



# ANNUAL REVIEW 2023

# ABOUT THIS ANNUAL REVIEW

Welcome to the 2023 edition of the Food & Trees for Africa (hereafter referred to as FTFA) Annual Review.

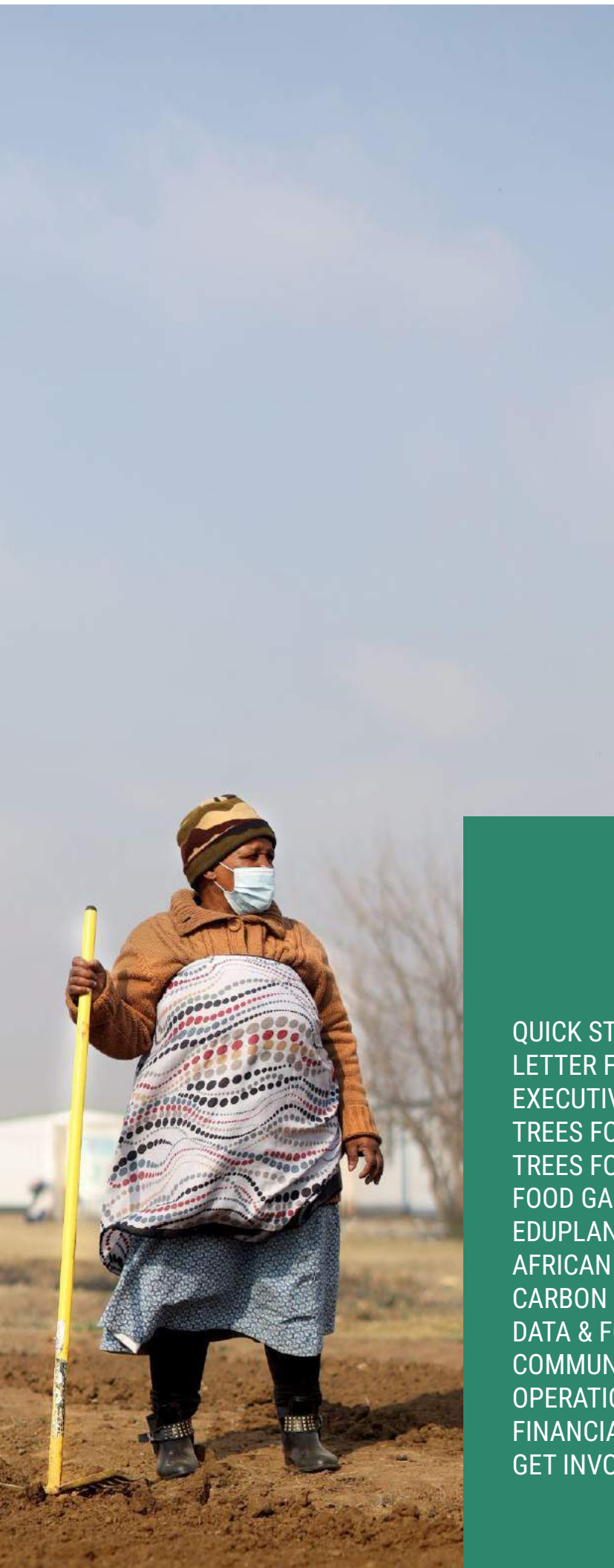
FTFA's core purpose is to improve lives and landscapes towards developing healthy people on a healthier planet.

FTFA operates primarily in South Africa, improving food security, environmental sustainability, and greening.

Covering the period from 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023, this review provides an overview of FTFA's programmes, operations, financials, and – most importantly – the organisation's impact.

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# QUICK STATISTICS



**FTFA greened approximately 58 hectares with indigenous and food-bearing trees in 2023**



**The organisation offset 8,580.50 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>**



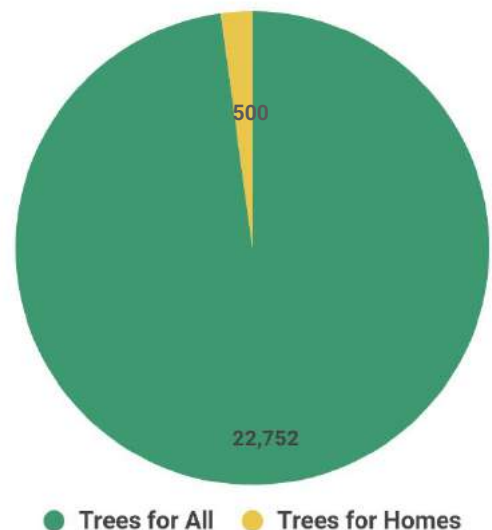
Planting a combination of indigenous trees and fruit and nut trees not only creates green corridors, but it also encourages the presence of endangered pollinators and increases food security in areas where access to fresh food is limited.



**FTFA distributed R9.2 million in resources to communities**



Trees Planted



# QUICK STATISTICS



**200 long-term Food Gardens**

**116,117 kg of food harvested\***

**12,000 indirect beneficiaries**

**R778,940.46 earned in income\***

\*Includes plenty of leafy green vegetables.

\*Many supported gardens are not income-producing; harvests go to community feeding programmes.

## What is a GinB?

A Garden in a Bucket (GinB) is a short-term food garden intervention that provides start-up resources to various households in a selected community. The 'bucket' contains planting resources, a Growing Green handbook and tools. Once implemented, the GinB encourages the establishment of household-linked food clusters and the collective realisation of a food-secure future.



**9,233 learners took home produce from their school food gardens\***

\*From educator records



**350,000 seedlings planted**



**200,000 litres of water storage installed**



**200,000 m<sup>2</sup> of irrigation**



**437 household and community beneficiaries**

# LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

The end of Food & Trees for Africa's (FTFA's) 33rd year as a leading social development and sustainability organisation led us to reflect on the trials we have faced as a country. These are juxtaposed with the successes and positive impacts of FTFA's programmes, and I write this letter with a profound sense of pride for all FTFA's achievements, whilst acknowledging that there is still so much more to accomplish in the years to come.

At face value, FTFA plants trees and provides education and resources for sustainable farming practices that facilitate the expansion of community and market food gardens. However, the organisation's impacts possess a profound depth, imbued with significant grassroots transformation that extends beyond the tangible.

With South Africa facing a 33% unemployment rate (currently the highest in the world), coupled with the cost-of-living crisis of 2023 brought, FTFA's role in skill building, upliftment, and food security became critical this year. I can say with confidence and pride that FTFA met this challenge head on, staying steadfast in its commitment to making a positive difference and nurturing resilience.

The sustainable farming skills that are taught to community members go further than driving economic development and providing a source of fresh local produce; they create local economies, support biodiversity, and empower individuals, with ripple effects in surrounding communities. Teaching permaculture and nutrition at schools extends beyond the education of young learners, as they take these skills home, creating networks of sustainability, food security, and hope. FTFA's tree planting projects build urban greenbelts and reforest degraded areas, strengthening the natural fabric of South Africa's ecosystems and restoring natural capital for its people. By implementing these and other programmes, we recognise the importance of creating an environment which fosters self-reliance, allowing individuals to create their own opportunities and look to the future, as well as their communities, as they address challenges that arise.



*MPHO MAHANYELE, CHAIRPERSON*

The increasingly formidable reality of climate change was felt in 2023 through the continued volatility of South Africa's weather, with heavy flooding in many parts of the country. Extreme weather events such as these disproportionately impact the most vulnerable in our society. FTFA has always placed adaptation and mitigation at the forefront of the organisation's design. With climate change and associated challenges becoming a constant, FTFA understands the importance of providing robust solutions to vulnerable communities amidst the uncertainties that 2024 may bring.

To the FTFA team, my fellow board members, our donors and supporter: every year I am in awe of our successes and am inspired for what the new year will bring; thank you for all that you have done for this organisation. I must also recognise the valuable contributions of one of our founding members, Mike Edwards, who retired from the Board in November 2022. I have the greatest respect for your selfless commitment to FTFA, your passion, and your generous spirit in going above and beyond for this organisation.

Best wishes,

*Mpho Mahanyele*

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

FTFA is acutely aware of the ever-changing socioeconomic dynamics in South Africa and the pressing needs of the communities we aim to support. Thus, while FTFA remains steadfast in its commitment to stakeholders, the organisation is likewise constantly evolving to bring creative and tenable innovation both to the organisation and the various industries in which we work. Despite ongoing economic challenges in South Africa exacerbated by Covid-19, FTFA has successfully navigated the past year, seizing opportunities to address backlogged projects. The 2022/2023 financial report reflects this resilience, although it is essential to acknowledge that our favourable position stems from overcoming recent difficulties.

## ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, GOVERNANCE (ESG) REPORTING

FTFA has embraced the trend in stricter ESG reporting requirements for companies, foreseeing positive impacts on transparency and accountability – core principles for FTFA. Recognising the administrative burden these standards impose, FTFA appreciates the continued donor support aligned with these heightened demands.

## EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND CULTURE

Fostering a positive work environment focused on well-being and transparency is paramount. FTFA has intensified efforts to evaluate and enhance employee well-being policies and support structures, prioritising growth and evolution in these areas.

## OUR IMPACT

Collaborating with the African Climate Reality Project (ACRP), FTFA developed a powerful high school programme addressing climate change literacy. This initiative empowers students to become proactive citizens, equipped with knowledge and skills to tackle climate challenges and advocate for climate justice.

Furthermore, the Inclusive Carbon Standard (ICS) remains integral to climate change mitigation efforts, particularly in Africa.



CHRIS WILD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FTFA partnered with Promethium to launch the ICS in May 2023, aiming to enhance accessibility, affordability, and accountability in carbon projects. We anticipate that the ICS will contribute significantly to attaining global climate targets.

## FUTURE OUTLOOK

Beyond refining existing programmes, FTFA is exploring revenue diversification strategies to ensure its ongoing stability and success. Amidst the proliferation of environmental buzzwords, we remain committed to translating environmental awareness into tangible achievements, guarding against superficial greenwashing and driving real transformation. We are proud to say that FTFA remains steadfast in its mission, leveraging over 30 years of experience to lead meaningful environmental action and catalyse lasting change.

Yours faithfully,

**Chris Wild**

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to be 'Chris Wild', written over a dark background.

# TREES FOR ALL



Urban tree planting, greenbelt development, and reforestation are emerging as crucial components of environmental restoration and the revitalisation of natural resources. Since 1990, FTFA has been at the forefront of this movement, accumulating decades of experience and refining methods to achieve the greatest impact.

## THE PROGRAMME

Trees for All (TFA) is an award-winning initiative recognised for its success in planting trees in communal spaces. This programme not only educates communities about the invaluable benefits of trees, but also serves to offset carbon emissions and enhance the surrounding environment.

The advantages of tree planting are manifold:

- Landscape enhancement, fostering community pride;
- Promotion of biodiversity and nature appreciation;
- Environmental education and awareness and climate change literacy;
- Contribution to food security, health, and nutrition.

## SHIFTS IN CORPORATE GIVING

There was a notable surge in corporate social investment (CSI) volunteering activities, with numerous tree planting events held in commemoration of significant Environmental Awareness days.

The heightened interest in CSI initiatives, particularly in urban greening and carbon offset projects, prompted an unparalleled number of volunteer days, with companies eager to not only contribute to sustainable development, but be involved hands on. This momentum continued throughout the year, resulting in FTFA's packed schedule.

Furthermore, there has been an increasing trend among funders to adopt a "smart ESG" strategy, leveraging tree planting initiatives to address broader societal challenges such as food security and education. FTFA's Trees Department and Food Gardens Department responded to this demand by implementing integrated projects that bridge traditionally separate programmes.

Globally, corporations are embracing impactful projects that align with the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). FTFA's diverse initiatives contribute – either wholly or partially – to 16 of these goals. The projects executed under the TFA programme encompass various elements, including climate change awareness, educational workshops, food security initiatives, employment opportunities, resource distribution, and infrastructure enhancement.

As we continue to plant seeds of change, FTFA remains dedicated to advancing sustainability and fostering a greener, more resilient future for all.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Bridgestone, a long-standing FTFA partner, planted 500 trees in Gauteng and the Western Cape along with three Permaculture Starter Pack (PSP1) food gardens.

In keeping with circular economy principles, Bridgestone tyres were repurposed as planter beds, offering protection and moisture retention for a number of the trees.



**22,752 trees planted**



**8,396 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> offset**



**211 communities greened**



**334 schools greened**



## STORY HIGHLIGHT

### GREENING THE PATH

The Eastern Cape is known for its abundant biodiversity and stunning landscapes. The region of Mthatha and its surrounds boasts around 40 afro-montane forest areas. These forests harbour diverse fauna, including bushbuck, duiker, and vervet and samango monkeys. Notable bird species, such as the endangered Cape parrot, also inhabit these areas.

The area is threatened, however, by significant challenges stemming from pastoral activities, habitat destruction, and deforestation, leading to land degradation and species decline. Responding to the deterioration, FTFA launched "Greening the Path" in 2023: a series of educational workshops and tree planting initiatives in Mthatha.

Funded by Adcock Ingram, the initiative benefitted 837 beneficiaries across 31 sites. Trees endemic to the region, such as Wild Olive and White Stinkwood, were specifically chosen to ensure greening efforts supported the revival of native flora and fauna uniquely adapted to the area. Fruit trees were also planted to bolster food security in the region.

This collaborative effort reflects a shared vision of restoring ecosystems and natural capital for future generations. At its core, the partnership also emphasises the importance of education and resource management, and that communities understand the value of nurturing their environments.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Greening the Path with Adcock Ingram has reportedly led to enhanced social cohesion among Mthatha's communities. Participation in this initiative has enabled the formation of strong local community networks involving knowledge and resource sharing.

# TREES FOR HOMES



## THE PROGRAMME

Trees for Homes (TFH) is a CSI and Economic Empowerment greening initiative that combines training with resource distribution and short-term employment. Through comprehensive training of community educators, households are equipped with the knowledge and skills to establish and nurture indigenous and fruit trees, fostering environmental restoration and food security while providing employment opportunities.

In a communal context, trees offer numerous advantages. They are known to enhance property values, mitigate dust, enhance soil quality, and promote water retention, thereby raising community resilience. Furthermore, the psychological benefit of environmental stewardship promotes personal well-being, contributing to emotional health at the household level. Additionally, tree planting has been correlated with a reduction in crime rates within neighbourhoods.

Driven by the belief in the transformative power of environmental stewardship, TFH utilises Footprint, FTFA's proprietary beneficiary software, to strategically map beneficiaries and ensure maximum impact. Each household receives one fruit tree and one indigenous tree, with survival rates being notably consistent at between 95 and 98%.

## COMMUNITY COHESION

TFH serves as a catalyst for community cohesion, fostering relationships among neighbours and promoting trust in areas often affected by crime.

By engaging local government leaders and empowering community foresters, the programme cultivates a culture of collaboration and resilience, laying the groundwork for vibrant and secure communities.

TFH facilitates the engagement of low-income communities in local decision-making processes and enhances their capacity for environmental management. This is done by establishing novel partnerships between provincial and municipal officials and these communities.

Leveraging FootPrint, TFH empowers FTFA to identify committed beneficiaries eligible for additional assistance, such as the Garden in a Bucket (GinB) programme. This distribution of resources, coupled with supplementary mentoring, cultivates food security networks within these communities and fosters organic initiatives like seed and resource sharing among residents.



**500 trees planted**



**184.5 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> offset**



**5 Community Educators trained**



**250 homes greened**



## STORY HIGHLIGHT

### BEAUTIFYING BOTSHABELO

In 1979, Botshabelo Township emerged as a sanctuary within the shadows of apartheid, its name echoing its purpose as "a place of refuge". Today, it stands as the largest township in the Free State, embodying resilience and community strength.

In late 2023, Shoprite Checkers, a steadfast partner of FTFA, joined forces for a transformative TFH distribution project in Botshabelo. Through the Shoprite Act For Change programme, 500 trees and 20 GinBs were distributed across 250 homes, igniting a wave of sustainability and food security initiatives.

Ma Betty Nkoana, the visionary leader of the Thoughtful Path, expressed gratitude to Shoprite Checkers for their invaluable community support and knowledge sharing. She articulated her vision for Munsieville: every home enhanced with trees and food gardens to foster self-sustainability and community vitality.

Reflecting on the project's impact, Community Educator Itumeleng Mokhobo noted the homeowners' excitement as they transformed their yards into biodiverse greenbelts with the newly planted trees. Botshabelo's streets began to flourish with greenery, marking a significant step towards a healthier and united community.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Since partnering with FTFA, Shoprite has supported the establishment and continued growth of 177 South African-based food gardens and a further six market gardens in Southern Africa. In 2022/2023 these gardens harvested 31,538 kg of produce.

Regular market days, hosted at Shoprite and Checkers stores, provide beneficiaries with the opportunity to sell their produce in a formal environment.

# FOOD GARDENS



## THE PROGRAMME

The Food Gardens For Africa (FGFA) programme plays a vital role in promoting food sovereignty and diverse food production within Southern African communities. The programme is committed to establishing food gardens in schools and communities and supports the growth of small-scale NGOs and civic organisations. Through comprehensive agricultural training, the programme assists applicants in developing and expanding existing food gardens, providing essential resources like infrastructure, training, gardening tools, and planting materials.

Permaculture and agroecology – methods taught by FTFA – represent comprehensive farming approaches based on sustainability and ecosystem restoration. By aligning with nature, these methods cultivate resilient, self-sustaining food production systems that prioritise ecological balance, soil health, and biodiversity. Implemented through community training workshops, permaculture and agroecology offer adaptable solutions to informal farmers, with proven results.

Food garden success hinges on factors such as access to land and water, as well as the dedication demonstrated by farmers. The programme not only ensures access to wholesome, naturally grown food, but also helps productive gardens generate income by selling surplus harvests to the community. In areas with a high prevalence of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) and child-headed households, the income generated supports community groups in funding additional programmes for the well-being of these young individuals.

## CHALLENGING GENDER DISPARITIES

According to Stats SA, female-headed households experience more severe poverty compared to their male-headed counterparts. Poverty and food insecurity disproportionately impact women due to factors such as gender-based violence (GBV), unequal access to resources, and caregiving responsibilities. Women often face greater challenges in accessing nutritious food, adequate healthcare, and economic opportunities, exacerbating their vulnerability to hunger and malnutrition.

Through the FGFA – a programme headed by women – FTFA's steadfast goal is to combat food insecurity in Southern Africa, with a specific focus on bridging the food security gap faced by women and youth.

A notable example of a successful project is African Food Addicts in North West Province. In 2018, facing a health setback, Karabo, the project leader, undertook extensive research on organic remedies. Recognising the importance of nutritious vegetables, she transitioned from formal employment to part-time involvement in food gardening alongside her father, a cattle farmer. Fuelled by her dedication, she invested her pension fund, transforming the garden into a thriving endeavour.

The project, led by Karabo and its members, aims to establish itself as a reliable supplier of leafy vegetables, with plans to expand to more local stores. Markedly, the project has created employment for four additional community members and provided essential produce to those in need. With ongoing growth, it aims to expand these benefits by offering further employment opportunities in the near future.



**200 food gardens**



**400 linked homestead gardens**



**R776,390.46 income generated**



**12,000 approximate beneficiaries**



## STORY HIGHLIGHT

### EXTENDING OUR IMPACT

In March 2023, FTFA and Shoprite significantly expanded their impact by backing a food garden in Windhoek, Namibia. Spearheaded by a former agricultural educator and her partner, the Groot-Aub project is a hub of agricultural excellence. Committed to cultivating diverse crops and empowering the local workforce, the project is a beacon of self-sufficiency. Additionally, its generous contributions of fresh produce to community institutions underscore its dedication to fostering communal well-being.

Following assistance from Shoprite and FTFA, inaugural training took place in August 2023. With the recent acquisition of a shade net tunnel for its nursery, coupled with the successful cultivation of a range of new crops, the garden anticipates a plentiful harvest. Throughout the intervention, the garden's production capacity has steadily increased, underscored by its strategic introduction of new crops.

The unwavering dedication of the project has garnered widespread community recognition, drawing a substantial number of visitors eager to procure vegetables directly from the initiative. During the period August to October 2023, the project achieved a notable harvest totalling 2,829 kg, with an impressive 97% of the yield sold, resulting in an income of R49,464.00. The remaining 3% was allocated to community donations or utilised by project members.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

A thriving food garden exhibits five fundamental traits:

- Sufficient water supply
- Security measures (such as fencing)
- Soil support
- Active community participation
- Strong commitment to the project

# FOOD GARDENS



## FOOD SECURITY RESTS ON THE SHOULDERS OF WOMEN

Lekau Nkoko, visionary founder of the Mothushi Tshegofatso ya Karabo food garden in Sandton, exemplifies the invaluable contributions provided by women. Previously engaged in empowerment projects, she identified a need in her community; this prompted the garden's establishment to support employment and local feeding schemes, with Lekau aiming to leave a lasting legacy alongside her daughter, Mothushi.

Over time, Lekau has created livelihood opportunities for community members through the food garden and has provided fresh, affordable produce. A year ago, Mothushi joined her, transitioning from formal employment to cultivate the garden and expand into an income-generating farm. Together, they produce a range of products like herbal teas, vegetable atchar, and homemade jams.

Bacardi, in partnership with FTFA, supported this food garden in March 2023, offering essential infrastructure, planting materials, and agroecology training. Over 300 people have benefited from Lekau's inspiring initiatives. In October 2023 the garden produced a harvest of 721 kg and earned an income of R5,980.00.



## ELDERLY FARMERS PROVIDE CRITICAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Founded in 2011, Nkosi Mamane is a registered cooperative comprising elderly community members dedicated to combating poverty and unemployment through a food garden initiative. Beyond providing fresh vegetables, the garden also assists community members by making donations during funeral events.

In 2019, this project received crucial support from Shoprite through FTFA, empowering its members with permaculture training, workshops, and essential tools. This comprehensive assistance significantly enhanced production and income generation efforts. Diversifying its crops to include eggplants, the garden not only increased sales, but also donated additional vegetables to the community, particularly during difficult times.

Through efficient land utilisation and crop rotation practices, the project achieved impressive results, producing a total harvest of 10,556 kg and an income of R76,614.00. This makes Nkosi Mamane Cooperative one of FTFA's most successful food gardens in 2023.

“As a woman, witnessing the transformative impact of food garden initiatives on communities and the empowerment of women and young girls inspires a sense of pride and hope for a more sustainable, equitable future. The growing engagement of community members reflects the tangible benefits of food gardens in promoting food security and economic stability. Agricultural activities are organically expanding in project implementation regions. Beyond immediate food security requirements, FGFA promotes broader aspects of development, including social cohesion, valuable skills transfer, and conserving indigenous knowledge systems.” – Luyanda Ntuli, Food Garden Programme Manager

# EDUPLANT



## THE PROGRAMME

The EduPlant programme, in partnership with Tiger Brands, has once again demonstrated remarkable success. Since its inception 30 years ago, it remains unequivocally South Africa's most impactful school food security, greening, and nutrition programme.

As the need for food security and environmental sustainability gains prominence, the EduPlant programme represents a transformative force, not only shaping the agricultural landscape, but also nurturing future leaders in agriculture and environmental science. By instilling a deeper understanding of healthier food systems and sustainable practices, EduPlant paves the way for learners to explore career opportunities in these vital fields.

The programme's curriculum, informed by local and global realities, is designed to resonate with both educators and learners, fostering a paradigm shift towards more sustainable practices. Through structured implementation processes and curriculum integration, EduPlant equips schools with the tools and knowledge necessary to cultivate thriving gardens and promote environmental stewardship.

## GEARING UP

Mentorship continued throughout 2022-2023, with the 300 schools onboarded in early 2022. Educators and community members surrounding each school deepened their expertise in food gardening and permaculture through comprehensive workshops.

These sessions covered a broad spectrum of topics, including bed preparation, soil conditioning, transplanting techniques, health and nutrition, portfolio development, and various aspects of sustainable gardening practices.

## MEDICINAL PLANTS WORKSHOP

The addition of a medicinal plants workshop this year proved to be a **pivotal** moment for participants, highlighting the programme's commitment to the transfer of traditional and indigenous knowledge. This workshop focused on the cultivation, care, and utilisation of various plants – not only as culinary ingredients, but also as valuable medicinal resources.

By integrating indigenous knowledge into the curriculum, the programme aligns seamlessly with permaculture principles, fostering a holistic approach to food system development. Workshop attendees had the unique opportunity to delve deeper into the profound significance encapsulated in the adage: "Herbs are the friend of the physician and the pride of cooks."

This emphasis on indigenous knowledge not only enriches participants' understanding of sustainable agriculture, but also underscores the importance of preserving traditional practices and harnessing the therapeutic potential of native medicinal plants.



**900 seed packs distributed**



**450 kg mielie / bean seeds distributed**



**214 tonnes of food (estimated)**



**300 schools / 30 clusters**



## HIGHLIGHTS

### SELECTING EDUPLANT'S CHAMPIONS

In anticipation of the EduPlant Finals Competition, EduPlant facilitators conducted comprehensive evaluations across the programme's 300 participating schools.

These evaluations encompassed various criteria, including the implementation of permaculture principles, learners' comprehension, garden maintenance quality, productivity levels, problem-solving initiatives, curriculum integration, community outreach, support for feeding programmes, and the sustainability of school gardens beyond the EduPlant intervention.

A panel of expert adjudicators meticulously evaluated each school to identify the top 10% of performers. From this rigorous process, thirty-six finalist schools emerged, tasked with presenting a comprehensive portfolio comprising evidence, imagery, and a concise five-minute video spotlighting their school gardens.

Schools that showcased unwavering dedication, flourishing yields, meticulous harvest documentation, community support through vegetable donations, contributions to school nutrition programmes, and exemplary leadership were awarded the highest accolades by the adjudicators.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

FTFA's EduPlant Programme, in partnership with Tiger Brands, won the Dialogue Strategic CSI Award in November 2022.

The award recognises projects that exemplify best practice in the South African development landscape and specifically encourages interventions that consider strategic business integration as the pinnacle of impact and sustainability.

# AFRICAN CLIMATE REALITY PROJECT



## THE PROGRAMME

The [African Climate Reality Project \(ACRP\)](#) serves as the continental arm of the Climate Reality Project and is [hosted by FTFA](#). ACRP provides backing to over 2,000 Climate Reality Leaders (CRLs) throughout Africa, empowering them to engage communities in implementing climate change solutions while advocating for more ambitious climate action from global leaders and decision-makers. ACRP fosters collaboration with diverse partners and networks within the climate advocacy realm, facilitating African-centric climate justice campaigns and initiatives aimed at promoting a fair transition to a low-carbon future and enhancing community climate resilience.

## AFRICAN VOICES FOR AFRICA'S FORESTS

In October 2022, the ACRP launched the [African Voices for Africa's Forests](#) film in Limbe, Cameroon. This cinematic endeavour, featuring protagonist and Climate Leader Ewi Stephanie Lamma, explored the intricate realms of climate justice, land rights, and nature-based solutions in the local context.

Ewi, a driving force behind the film, engaged fervently with communities, particularly emphasising the involvement of women and youth in decision-making processes for the preservation and restoration of their forests. A subsequent tree-planting activity led by Climate Leader Sunday Geoffrey in Yaounde, Cameroon, exemplified the commitment to tangible action, with over 1,500 trees planted in a step towards a sustainable future.

## ACRP WINS UN AGORA AWARDS

The ACRP film achieved global recognition, earning the prestigious United Nations [Agora Award](#) during COP27 in Egypt in November 2022. Building on the success of the "African Voices for Africa's Forests" film, Ewi seized opportunities to share insights about her community and initiatives on numerous

international platforms, including the UN Global Climate Change Summit in the US and various conferences focusing on women in leadership, African youth empowerment, and environmental education.

This acknowledgement underscores the indispensable contributions of climate leaders in elevating the voices of local communities on a global scale.

## FOCUS ON YOUTH

In May 2023, ACRP held a film screening and climate change 101 conversation in collaboration with [YouthLab](#), which played a pivotal role in educating young people about climate change. Through the screening of [African Voices for Africa's Forests](#) and the [Not on Our Soil](#) docuseries in South Africa, ACRP continues to build climate literacy and awareness while also providing training for high schools through the Climate Change Curriculum.

ACRP participated in South Africa's Youth Day parade in Pretoria, educating young people through its Climate Change 101 presentations. The event culminated in the submission of a memorandum to the Presidency outlining demands related to climate justice, green jobs, gender-based violence, and education. This commitment to youth engagement demonstrates ACRP's dedication to fostering climate literacy and advocacy at a grassroots level.

## FOCUS ON FAIR FINANCE

In July 2023, ACRP – through the [Fair Finance Coalition Southern Africa \(FFCSA\)](#) – hosted the inaugural Fair Finance School in Johannesburg. This three-day event brought together participants from eight African countries, providing theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and an [activist toolkit](#) for effective engagement in finance issues.



## HIGHLIGHTS

### CASE STUDY LAUNCHED ON MEDUPI POWER STATION

This year also saw the launch of "[Living in Medupi's Shadow: Stories from Lephalale](#)", a case study examining the impact of the Medupi Power Station on local communities in Limpopo Province, South Africa.

ACRP, alongside FFCSA, provided media training and interviews where community members shared their lived experiences confidently, shedding light on the environmental and social implications of large-scale development projects, and the importance of fair financing when it comes to megaprojects like the Medupi power station.

### AFRICA CLIMATE SUMMIT DURING AFRICA CLIMATE WEEK

In September 2023, ACRP attended the Africa Climate Summit and Africa Climate Week in Nairobi, Kenya. The booth displayed branch material, the African Voices photo exhibition, and the Not on Our Soil documentary series.

At the booth, campaigners facilitated meaningful engagement with government officials, climate groups, and businesses. The event demonstrated the interconnectedness of issues and the need to continue to approach the climate justice movement in a way that unites African groups, in order to champion African solutions.

# CARBON



## THE PROGRAMME

The Inclusive Carbon Standard (ICS) is a distinguished not-for-profit entity and cutting-edge platform dedicated to the issuance of carbon credits for greenhouse gas emission reduction initiatives. Embracing an open-market approach underpinned by open-source technology, the ICS offers a cost-effective avenue for project registration and methodology establishment, diverging markedly from conventional carbon standards while upholding a high degree of integrity.

## LAUNCHING INTO ACTION

Over the past year, the ICS team diligently developed the platform and accompanying resources, culminating in its successful launch in June 2023. This milestone event attracted over 200 stakeholders from government and the consulting, carbon, sustainability, and finance sectors, both in person and virtually.

The launch featured an insightful presentation from Promethium Carbon, followed by a panel discussion with industry leaders including Chris Wild, Olivia Tuchten, Philip Goyns, Kenneth Slabbert, Jason Schäffler, and Robert Louw. This event marked the start of a four-part workshop series aimed at equipping participants with a comprehensive understanding of the ICS and its potential for streamlining carbon credit issuance.

These workshops, held between May and June 2023, attracted a diverse local and international audience. They provided carbon project developers with essential skills to navigate the ICS platform effectively. Subsequent workshops were tailored to project auditors, focusing on their role within the ICS framework.

## PUBLIC TRAINING SESSIONS

Following the inauguration of the ICS, 12 comprehensive public training sessions were conducted from August to September 2023.

These sessions were meticulously designed to equip participants with the requisite knowledge and skills to navigate component methodologies, verify projects, and effectively engage with the ICS platform.

The training series commenced with six sessions tailored to Methodology Developers, followed by the ICS Auditor Platform's six consecutive public training sessions. Following a similar online and in-person hybrid format to the Methodology Developers' training, these sessions comprised a blend of theoretical insights and practical exercises, ensuring thorough preparation for auditors within the ICS framework.

## FURTHERING THE ICS COMMITTEES

In August 2023, the ICS concluded the establishment of the Technical Sub-Committee and conducted the inaugural training session for both the Environmental Integrity Committee and the Technical Sub-Committee.

The primary objective of the training was to acquaint committee members with the intricacies of the ICS platform and guide them through the approval procedures.

## DID YOU KNOW?

To promote climate change literacy within communities, ABSA Bank sponsored tree planting events across all nine provinces of South Africa.

Each planting event was preceded by a comprehensive climate change talk, elucidating the profound impacts of climate change on our environment and emphasising the vital role that trees play in both mitigation and adaptation efforts.



## HIGHLIGHTS

### STUTTERHEIM REFORESTATION PROJECT

The Stutterheim Reforestation Project, situated within the Kologha Forest, is managed by FTFA's Carbon Department in collaboration with the ICS. The project experienced favourable conditions during the reporting period, characterised by abundant summer rainfall conducive to the flourishing of the forest. Throughout the past year, the primary focus of the project has been the maintenance and nurturing of trees planted during earlier phases.

Key activities undertaken included the ongoing care and maintenance of existing trees, replacement of deceased trees with new saplings, clearing of alien vegetation from water courses, and continued treatment and eradication of American Bramble. By May 2023, efforts to combat American Bramble began to yield promising results, with subsequent months witnessing signs of indigenous vegetation resurgence as well as the establishment of a natural wetland.

The team is gratified to observe the tangible outcomes of their labour, evident in the reappearance of indigenous flora and the emergence of new ecosystems. This signals the successful ongoing restoration of the Kologha Forest.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Forests serve as crucial regulators of surrounding ecosystems and microclimates, wielding a profound influence on environmental stability and biodiversity.

Through interactions between vegetation, soil, and atmospheric processes, forests mitigate climate extremes, moderating temperature fluctuations and fostering moisture balance. Their expansive canopies act as a natural filter, purifying air and water and providing habitat for countless species.

# DATA & FOOTPRINT



## THE DATA DEPARTMENT

The Data Department plays a central role in fortifying internal systems, fostering departmental synergy, and illuminating the profound impact of FTFA's programmes.

Positioning itself as a cornerstone within the organisation, the Data Department actively engages in assessments, facilitates beneficiary and funder matches, conducts comprehensive reporting, and delivers insightful impact analyses. This collaborative endeavour cultivates a profound sense of cohesion among all departments, reinforcing the notion that FTFA's collective strength propels the success of its mission.

Through the innovative utilisation of the Footprint tool (FTFA's online beneficiary database), the Data Department enhances the organisation's capacity to furnish each beneficiary with a personalised scorecard, leveraging key data points. This not only empowers FTFA to align beneficiaries with potential funding, but also ensures resonance with the strategies of esteemed funders.

Footprint stands as a testament to FTFA's dedication to precision and efficacy across all programmes. While FTFA places increased emphasis on tracking and analysing, the organisation's commitment extends beyond merely presenting clear and concise data. The amalgamation of data with compelling narratives of FTFA's beneficiary successes serves as a potent instrument to connect with and inspire others.

The Data Department's aim is to harness every data point collected to enhance the overall well-being of those served by FTFA, aligning seamlessly with the organisation's core values.

As we venture into 2024, the Data Department remains dedicated to a trajectory of innovation, improvement, and impactful decision-making. Its unwavering commitment to leveraging data for the greater good persists, with the well-being of programme beneficiaries perpetually at the forefront of all endeavours.

# COMMUNICATIONS



## ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

In its second year, FTFA's Communications Department expanded its focus on internal and external stakeholders, building upon a solid foundation established the previous year.

The strategy aimed to elevate the organisation's profile as a thought leader and expert in development, leveraging academic content while preserving impactful storytelling.

Aligned with programme departments and the Data Department, FTFA communications continued to identify and remedy knowledge gaps to enhance the organisation's public voice and foster collaboration among departments for improved information flow.

Numerous communication campaigns revolved around significant national and international food security and environmental days. Additionally, FTFA adeptly coordinated a substantial volume of corporate volunteering days, this year encompassing both tree planting and food garden establishment.

This strategic shift underscores FTFA's recognition of the pressing imperative for continual innovation, striving towards a Zero Hunger, food secure, and environmentally sustainable society.

Moreover, this evolution shaped FTFA's communication strategy and growing communications mandate, emphasising the dissemination of both current and future-facing insights on the interplay between social development and environmental harmony. These communications efforts aim to support FTFA's mission to foster restored ecosystems and promote food security and sovereignty.

The first year of the 25th cycle of the EduPlant Programme was a resounding success, culminating in the programme winning the Triologue Strategic CSI Award.

As the review period drew to a close, much attention within the Communications Department once again shifted towards the EduPlant Finals competition.

The deployment of the eduplant.org microsite, showcasing champion schools, served as a focal point. The Communications Department played a pivotal role in receiving, sorting, and editing school video submissions for the competition, while also orchestrating a targeted social media voting campaign.

This concerted communications effort across the organisation resulted in a substantial surge in engagement on FTFA and EduPlant social media platforms.

Over the entire review period, the organisation can report an average increase in social media engagement of 33%. Throughout the review period, FTFA and its funders garnered print, online and broadcast coverage to the value of R3.5 million.

FTFA also published Thought Leadership articles, maintaining its position as a leading voice on the role of South African businesses in ESG and CSI in the non-profit sector.

Looking ahead, FTFA plans to expand its Communications Department to extend its reach within diverse communities, further reinforcing its commitment to sustainable development and environmental harmony.

# OPERATIONS



After another remarkable year at FTFA, credit must be given to the unwavering commitment, dedication, and passion exhibited by each member of the exceptional operations team. This team is responsible for the continued success of programmes, the realisation of newly implemented projects, and the achievements of the organisation as a whole.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF WELL-BEING

FTFA is an organisation which primarily looks outward, toward improving lives and landscapes through food security, sustainability, education and greening programmes – both in South Africa and across the continent.

In addition to this outward focus, FTFA recognises the importance of supporting those who work within the organisation. This focus is primarily managed by the Well-being Committee, which ensures adherence to FTFA's Mental Health and Well-being Policy adopted in January 2021. FTFA has a hybrid work-from-home model, and the committee is tasked with ensuring that employees feel heard and seen.

In addition to organising team-building workshops and social events, the Committee has created a Wellness Hub containing useful resources to help staff members manage various issues they may face. In 2023, the committee utilised bi-monthly storytelling to create a safe space for communication around mental health and general well-being. The storytelling focused on five themes: movement and physical health, nutrition, the benefits of being outside in nature, religion and spirituality, and creativity. The advantages of these sessions include team bonding, effective stress management, and ensuring a good work-life balance. These have been implemented with great success, ensuring that staff members' mental and emotional well-being is taken care of, thereby allowing them to fulfil their roles at FTFA with dedication and resilience.





## OUR STAFF

The Management Committee comprises: Bharathi Tugh, who manages EduPlant and is FTFA's Education Associate; Aurelie Kalenga Njimngou, who heads up the ACRP; and Rogan Field, the Supply Chain Manager. Mary-Ann Fairall is the Data Manager and Nicole Ras is the Communications Manager.

Programme managers oversee their respective departments: Luyanda Ntuli heads up Food Gardens; Susan Evans runs the Trees Department; and Simone Ruthnam manages the Carbon Programme. A real team effort allows every programme to realise FTFA's mission and vision.

Nosiphelo Nikani; Mini Sikosana, Sylvia Mokete, Jeminah Mkhize, Thando Jafta, Zanele Radebe, Precious Duma, Diyanka Naidoo, Ziyanda Nkumane, Avantika Seeth, Courtney Morgan, Kholwani Simelane, and Curtis Kuyanie are designated as coordinators, campaigners, and administrators within the programmes. Support staff include Raeesa Mayet and Kaylee Odde in the finance team, as well as Heather Wolmarans, Mary Masuku, Noma Moyo, Teboho Mosehle, and Rabson Donga in the operations support team.

FTFA's senior leadership team consists of Chris Wild (Executive Director and member of the Board of Directors); Robyn Schraibman, the Financial Manager; Kate Sheldon, the Operations Manager; and Robyn Hills, as the Head of Programmes.

The organisation's strength lies largely in its staff's shared camaraderie and passion for social development. It has not been an easy few years for many South Africans; FTFA acknowledges the toll this can take on minds and spirits. The resilience exhibited during these challenging times, the creativity in problem-solving, and the passion for FTFA's cause have set a benchmark for excellence that staff meet time and time again.

# FINANCIALS



Revenue fell by roughly 5.4% in 2023, due to the challenging funding environment. However, the ratio of project expenses to revenue improved by about 5.6%, meaning a larger portion of our income directly benefited our beneficiaries. This improvement, however, is likely the result of potential under-capacity within the team. The Directors are aware of this issue and are actively developing human resource systems and policies to maintain the team's health and well-being.

The surplus this year increased by approximately 45% to R2.9 million, but FTFA urges stakeholders to consider this in the context of the past four financial years.

During this period, the organisation has averaged a modest annual surplus of R440,000. In the future, the organisation will persist in seeking diversified revenue streams, coupled with innovating within the field.

## CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION, AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2023\*

<u>Assets</u>	2023	2022
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>		
Property, plant, and equipment	2,679,213.00	2,499,238.00
Investment in subsidiary	1.00	1.00
	<b>2,679,214.00</b>	<b>2,499,239.00</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Inventories	627,536.00	445,917.00
Trade and other receivables	2,689,074.00	2,311,660.00
Cash and cash equivalents	25,834,912.00	21,337,704.00
	<b>29,151,522.00</b>	<b>24,095,281.00</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>31,830,736.00</b>	<b>26,594,520.00</b>
 <b>Equity and Liabilities</b>		
<b>Equity</b>		
Pre-incorporation surplus	26,629.00	26,629.00
Accumulated surplus	7,268,285.00	4,367,589.00
	<b>7,294,914.00</b>	<b>4,394,218.00</b>
 <b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	4,288,495.00	2,806,391.00
Income received in advance	20,247,327.00	19,393,911.00
	<b>24,535,822.00</b>	<b>22,200,302.00</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>24,535,822.00</b>	<b>22,200,302.00</b>
<b>Total Equity and Liabilities</b>	<b>31,830,736.00</b>	<b>26,594,520.00</b>

# FINANCIALS



## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023\*

	2023	2022
Revenue	30,081,792.00	28,703,554.00
Other income	386,196.00	351,450.00
Operating expenses	<u>(29,206,652.00)</u>	<u>(27,919,300.00)</u>
Operating surplus (deficit)	1,261,336.00	1,135,704.00
Investment revenue	<u>1,639,360.00</u>	<u>911,056.00</u>
<b>Surplus (deficit) for the year</b>	<b>2,900,696.00</b>	<b>2,046,760.00</b>
Other comprehensive income	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Total comprehensive income (loss) for the year</b>	<b><u>2,900,696.00</u></b>	<b><u>2,046,760.00</u></b>

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2023\*

	2023	2022
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Cash generated from (used in) operations	3,202,810.00	3,099,146.00
Interest revenue	<u>1,639,360.00</u>	<u>911,056.00</u>
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	<b><u>4,842,170.00</u></b>	<b><u>4,010,472.00</u></b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(388,195.00)	(193,625.00)
Proceeds on disposal of property, plant, and equipment	<u>43,233.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Net cash from investing activities</b>	<b><u>(344,962.00)</u></b>	<b><u>(193,625.00)</u></b>
<b>Total cash movement for the year</b>	<b>4,497,208.00</b>	<b>3,816,847.00</b>
Cash at the beginning of the year	<u>21,337,704.00</u>	<u>17,520,857.00</u>
<b>Total cash at end of the year</b>	<b><u>25,834,912.00</u></b>	<b><u>21,337,704.00</u></b>

\* The full set of Annual Financial Statements is available on request from FTFA's registered offices at: 94 Bessemer Street, Wendywood, 2090.

# IMAGE BOARD



# GET INVOLVED

## THE STORIES WE START NEVER END

### CORPORATE CONTRIBUTIONS

Maximise your company's spend-for-impact through FTFA's CSI and ESG programmes.

You can contribute sustainably to the future of our country, while maintaining your B-BBEE scorecard and obtaining a Section 18A certificate – making your donation a tax-deductible expense.

### GIVE A MONTHLY TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION

Set up a monthly recurring donation, either toward core mission support, or one of our programmes. Our secure donation portal enables you to quickly and easily customise your donation.

### CORPORATE TEAM-BUILDING

Contact us to facilitate your next team-building event or volunteer day. Your company can plant trees and food gardens around South Africa.

### GIFT A TREE

Donate a tree(s) as a gift to celebrate a special occasion, or in remembrance of a loved one. FTFA will plant your tree at one of our partner organisations, where it will be well loved and cared for.

### MYSCHOOL CARDS

Sign up for a MySchool Card and add us as a beneficiary. If you already have a MySchool Card, you can still add FTFA as a beneficiary – MySchool allows up to two beneficiaries per card holder.

### CONTACT US

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ms M Mahanyeke (Chairperson)

Ms I Feldman

Mr D Mncube

Ms T Visser

Prof J Limson

Mr CE Wild