a way to achieve this in a sustainable manner.

An outcomes framework for youth social action which maps 90% of the list of skills necessary for success in the future according to WEF²:



SHIFTING PARADIGMS FOR TRANSFORMING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Recent research coming out of a collaboration between The Mastercard Foundation and Ashoka¹ maps out emerging best practice trends in transforming youth livelihoods and leadership in Africa.

The emerging paradigm spells out 4 elements specifically relating to the leadership element:



The Columba model aligns with all of these and extends these by showing how these can be institutionalized in high schools through a values-based youth engagement model.

School Principals, Educators and learners work as partners in bringing positive change to schools and communities. The values-based leadership programme and 2 years of social action involvement which targets problems in the school and community serves to develop character and grit, connects youth to a sense of purpose, and develops a range of essential 21st century skills for life and work. As the school embeds youth engagement, so many opportunities open up for youth to contribute as leaders in their schools and communities whilst leading change in their own lives.

Real-life action learning projects are an essential foundation for contemporary new approaches to education globally. An independent review Commissioned by the UK Prime Minister listed an outcomes framework for youth social action (left).

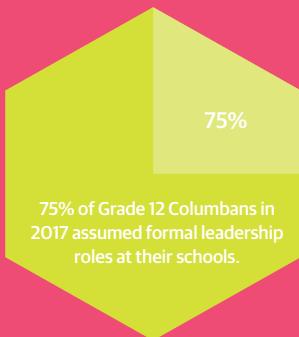
1 Future Forward (ND). Youth Unstuck. Social Innovations and Transforming Livelihoods and Leadership in Africa.

2 Scoping a Quality framework for youth social Action. The campaign for Youth Social Action, June 2013

3 Top 10 Skills for 2020: WEF The Future of Jobs

LEARNERS – INSPIRED TO LEAD CHANGE IN THEIR OWN LIVES

LEADERSHIP



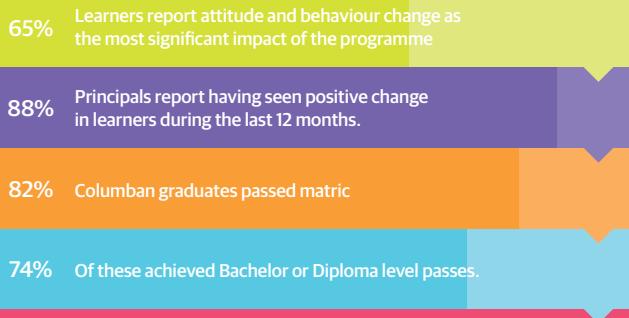
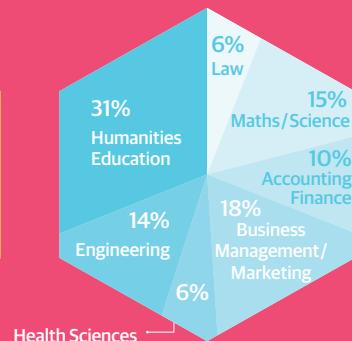
SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS



TRANSITION DESTINATIONS AT 6 MONTHS



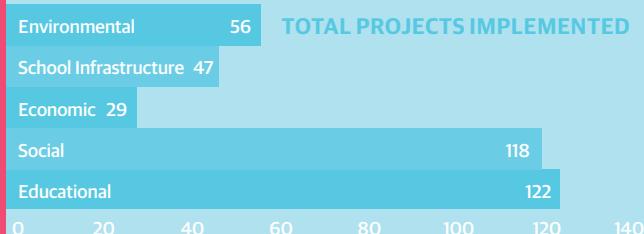
FIELDS OF STUDY



* Based on annual assessments from 88 schools in 2017

YOUTH LEADING CHANGE IN THEIR SCHOOLS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

Determined to lead change in their schools and communities, teams of youth supported by adults implemented no fewer than 372 school or community based projects to tackle identified challenges.



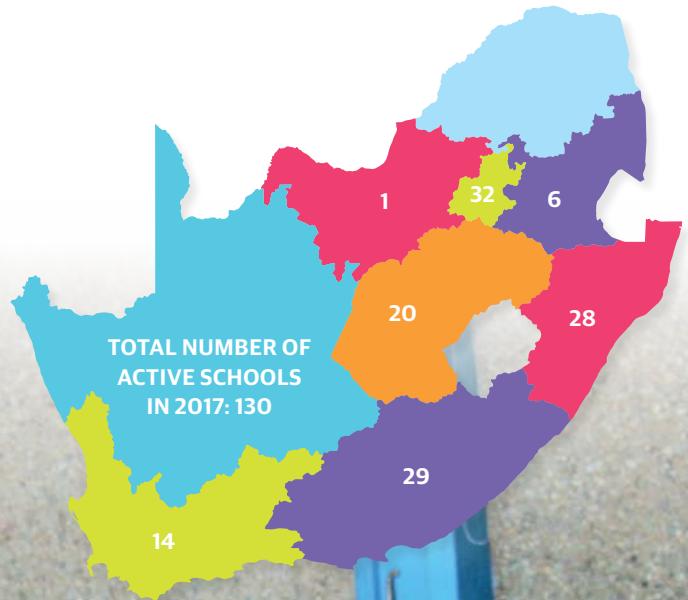
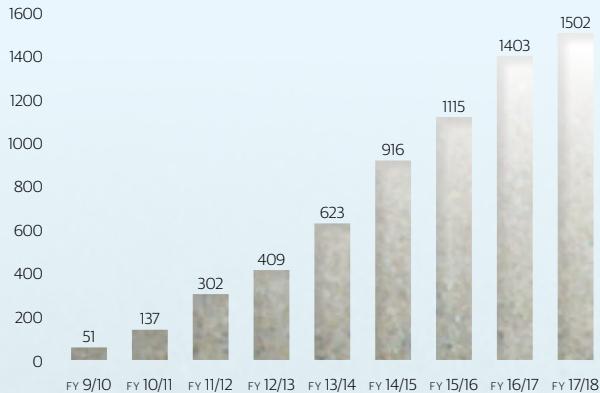
TYPICAL PROJECTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

- Peer to peer sharing of values with fellow learners.
- Recruitment of other learners into the group to be part of social change initiatives and promote values especially with younger learners.
- Projects aimed at increasing self-discipline in terms of late-coming, uniform compliance, truancy .
- Working with the Representative Council of Learners to monitor problematic behaviour.
- Claiming back school grounds and facilities from litter, graffiti and grime often through weekly clean up campaigns, painting, cleaning of toilets and in some cases recycling which also served to raise funds for their projects and to address identified needs of vulnerable youth.
- Establishment of school vegetable gardens and supporting school feeding schemes; greening initiatives such as planting trees.
- Youth activism around drug and substance abuse, teen pregnancy, HIV-Aids and other STIs, vandalism, bullying and violence. These typically take the form of talks, testimonials and arts-based campaigns.
- Academic support and literacy promotion through learner led study groups, extra lessons and reading clubs, and restoring school libraries.
- After school programmes such as debating, cultural or sporting events.

GROWING LEADERS WHO CAN TRANSFORM THEIR OWN LIVES, THEIR SCHOOLS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

FOOTPRINT AND TRACK RECORD

Since inception Columba has worked in 169 schools and taken 445 cohorts of adults and learners through the programme.



2017 ACTIVITIES

Supported youth engagement and leadership in 130 schools

On-boarded 29 new partner schools

Implemented 104 residential values-based leadership academies with 1502 participants (20% adults; 80% learners)

Developed capacity and fostered a connected network through:

- Thirteen educator empowerment weekend residencies for 350 educators from 83 schools
- A year end showcase event celebrating the actions, practices and achievements at partner schools with 252 principals and educators
- 6 Provincial Youth Conferences for 1282 people



EDUCATORS* - INSPIRED TO CHAMPION YOUTH POTENTIAL

93% of educators reported that the programme contributed significantly to their professional development:

- Enhanced leadership skills
- Increased confidence
- Better understanding and communication with learners
- Better engagement with learners
- Better collaboration with colleagues

89% of educators report improvements in quality of their engagement with youth as a result of:

- Understanding learners better
- More trust and communication
- Recognising learners' potential

* Lean Data Sprint Research Results conducted by Acumen, 2018.

PRINCIPALS - EQUIPPED TO EMBED YOUTH ENGAGEMENT INTO THE SCHOOL CULTURE

- 89% of Principals report involvement in youth-led projects at the school.
- 66%* of Principals report actively seeking the contribution from others including learners.
- 56% of Principals report encouraging discussions amongst leaders that contribute new ideas to improve school culture.

* Based on a sample of 104 school principals



CULTURE CHANGE

In a recent external research project involving 23 schools, 100% of the Principal/Educator respondents felt that the Columba programme was hugely beneficial, not only for learners and teachers, but for the school in general.



SELF-IMPOSED DISCIPLINE

'Christian Liphoko Senior Secondary School, in the Free State, had serious discipline problems before they embarked on their first Columba academy in 2012. But, as the Principal Mrs Rancho testified, 'Columba changed our school, I don't want to lie.' A teacher at the school, Mrs Mohake, elaborates: 'The values made the difference. As the learners told their stories at the academy, we could see that they had challenges with self-esteem. When they came across challenges, they looked at themselves as if they had no value. But because of the Columba values, they saw who they were. They educated the whole school on these values and it changed the learners. It became much easier to teach them in class.' The Department of Education even noted on their visit in 2017 the complete change in the discipline of the learners and the vibe of the school.

Mr Ramabubuda, of Acorns to Oaks High School (Mpumalanga) explained: 'We have seen that, through Columba, the young ones are responsible and become like independent workers. They are now self-disciplined. We selected a mixture of learners to attend and we saw the changes in those who went. It is a leadership academy so we saw the change where they understand themselves and others better.'

A VALUES-BASED CULTURE

At Mdluli High School (Mpumalanga), a teacher who attended the academies and became a 'values champion' (Mrs Machimane) shared 'So many learners have changed. For example, poor performers have changed and become good performers academically, and actually achieved distinctions. The reason is because of the Columba values. Even in sports and other activities the learners are using the spirit of perseverance and we now try to excel in everything. But we also live by the value of integrity – we don't cheat and we are proud of what we do.'

INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF YOUTH ISSUES

At Lethukuthula Secondary School (Gauteng), Mrs Balozi the values champion shared: 'The outlook of learners has changed radically, and also that of the teachers. The teachers realised that the learners have potential and started to understand better the underlying issues causing bad behaviour.'

Mrs Monyepao of Alafang Secondary School (Gauteng) voiced a similar opinion: 'There were lots of impacts on the lives of learners and teachers. We had a chance to look back and see what we were doing wrong. We were blaming learners before, but with the values, we saw we were not doing it right. We saw we were not serving the learners. So we became caring and the learners even taught their teachers about the values and how to treat people.' She went on to testify how much she herself had benefited: 'It offered me life-long lessons. It was mind-blowing; it changed my heart and mind'.

SHARED LEADERSHIP

As Mrs Machimane of Mdluli High School demonstrates, the school leadership has also been changed in some cases: 'We also had a managerial problem. There were only men on the School Management Team (SMT) and things were not going well. But through the influence of the academy, the Principal changed the situation, and he got wide participation on the SMT and is now very supportive.'

Thus, in all of the schools in this sample, there is ample evidence that new youth-adult partnerships did emerge which informed the projects which were implemented for the benefit of the schools and the broader community'. (Hartknack, 2018).

* Hartknack, A.(2018). Schools Reaching Out to Schools. External Research.

COMMUNITY IMPACT: ACTIVATING A MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE IN COMMUNITIES

Columba recently commissioned external research to gain insight into the approaches that schools were adopting in their outreach activities with other schools.

DRIVERS OF OUTREACH

The drivers of outreach activities tended to be youth the majority of the time. Two main reasons were cited for doing the outreach:

- 1 The realization that issues outside the school are affecting the Columba school and need addressing
- 2 The desire to make an impact on those in a less fortunate position.

INTENSITY OF OUTREACH

48% of the schools were involved in high intensity outreach activities



26% were involved in medium intensity outreach activities



26% were involved in low intensity outreach activities



'The programme works, especially if you take it seriously. It can change the attitude of learners. For example one boy was not good in class before the academy. But after he attended he became the top learner in grade 11 and then last year he got the top results in the country.'

Mr Ramabubuda ACORNS TO OAKS HIGH SCHOOL, MPUMALANGA

'We don't just select the best learners for the academies. But we have seen a lot of success stories. Several of the boys who were a behavioural and academic challenge became serious and have since done well academically.'

Principal Martins BOOYSEN PARK SECONDARY SCHOOL, EASTERN CAPE

HIGH INTENSITY EXAMPLES OF CATALYTIC SCHOOLS

GAUTENG

Blue Eagle High School has an established outreach committee which visits 4 primary schools to promote values and help prepare learners for high schools. They also initiated an annual leadership conference where 11 schools in the community discuss issues facing teenagers and what can be done about these. They run a community event for all schools in Cosmo City once a year. On weekends the group members visit orphanages and old age homes, where they interact with residents and donate clothes and clean buildings.

Sunward Park ran a leadership process at Reiger Park mirroring the Columba academy. They have ensured that a number of learners at this partner school have been empowered to use the values in their own lives and make a contribution at the school without any involvement from Columba. Joint social change initiatives have been run as have extramural activities.

Alafang have, since 2012, visited 2 primary schools to help with homework and impart the Columba values which they do through assemblies, games and drama. This is a regular activity which takes place 4 times per term. They have also visited 2 crèches, an orphanage and old age home to perform voluntary work. They also promote values amongst the unemployed in the community.

Outreach activities were initiated in 2016. They engaged 3 primary schools to speak about values and prepare learners for high schools. The principals from the 3 schools were impressed by this and requested that this be made 'part of the culture'. They go to the schools three times a year.

FREE STATE

Moroka High School started a conference with other schools in Thaba Nchu to discuss social ills like drug abuse and teenage pregnancy and to promote the Columba values. They extended this to other schools from Bloemfontein and Botshabelo which resulted in up to 18 schools at such conferences.

Christian Liphoko Senior Secondary 'adopted' Mokae Primary School raised funds and secured food from companies. They delivered food to their primary school three times a week. This drew the attention of the Department of Education which has now established a feeding scheme at the Primary School. The school also worked with Moroka and Sediti High Schools promoting values and leadership for learners.

EASTERN CAPE

Masiphathisane Secondary School has formed a community of practice with 3 other Columba schools in Motherwell, Port Elizabeth where they meet every second week on Saturdays. 15 members from each school meet to strategise around dealing with various social ills that affect their schools and also hold combined community campaigns on issues such as drug abuse and violence against women and children. Another school from KwaZakele township which is not a Columba school has also joined and the COP member schools provide transport for this school to attend the meetings.

Enoch Sontonga Secondary School identified learning deficits among incoming Grade 8s and went to 3 feeder primary schools and established reading groups targeting Grade 6s. They go to these 3 primary schools on a fortnightly basis. The intention is to work with Mathematics educators and add a Maths component to this process.

MPUMULANGA

Mdluli High School reached out to 3 primary schools to share values and later on in the year to prepare the Grade 7s for high school. Conduct community campaigns regarding littering, drug abuse and teen pregnancy. They also adopt poor families and assist them with food and uniforms. A Saturday morning initiative sees the team attend a local library to assist younger children to read. They connect with other Columba schools to promote debating.

Acorns to Oaks have established a successful recycling programme and have now mentored another 2 Columba schools to do the same. They donate clothes and raise money for food as part of their community outreach.

KWAZULU-NATAL

Sibusisiwe Comprehensive Technical High School have since 2017 organised events and campaigns in their local community of Umbumbulu. These events have focused on teenage pregnancy, substance abuse awareness and the group has ensured the involvement of a number of other community stakeholders in these events.

Mconjwana High School reached out once a week to a feeder primary school Julumgoda Primary School over the past two years speaking about the importance of values and preparing learners for the transition to High School.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED AND PROGRAMME STRENGTHENING

Columba has learnt several lessons during implementation of the programme.

- 1 When contracting with a school, Columba immediately needs to plan for transition. Transition refers to assisting the school from the outset to manage the programme alongside Columba's facilitators for when no further programmes are run in the school. This will ensure the school is able to sustain the achievements towards institutionalising youth engagement.
- 2 The school derives the most benefit where there is a compelling and enlivened school vision which can be driven not just from the top-down but also the bottom up.
- 3 Schools that achieve the greatest multiplier effect are those that establish a collaborative structure that brings together the various youth groups in a school. Failure to do this can result in antagonism between the groups and a context which does not enable broad-based involvement of the learner population.
- 4 Youth engagement does not mean adults are not involved. The relationship between adults and youth is best understood as a partnership.
- 5 The experiential approach adopted by Columba naturally leads school stakeholders to experimenting with applying similar approaches in classrooms and the school. This can be supported through educator empowerment sessions which focus specifically on applying new youth engagement practices.
- 6 Youth engagement needs to be nurtured by the school and can be driven by school activities which mobilise the involvement of learners. Columba has seen that youth engagement tends to cluster around 4 pillars: Youth voice, youth leading learning, youth at play, youth in service. This model serves to engage learners in different ways, allowing them to develop a range of skills and contribute to the culture of the school in different ways.
- 7 Relationships of trust and respect between adults and youth makes the life of an educator easier and provides support for youth.
- 8 Learners are made vulnerable by a range of issues which often go unnoticed or unaddressed. Failure to address these issues not only impacts on programme retention it also impacts on learner performance and retention. Schools need a network of referral agencies to support vulnerable learners.
- 9 There is much energy, hope and inspiration that can come from being part of a positive, solution-focused community (be that in the school or across schools). Connecting schools typically leads to sharing of effective approaches and practices and even school exchange visits/mentoring across the network.
- 10 A culture of youth engagement can result in self-imposed discipline through values and purpose rather than sole reliance on rules.

The lessons learned have informed programme strengthening for roll-out in 2018 with an emphasis on ensuring sustainability through the strengthened model and accompanying sustainability toolkit for schools.



FINANCES

Despite the trying economic times Columba continued to build its financial accountability and sustainability. We use King 4 to guide our Governance; we now have an Independent Chairman. We have established committees for Audit, Investment, Social and Ethics and Remuneration. We have a strong balance sheet and reserves that provide stability through difficult periods. We are working on plans to generate market-based revenues by utilising our BEE credentials and building our own flagship academy residency at the world renowned Nirox sculpture park to better our cost structure.

COLUMBA'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jason van der Poel (Chairman)

Tracy Hackland

Paul Hanratty

Jerry Mabena

Mondli Makanya

Ndiwuhwo Manyonga

Caroline Mathonsi

Dipuo Mvelase

Atli Phathudi

Clive Tasker

Rob Taylor



SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The annual financial statements, which are summarised below, have been audited by Ernst & Young Inc. since 2014.

| | 2018 R000's | 2017 R000's |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| INCOME STATEMENT | | |
| INCOME | | |
| Donations received | 24 304 | 32 367 |
| Investment income earned | 4 439 | 1 459 |
| | 28 743 | 33 826 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Programme expenses | 24 869 | 21 975 |
| Trust management expenses | 4 528 | 6 249 |
| | 29 397 | 28 224 |
| (Deficit) surplus for the year* | (654) | 5 602 |
| A R5million grant expected in February was delayed and received in May | | |
| BALANCE SHEET | | |
| ASSETS | | |
| Investments and cash | 61 193 | 33 639 |
| Inventory and debtors | 4 509 | 5 065 |
| | 65 702 | 38 704 |
| EQUITY AND LIABILITIES | | |
| EQUITY | | |
| Trust capital and reserves | 27 579 | 28 234 |
| LIABILITIES | | |
| Restricted donations | 37 150 | 9 812 |
| Trade and other payables | 973 | 658 |
| | 38 123 | 10 470 |
| Total equity and liabilities | 65 702 | 38 704 |

Detailed audited financial statements are available upon request.