



SOUTH AFRICA CHALLENGE

WORLD CHANGERS FOUNDATION®



South Africa Challenge 2017


Annual Report

Celebrating Six Years of South Africa Challenge

Since 2012, the South Africa Challenge has been taking young people to Durban, South Africa, for a two week personal development and leadership course. We work with high potential, entrepreneurial emerging leaders, who are passionate about tackling societal challenges.

Perhaps somewhat uniquely, the five trips have been consistently organised and led by participants of the programme. This demonstrates the practical leadership skills our participants learn and not only is it something we are proud of, it is an indicator that the South Africa Challenge is building a network of socially conscious leaders, whose relationships and involvement extend far beyond the two week trips.

As we reflect on this year's successful Challenge, which saw considerable growth in team size and a greater emphasis on experiential learning, we look ahead to celebrating the future successes of the South Africa Challenge.



All image credits go to Leon Seefeld, Marie-Louise Galois, Grace Wong, and Matt Pradhan, alumni of the programme.

We empower socially conscious and responsible leaders, to start the change we want to see in the world

Our vision is to build a global network of leaders committed to the development of products and projects that have the potential to change the world

South Africa Challenge has been grown and led by young people who understand the need to find profitable, sustainable, and innovative solutions to societal challenges; whilst recognising that other young people need a supportive platform from which to develop and test ideas.

South Africa Challenge brings together high potential entrepreneurial emerging leaders. Through an international experiential learning, personal development and leadership programme, we give young people the opportunity to research and test entrepreneurial solutions to societal challenges.

Our programme facilitates young people aged 18-25 to;

- Enhance their self-awareness, enterprise and leadership skills through self-reflection and practical real life leadership opportunities
- Exchange skills, knowledge, and spark new thinking to find solutions for societal challenges both in South Africa and their own countries
- Build relationships and connections between South Africa and the rest of the world

Developing leaders, enhancing skills and challenging perceptions

Our programme enhances self-awareness and develops enterprise and leadership skills, through self-reflection and practical real life leadership opportunities

Through coaching, mentoring, and self-reflection group sessions, Team Leaders work closely with each participant to identify their personal development needs and goals.

Increasing self-awareness – including reflecting on values and leadership style; alongside developing cultural awareness, understanding of societal challenges, and developing new networks – gives participants the skills, knowledge, and networks necessary to begin exploring profitable, sustainable, and innovative solutions.

Cultural activities, visits to communities, and working with businesses and NGOs, exposes participants to another view of South Africa – something which tourists rarely see. Participants witness how economic inequality can affect a country's development and play a significant role in people's lives; as well as the influence of traditional cultures and historical racial segregation. What it also does is highlight the opportunities created by economic and community development.



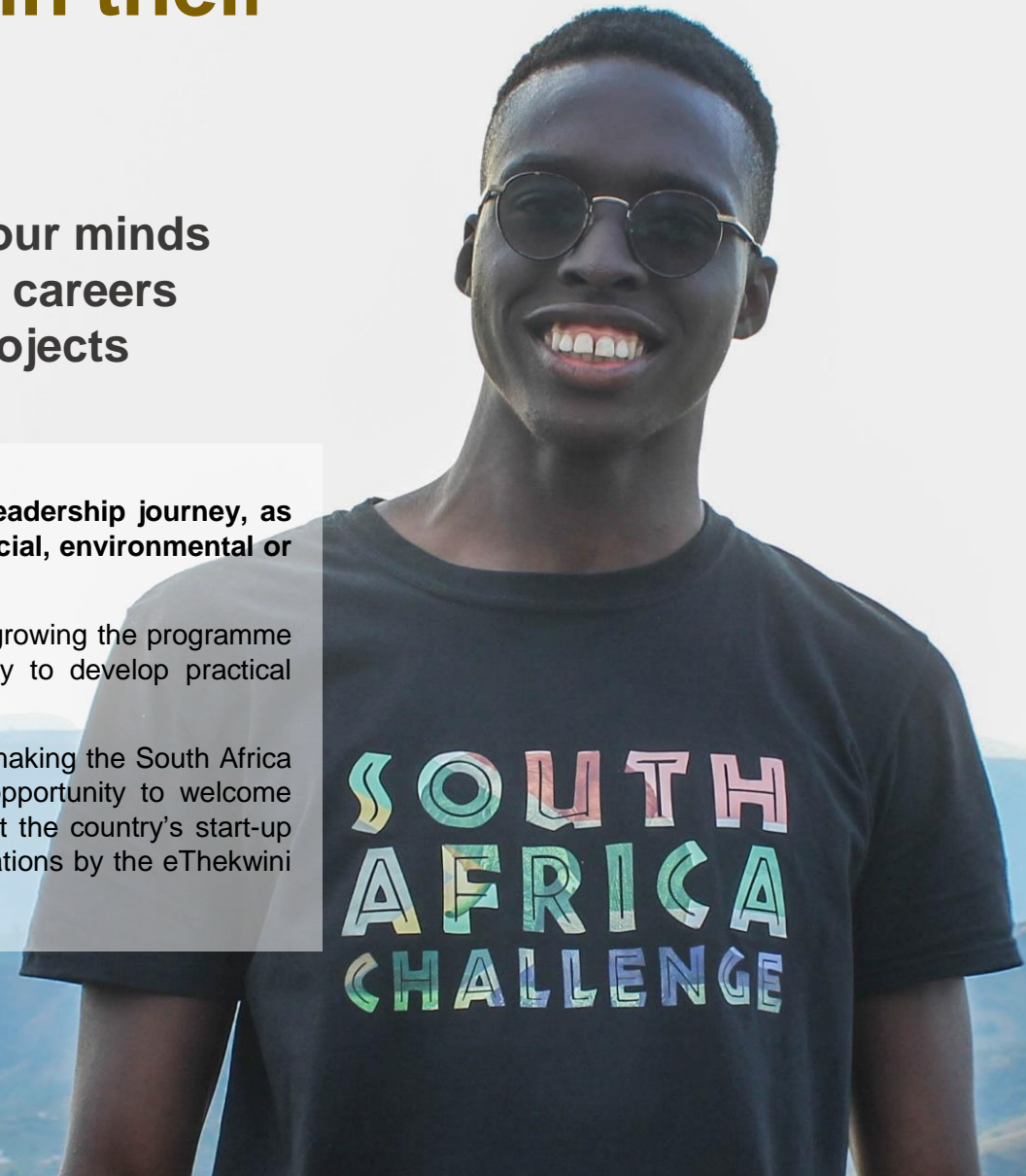
Supporting high potential individuals to make a positive difference in their lives and the lives of others

Our South Africa Challenge experience has opened our minds to new possibilities, developed confidence, changed careers and been instrumental in starting businesses and projects

As a network we support each other to continue our personal development and leadership journey, as well as the growth of projects and ideas which have the potential to improve the social, environmental or economic prospects of our fellow participants and their communities.

Every Challenge is led by our alumni, who step forward as Team Leaders and mentors, growing the programme and continuing our work with partner organisations. This creates a further opportunity to develop practical leadership skills, even after going through the programme.

In addition to taking young people to South Africa, we have always had the ambition for making the South Africa Challenge into a cross country cultural exchange programme. In 2016, we had the opportunity to welcome Nkululeko Mthembu, a South African entrepreneur, to the UK to explore and learn about the country's start-up business support. One of our alumni was also involved in facilitating visits to UK organisations by the eThekweni Municipality's Innovate Durban programme team.





South Africa Challenge 2017 Team

Every South Africa Challenge seeks to bring together a diverse team of high potential young people. This 2017 team was drawn from graduates across industries including education, consulting, and mental health services, and current students and recent graduates from six universities, studying law, business, economics, and international relations. Many of the team participate in an array of hobbies, entrepreneurial pursuits, and pro-bono services. Together, they represented 12 nationalities and countries.

This team sought to tackle waste management through education, raise awareness of mental health, tackle stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS, develop entrepreneurial thinking in local business owners, and support South Africa's sport and life skills coaches.

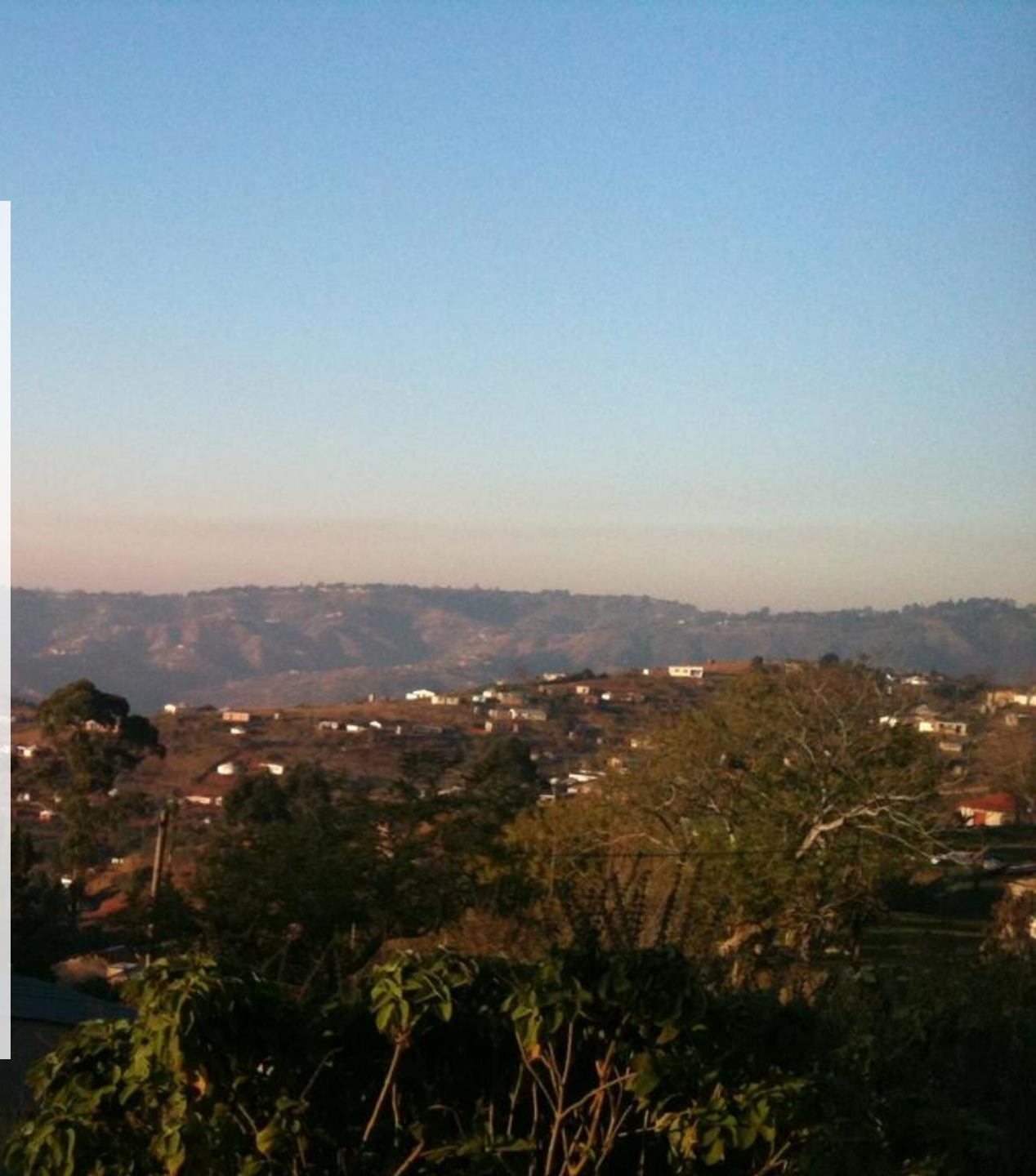
South Africa Challenge 2017 involved Leah Simmons, Maaha Suleiman, Catarina Da Silva, Cameron Kelly, Troy Norbert, Olly Larcombe, Grace Wong, Marie-Louise Galois, Umberto Kone, Giorgos Neokleous, Toju Olufeyimi, Pamela Bijl, and Leon Seefeld, with Lorenza Arnaboldi, Hadrian Tulk, and Helen Ots as alumni Team Leaders.

South Africa Challenge 2017

Programme developments

Every year, we seek to build upon the success of previous Challenges. Our key developments in 2017 include:

- Leading the largest team to date, with 16 members, including three alumni who were returning as Team Leaders.
- Running our first residential training weekend in March 2017, alongside 10-weeks of pre-programme online training sessions.
- Co-organising a networking event for Durban NGOs and taking part in a pitching event with a local start up incubator, Bizfarm, hosted by the Durban Chamber of Commerce.
- Focusing our projects and services on a single community, KwaNdengezi, where our team researched five societal challenges affecting that area and tested their solutions to address four of these.
- Broadening the number of universities and student led groups we engaged with for recruitment, including Kings College London, BPP University, Loughborough University, University of Essex, Lancaster University, and Brunel University. As well as strengthening our relationships with universities, evidenced by the continuation of sponsorship awards for participants.
- Developing our personal development and leadership training material.
- Broadening our network of partners in Durban and surrounding areas, across the public, private, and third sectors.

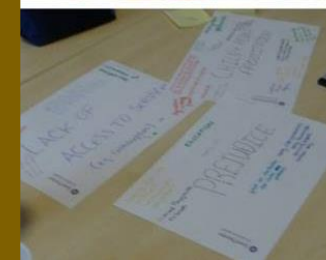




South Africa Challenge 2017 Highlights

Our participants hit the ground running as soon as they land in South Africa, meeting with our network of partners to pitch, share, and shape their ideas. Learning about the local environment and culture is key to understanding the context in which they are aiming to operate in, so every year we schedule in a mixture of cultural exchange activities and visits to communities.

This year's programme saw the team meeting several NGOs, learning about the local culture, taking part in networking events and pitching competitions, all in between researching and testing solutions for tackling their chosen societal challenges. In the following pages, we have brought together the highlights of the trip, including the team's projects, to showcase their achievements.



Left: Discussing ideas with the team at Catalyx Consultants.

Top right: Exploring societal challenges with the team at our residential training weekend.

Bottom right: Visiting a school in Kwandengezi to understand more about challenges facing young people in the local community.



Top left: At the networking event we co-organised for Durban NGOs, with Global Shapers.

Middle left: Visiting a local NGO orphanage, LIV Village, to learn about how they operate within their community. **Bottom left:** Visiting Bizfarm, an incubator for entrepreneurs, to learn more about Durban's start ups.

Right: The team at Vuk Africa, learning about Zulu life, culture and traditions, staying overnight with a local family.



Top left: Meeting Luvuyo Mandela to learn about social entrepreneurship and his story on growing up in South Africa.

Bottom left: Learning more about Durban's Chamber of Commerce and local businesses. We took part in a pitching competition with local young entrepreneurs.

Middle top: Leah, one of our participants, pitching her project to the audience at the pitching competition.

Top right: Group session discussing leadership styles.

Middle right: Meeting Karabo Che Mokoape, to learn about collaborative technology and innovation.

Bottom right: Visiting Sinika Uthando, an NGO offering counselling and life coaching programmes.





Top left: Meeting Dr. Maitshwe Nchaube Aubrey Mokoape a political anti-apartheid activist and a former leader of the Pan-African Congress and Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa.
Bottom left: Enjoying the view at a local nature park.
Top right: The team after a successful winter holiday camp they organised with a local school.
Bottom right: The team delivering a session on innovation and business tools to local entrepreneurs.



Project #1: Tackling waste management through education

Research into waste management uncovered issues such as insufficient governmental resources to collect recycled material. Pivoting their solution to focus on changing attitudes towards waste, Cameron, Toju, and Leon created workshops to engage children in finding their own solutions to waste management.

Passionate about economic empowerment driven by a disparity in the spread of wealth, the protection of the environment, and the potential of circular economies to reduce waste; the project initially sought to tackle unemployment, through the collection of recyclable materials including plastics, alongside providing education to change generational mindsets, with the aim of reducing waste in the environment. Prior to the trip, the team spoke with private sector companies and community centres to learn about waste management in Durban.

Upon arriving in South Africa, they quickly realised that the issue of waste management was far larger than they had previously thought. From speaking with various NGOs and businesses, they learnt that the local government were not providing sufficient infrastructure and resources to collect recycling in rural communities. Not wishing to rely on an under resourced local government to provide resources, they changed their focus onto how they could engage with young people to help them in owning their own solutions to waste management.

Discovering that the trip coincided with school holidays, the trio organised a winter holiday camp, where alongside the wider team they ran educational sessions to over 30 children. These workshops focused on changing attitudes towards waste and giving them a platform to discuss ideas for how they could implement solutions in their own community. Engaging teachers within the process is a key learning for iterations of the project in the future.



Project #2: Raising awareness of Mental Health

Pamela and Leah identified a need for basic psychological and emotional support training for those working with young people, to tackle the lack of understanding of mental health and awareness of local support services.

Pamela and Leah are passionate about ensuring that children and young people have access to mental health services. Leah's experience working in the UK mental health services has shown her the positive impact that adequate mental health services has on those experiencing trauma. Whilst Pamela's experience of living in Mozambique and the UK, has shown her how a lack of open discussion can lead to stigma and people not seeking the help they need. They aimed to raise awareness of mental health in children and young people, through workshops focusing on the participant's perspectives of mental health and removing associated stigmas.

Prior to travelling to South Africa, the pair contacted various organisations providing mental health support, to understand what primary care and support was available. In their first week, they spoke with various schools and organisations working with children and young people, to understand how mental health is viewed in a cultural context of South Africa. They then ran multiple workshops with children and young people, focused on gaining insight into their understanding of mental health, what contributes to a healthy mind and emotions, and discussed coping strategies for more difficult emotions such as sadness, anxiety, and anger.

Their research highlighted a lack of general understanding, with mental health often only connected to psychosis or learning disabilities, and a lack of awareness of local support services. They found that those working with young people also felt they lacked training to confidently provide emotional support. Future projects in this area could focus on the following; basic psychological and emotional support training for teachers and learning support assistants, and the creation of a guide of local support services.

Project #3: Tackling stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS

Umberto and Giorgos identified the need to tackle the lack of open discussion between generations and treatments given to young people, which is perpetuating the stigma.

Experiencing false myths about HIV/AIDS first hand from close family and friends and a general lack of education around the subject, drove Umberto and Giorgos to start their project. They set out to tackle HIV/AIDS stigma by raising awareness and challenging the common misconceptions which people hold.

Initially, they planned to use workshops and open discussions aimed at children and young people, to challenge the beliefs which lead to the stigma against those with HIV/AIDS. The pair received training by UK HIV/AIDS charities and researched the common beliefs by speaking with various South African NGOs, prior to the trip.

After gaining advice from NGOs raising awareness of HIV/AIDS and visiting a school to discuss prevention education, the pair delivered a workshop to twenty children aged 12-15. Using games they tested their knowledge of the key facts and asked them to identify the sources of their beliefs, to encourage them to question and verify information they had heard. They quickly found that the children were very well educated on the basic facts regarding prevention, however it became clear that their education did not contain information about available treatments.

From speaking with social workers and teachers, they learnt that limited information on treatments and parents and teachers unwilling to discuss the topic, was leading to children and young people not seeking more information or help if they believed that they had HIV, thus perpetuating the stigma and fear.

Umberto and Giorgos identified the need to tackle the lack of open discussion between generations and conversations regarding treatment. Possible future projects could focus on bringing together organisations with aligned goals to start to challenge wider society, including the older generations, to have open discussions to break beliefs and associated stigmas.





Project #4: Developing entrepreneurial thinking

Uncovering a lack of education focusing on entrepreneurial thinking and innovation, Grace and Olly developed a resource booklet and workshop series covering innovation and business planning tools. This was delivered to fifteen small business owners during a one-day workshop.

Grace and Olly's project came from their belief that to develop a better community is to develop a greater entrepreneurial spirit, to attract jobs and greater wealth. Sustainable employment is key to breaking out of the poverty cycle and creating businesses is one way to overcome the barriers young people face, to becoming financially independent with full-time employment.

Originally, their project set out tackle the high level of youth unemployment by delivering a series of business knowledge workshops, to develop future entrepreneurs. Olly and Grace visited several businesses and networking events to gain an understanding of the causes behind a perceived lack of entrepreneurship amongst young South Africans. From speaking to several schools, they learnt that 'business studies' lessons are focused on key administration and accounting skills. Students were not being taught how to develop an entrepreneurial mindset, specifically creative thinking and problem solving, which is important for any career, including self-employment.

This knowledge shifted focus away from teaching business knowledge. Instead, they developed a resource booklet and workshop series to teach key innovation concepts and business planning tools, to encourage creative thinking; testing their approach with a group of fifteen local small business owners. To ensure that their material could be replicated, they included lesson plans so that it could be delivered by anyone with basic business knowledge and shared it with a local NGO. This was tested by the wider team who delivered sessions during the one-day workshop.



Project #5: Supporting South Africa's sport and life skills coaches

Football has played a big part in both Marie-Louise's and Troy's life, the game and their coaches have had a profound effect on their physical and mental states and development of social skills. After developing a best practise sports coaching resource and testing it with coaches, the pair are seeking ways to distribute this resource to empower coaches within rural communities, to help more young people to succeed and thrive.

Troy and Marie-Louise set out to help young people to develop physical and social skills through sport, set goals, and give them the opportunity to practice skills such as teamwork and discipline, whilst having fun playing the game. They also set out to connect grassroots coaches, NGOs, and schools within the rural areas of KZN and distribute resources on best practise coaching; so that coaches could improve their coaching skills to further benefit the youth teams they work with.

During the trip, the pair met with several schools, sport related NGOs, soccer coaches and representatives of soccer clubs from the Premier Soccer League. Through these semi-structured interviews, they identified that coaches in rural communities have passion and experience but lack structure and specific skills to suitably coach and nurture players. Therefore, they shifted their priorities towards 'coaching coaches' instead of young people, which involved finishing a resource booklet on coaching football and life skills and finding a network to distribute this through.

They met several individuals and organisations also aiming to connect coaches of all levels together. They plan to keep the relationships they formed going, so that they can return to South Africa in coming years to continue their project. Troy and Marie-Louise also tested their resource booklet material by running short coaching sessions with children and coaches.

Evidencing the impact of South Africa Challenge 2017

Prior to and after the programme, we asked our participants to score themselves against 24 skills, under four main categories; communication, leadership, team work, and project management. Below, Figure 1 displays the improvement in average scores, across all four categories.

The greatest reported improvement of skills included resilience, adapting to new situations, effective communication, and managing multiple tasks and their time.

Pre and post-trip enterprise and leadership skills group average score evaluation

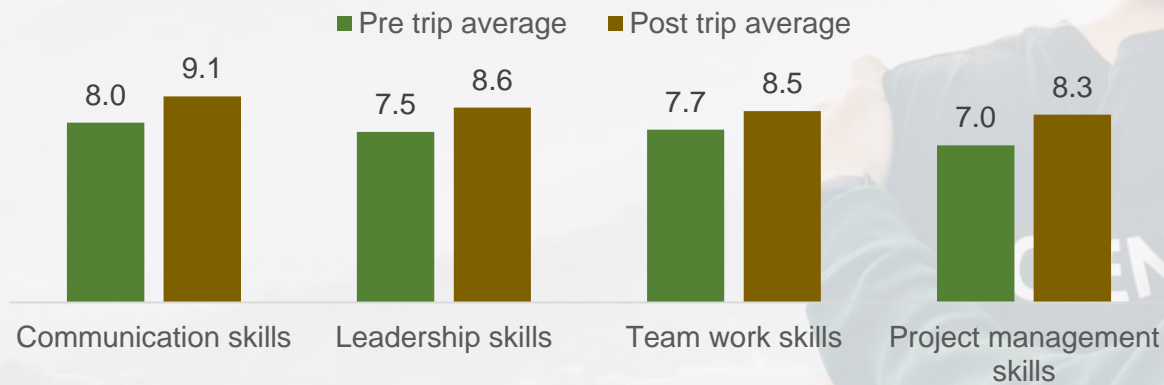
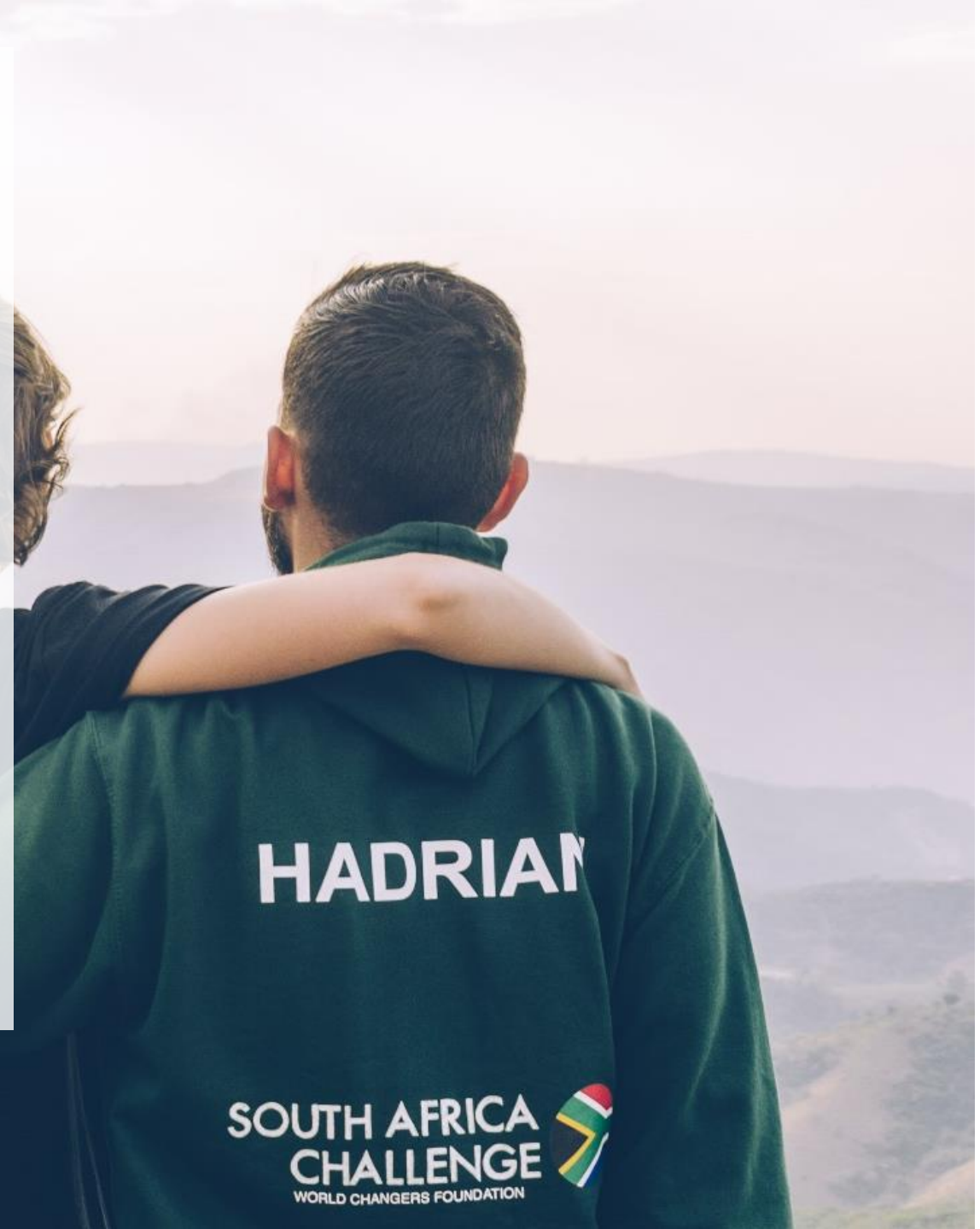


Figure 1: Enterprise and leadership skills average group scores



What did our participants have to say?

"SAC has reminded me that I can still commit to something, whether it is a challenge, a project or a goal or even a person or a team of people. Adaptability was something I would always consider as an asset of myself but for the past few years I have not really tested it and it turned out I can still be the chameleon I thought I was!"

Supporting our participants to become more self-aware, increasing their confidence, motivation, and goal setting ability; alongside increasing their understanding of their own values, vision, and leadership style, are outcomes we strive to achieve.

Surveying our participants on what they felt the experience had changed for them, a few weeks after returning from South Africa, their comments highlight the impact of the experience.

"We all have stories of what made us who we are, and who we are today isn't where we started."

"I am more confident. The programme and the team are really amazing in building you up in your strengths and self-confidence. I am more determined in my career path for social entrepreneurship."

"I learnt that I am capable of doing things that I thought I couldn't before, like talking to a room full of people. It was nerve wracking and probably wasn't the best presentation, but it gave me confidence to know that I can do anything I set myself up to do and the only real barrier is myself."

"South Africa has significantly changed my outlook on life, it has made me re-think what's important in life and my values. It has made me realise that I can achieve beyond what I have imagined and I will continue to hold this mindset going forward in my life and future projects. It has also enabled me to be more positive and be more grateful for my life and what I have."

What did our participants have to say?

“Planning a project can be quite simple and easy, because it is just you, your ideas, a pen, and a piece of paper. However, when you try to implement it, that’s when you need to scrap most stuff and adjust everything you have considered. This is the most frustrating but most exciting part.”

“It is a really long and demanding process, you cannot give up at the first difficulty because the path is full of obstacles and unexpected twists.”

“Creating a perfect product in the development stage isn’t necessary. Focusing on the minimum viable project more, and less on producing a perfect product in the development stage, means in the future I would be better able to roll out products sooner and more successfully.”

“I learnt the importance of networking, as through liaising with organisations tackling the same issue, I was made more aware of the barriers they faced, and that I too should take into consideration.”

“Understanding the issue in full is not always possible, but is the best precondition for success. Tailor your solution to parts of the problem, not all of it at once. Impacting only one individual in a mindset changing way, is already a really good step.”

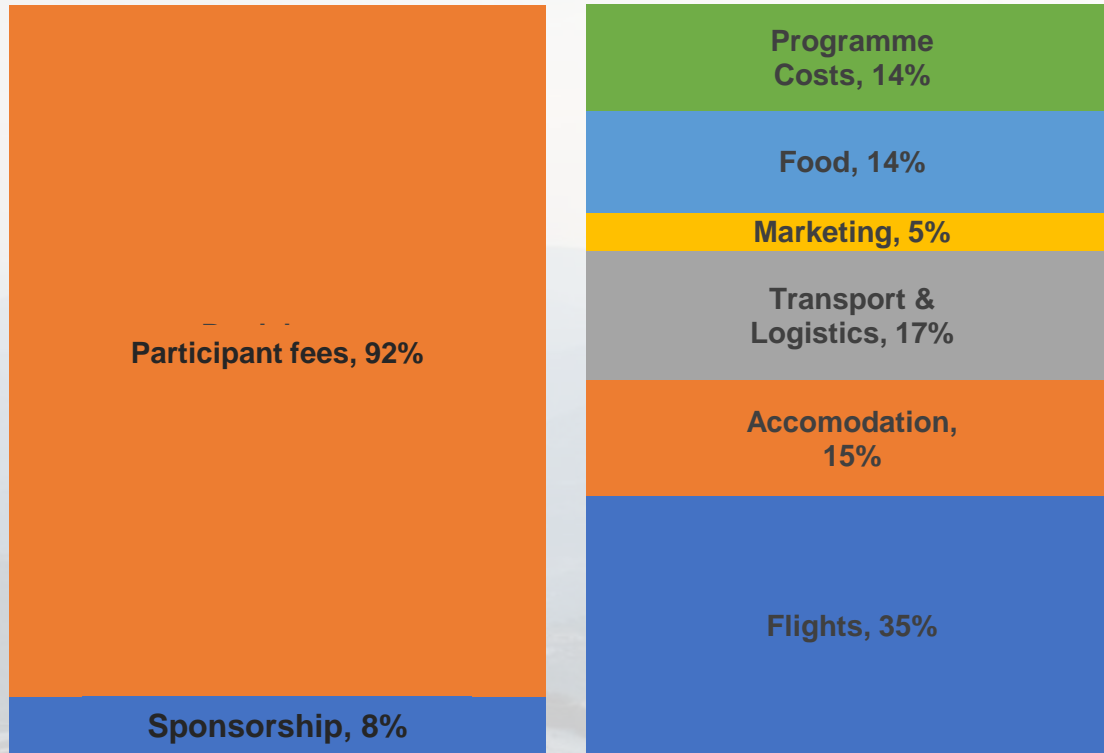
Combined with enhancing self-awareness, our long-term aim is to increase their ability to lead the development of economically, environmentally and socially responsible products and projects in the future.

We focus on developing enterprise skills and leadership capabilities through the practical challenges associated with starting a social action project. Along the way, participants gain an understanding of the complexity of societal challenges, how culture plays a part, and how to develop new networks. Together these elements aid our participants to understand the skills, knowledge, and importantly the confidence, to take on leadership opportunities.

When asked to reflect on how they found the experience of researching a societal challenge and designing a solution, their responses demonstrate the important insights they have gained.

South Africa Challenge 2017 Financial breakdown

South Africa Challenge 2017 Income and Expenditure breakdown



Income breakdown

Expenditure breakdown

Thank you to all our supporters

A thank you to all our current partners and sponsors, for without your support, dedication, and hard work, South Africa Challenge 2017 would not have been made possible.

Our partners



Our sponsors



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2012



2013



2014



2015



2017