



ANNUAL REPORT

Giving children a fair start in life.

January 2024 to December 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, Impande made significant progress toward our mission of ensuring every child in marginalised South African communities has access to quality early learning. Our work spanned 11 municipalities across KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, growing our impact through trusted partnerships, data-driven practice, and community-led solutions.

AT A GLANCE

22 058	1 000	943	36
Children served breakfast every day	Practitioners received regular SEF stipends	ECD centres in Learning Groups	ECD centres improved with new buildings and sanitation
7 035	6 468	25 972	70
Households visited during home visits	Children with access to Lego Play Box packs	Children received Book Dash books	Practitioners enrolled in accredited ECD Level 4 programme
208	832	1 013	130
Helped at our ECD Help Desk	ECD centres attended our network meetings	ECD centres visited by Impande	ECD centres received a basic ECD resource box

Key Achievements

Residential Training Centre Launch

We opened our first-ever central training facility in KwaNzimakwe, offering accessible, accredited ECD training to rural-based practitioners.

Expanding Our Network

In 2023, we reported on the natural increase within the 10 initial local municipalities from 1 459 to 1 651 ECD centres; in 2024, this increased to 1 717 ECD centres.

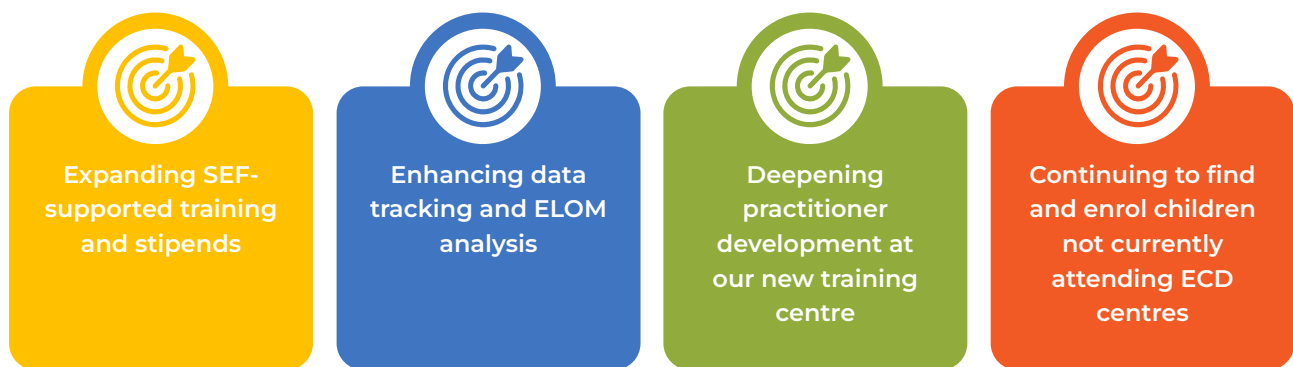
2022	1 459	2023	1 651	2024	1 717
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A Growing Learning Ecosystem

Through our Learning Groups, training sessions, and new educational tools (including Lego Play Boxes, Book Dash books, and Little Stars kits), we've continued to equip ECD practitioners with the resources and skills needed to provide quality early learning experiences.

Looking Ahead

As we move into 2025, we're focused on scaling what works:

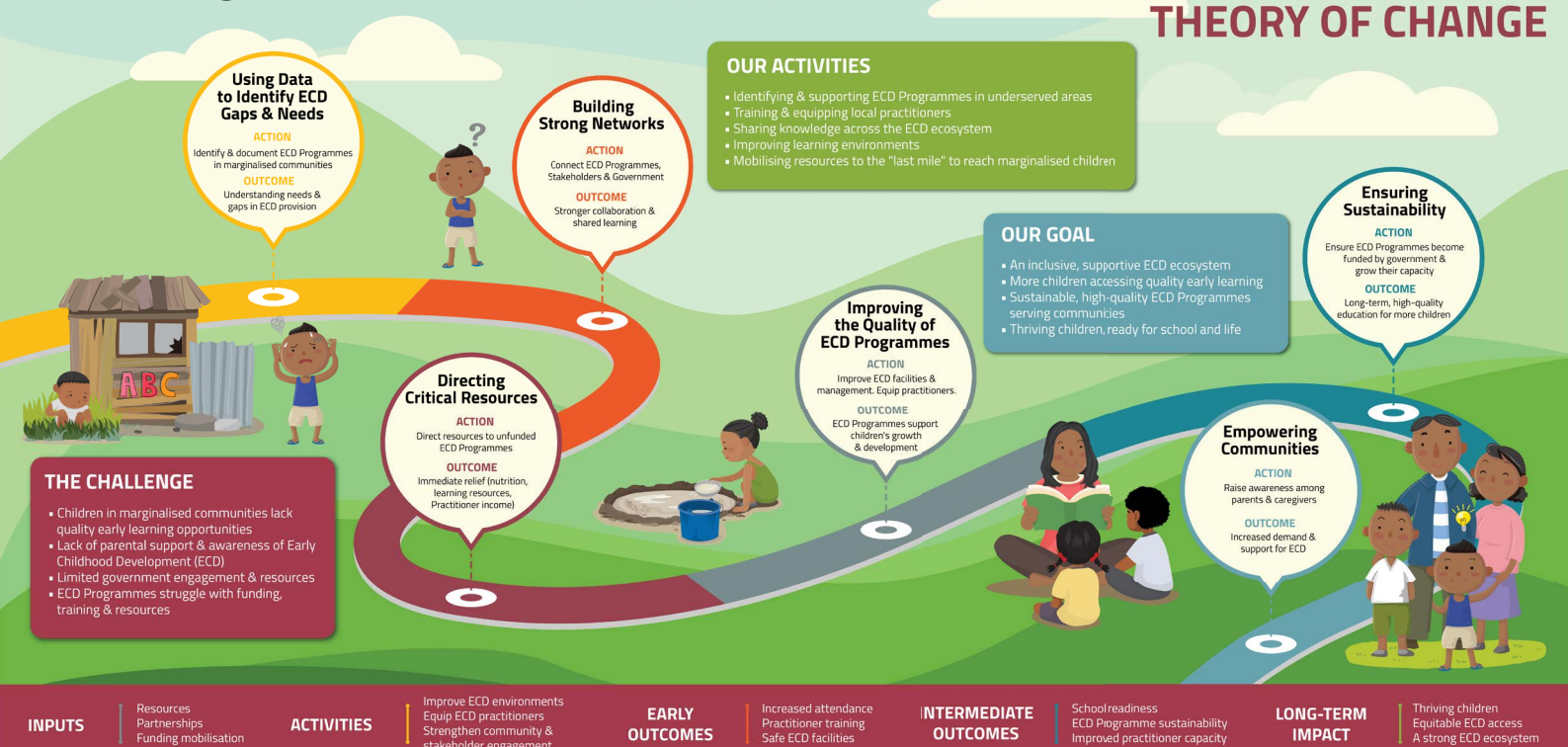


Impande's Theory of Change

Our approach combines the power of data, community, and influence to work towards a fair start for every child in marginalised South African communities.

A Fair Start for Children in Marginalised South African Communities

Impande GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT THEORY OF CHANGE



Director's Report

As I reflect on 2024, I'm filled with deep gratitude for the partners, funders, staff, and community members who have journeyed alongside us to build a fairer start for young children in South Africa.

It's been a year of momentum, consolidation, and bold new steps. But our core belief remains unchanged: that every child, regardless of background, deserves the opportunity to grow, thrive, and learn in a safe, stimulating environment.

Thanks to the support of the Social Employment Fund (SEF), we successfully completed a third round of funding, reaching over 1 000 Early Childhood Development (ECD) practitioners across our network. These stipends represent dignity, recognition, and the ability for practitioners to invest more deeply in the children they care for. We've heard first-hand how these stipends have opened up further study opportunities and transformed the quality of classroom interactions.

Another significant milestone in 2024 was the completion of our first-ever Residential Training Centre in KwaNzimakwe. With a capacity for 30 practitioners at a time and a dedicated team, we've created a hub for connection, capacity-building, and accredited qualifications. This year alone, 70 practitioners from 57 ECD centres enrolled in the ECD Level 4 programme, laying a strong foundation for professional growth and classroom excellence in even the most under-resourced communities.

In partnership with the Peninsula School Feeding Association, Zero2Five, and SEF, we provided nutritious daily breakfasts to 22 058 children in unfunded ECD centres.

We've also pushed forward with vital infrastructure improvements, delivering new buildings and sanitation to 36 ECD centres with the support of key partners, including Nelson Mandela Foundation, PIC, FNB, and our friends at Impande UK and Norway.

This year saw the expansion of our monthly Learning Groups, reaching 1 200+ practitioners from 943 ECD centres. Strengthened through a dedicated training session at the new centre, our team has led meaningful engagements

on topics from indigenous play to safety and parental involvement. Learning Groups continue to be one of the most cost-effective, high-impact ways to support programme quality and peer learning.

Our home visiting programme, in partnership with YES, continues to change mindsets one conversation at a time. Over 7 000 households were visited in the Umuziwabantu Municipality, helping parents understand the value of early learning and identifying over 2 600 children not currently in ECD programmes.

Strategic partnerships helped us deliver more learning resources:

173

Lego Play Box packs reached over 6 400 children, unlocking new learning opportunities in play-based settings.

857

ECD centres received books from Book Dash, bringing African stories into the hands of 25 972 children.

149

Practitioners received Little Stars storytime kits, improving language and literacy skills through structured storytelling.

Finally, we made great strides in research and data. Under the leadership of Dr Xoliswa Majola, our 10 Early Learning Outcomes Measure (ELOM) assessors profiled ECD programmes in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. These insights will guide even more targeted interventions in 2025 and beyond, helping us track how support translates into improved outcomes.

I want to close by saying thank you. To our donors, partners, and the many practitioners, caregivers, and interns who show up each day for the next generation. And to our Impande team and Board, thank you for your tireless commitment and vision.

**Kind regards,
Brian Liggett**

New Developments

Residential Training Centre

We celebrated a major achievement for Impande in 2024: the completion of our first-ever Residential Training Centre. This investment allows us to provide much-needed professional development in a more accessible way.

For the first time, we now have a centralised location where up to 30 ECD centre practitioners can stay and receive quality training, reducing the logistical challenges of daily commuting from remote areas.

At our new Residential Training Centre, 68 ECD centre practitioners are completing ECD Level 4 training, due to finish in April 2025. This nationally accredited qualification equips practitioners with practical and theoretical skills to support their professional development.



“Before joining Impande, I felt uncertain about my career path and struggled to find direction. However, Impande’s Level 4 programme helped me a lot by developing valuable skills and knowledge, building confidence in my abilities. Impande’s Level 4 programme has transformed my life, unlocking new opportunities and perspectives. I am running out of words for what Impande did for me. I’ll always be grateful.”

- Level 4 trainee

Expanded ELOM Research

In 2024, under the leadership of Dr Xoliswa Majola, we scaled up our ELOM research to better understand the effectiveness of our work in improving ECD outcomes.

Our team of 10 ELOM assessors worked diligently across Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, profiling and evaluating ECD programmes.

Expanded our ECD programme implementation team

A comprehensive three-day training session brought our team of facilitators together to deepen their understanding of the Impande Learning Group Facilitator Guide and enhance their skills in delivering impactful training.

We are confident that our expanding team will help us deliver even greater Learning Group results in the years ahead.

Extending to Winnie Madikizela-Mandela (WMM) Local Municipality

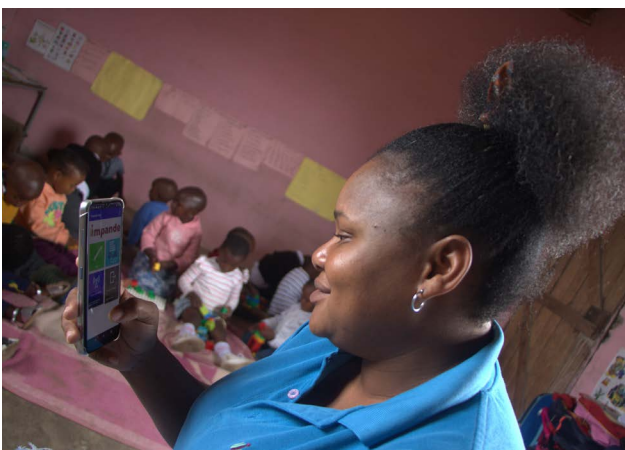
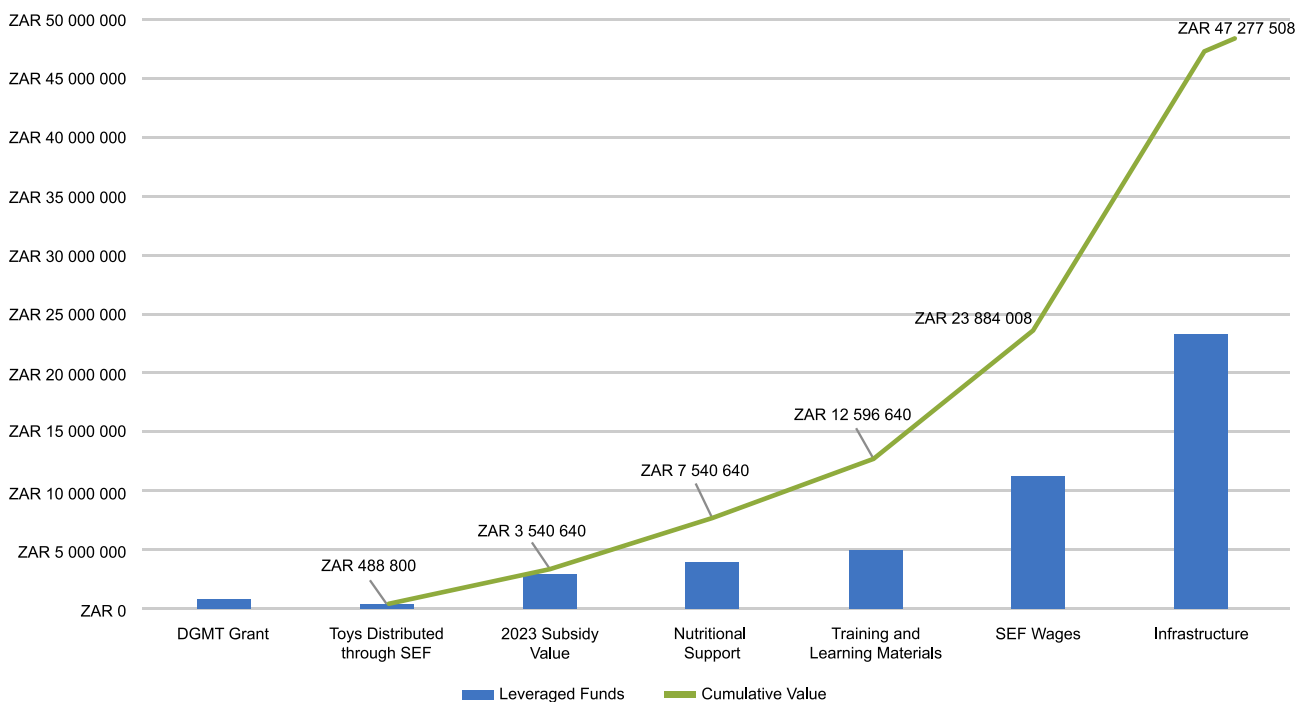
In 2024, we concluded a three-year funding cycle with DG Murray Trust (DGMT) to extend Impande's work into the Winnie Madikizela-Mandela (WMM) Local Municipality, one of four local municipalities in Alfred Nzo District, EC.

DGMT's investment of R1 million enabled us to:

- Complete a baseline survey of ECD centre provision in WMM
- Establish an active local ECD network representing 328 ECD centres
- Complete a door-to-door survey of 2 752 households to quantify the number of children not accessing ECD support

Furthermore, we leveraged this grant funding to raise a further R42 million in ECD resources, nutritional support, infrastructure investment, practitioner wages, and subsidies across the WMM ECD Network.

ROI example for Winnie MM ECD Network



Finding Children Not in ECD CENTRES

Could a simple conversation change a child's future? We'd like to think so.

Through our partnership with the [Youth Employment Service \(YES\)](#) programme, young interns visit homes in targeted locations to identify children under five and to demonstrate to caregivers the value of ECD using simple, educational tools.

A second round of the household survey and home-visiting project has been completed by 27 YES interns across six wards in the Umuziwabantu Municipality, KZN. During this phase, 7 035 households were visited, and 2 620 children not attending ECD programmes were identified. Fieldworkers are now conducting follow-up visits to encourage parents and caregivers to enrol their children in ECD programmes.

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“Since the beginning of home-visiting follow-ups, we're rarely finding children still at home. This must reflect the great impact that the home visiting project has had in our rural area. Caregivers are reporting that children have enrolled in local ECD centres. The project has shed light on the importance of ECD and encouraged caregivers to enrol their children for a chance at a better future. It's impressive”

- Thembisa (YES Intern)

Nutritional Support

715

ECD centres received
nutritional support

22 058

Children served breakfast
every day

No child can fully develop and thrive on an empty stomach. But it's a sad reality that many young children come to ECD centres hungry.

This year, through our partnership with [Peninsula School Feeding Association](#), [Zero2Five](#), and the [Social Employment Fund](#), we provided 22 058 children in unfunded ECD centres with a nutritious breakfast every day.

Full tummies mean children are better able to focus, learn, and grow.



“My child going to an ECD means that I no longer have sleepless nights worried about how much bread we have left and how long it will last.”

- Caregiver at an ECD centre in WMM Mandela Municipality.

Infrastructure

36

ECD centres received infrastructure

With continued support from Nelson Mandela Foundation, Public Investment Corporation, FNB, Industrial Development Corporation, Development Bank of Southern Africa, Sawabona Africa, Impande Norway, and Impande UK, we provided 36 ECD centres with new buildings and sanitation facilities.

These infrastructure improvements are a vital part of our mission to create ECD environments where children feel safe, supported, and inspired to learn.

Before-and-after transformation of several ECD centres this year:





Social Employment Fund (SEF)

1 000

Practitioners receive regular stipends

588

ECD centres on SEF

In 2024, we secured our third round of funding through the Industrial Development Corporation's (IDC) Social Employment Fund (SEF).

This funding has allowed us to support over 1 000 ECD practitioners across KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, many of whom were previously underpaid or not paid at all.

Financial stability boosts classroom quality and educational outcomes:



“With less financial stress, I now invest more time and effort into preparing my lessons. My classes have become more interactive, with new activities that engage children in hands-on learning. I now focus more on the individual needs of the children. I take the time to understand each child's unique challenges and strengths, implementing targeted interventions to support their development. As a result, children in my classroom are showing significant improvements in both their academic and social skills.”

- Lindeka Mathambo, principal of Ikhaya Kids Pre-School

Financial stability enables personal and professional growth:

“Given the financial difficulties my family faced, I never imagined I would be able to further my education. However, in 2024, I made the life-changing decision to enrol in an ECD Level 4 qualification programme. This experience has not only empowered me as a parent but also set a positive example for my children to pursue their education.”

- Nozibele Sitsho, assistant practitioner at Sinenjongo Pre-School

Learning Groups

943

ECD centres

1 200+

Practitioners

Our monthly Learning Groups offer ECD practitioners practical tools, skills and resources to help them run quality ECD programmes.

Some of the topics we covered in 2024:

SAFETY IN ECD CENTRES

Ensuring that ECD practitioners can identify and address potential dangers to children's safety.

INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS GAMES

Demonstrating the richness of traditional children's games as an instructional tool for promoting holistic child development at the early childhood level.

BOOK DASH

Using Book Dash story books to engage in different literature activities, therefore acquiring advanced language skills.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Promote the importance of parents' involvement, identify ways to improve it, and have basic information about the importance of nutrition as one of the issues that involves both practitioners' and parents' mutual understanding.



“It has only been a few months since the start of learning groups in our area, yet it feels like Impande has been with us for many years due to how much we have learned already, especially regarding the National Curriculum Framework (NCF). For many of us, NCF was something we only heard of from afar. We had no close association or practice with it until the learning groups introduced it to us in a very practical way.”

- Nozibele Sitsho, assistant practitioner at Sinenjongo Pre-School

Learning Resources

LEGO PLAY BOX : When children play, they learn

173

Play boxes distributed

6 468

Children reached

In partnership with [Care for Education](#), we brought 173 Lego Play Boxes to remote and under-resourced ECD centres in 2024.

Our training sessions helped practitioners incorporate Lego Play Box activities that develop fine motor skills, early numeracy, and language.

Practitioners report a significant difference in children’s engagement, creativity, and overall development.



“Being an ECD practitioner is so fun and easy now since training. It can be the hardest thing ever to want to develop children, but not have the knowledge and skills to. There is so much we gain from these blocks. The children are exploring different characters, mathematics, colours, storytelling, and so much more.”

- Practitioner, Sakhisizwe Pre-School

BOOK DASH: Bringing stories to life for children in rural communities

857

ECD centres received books

25 972

Children received books

In 2024, 857 ECD centres received a range of culturally relevant and engaging books from [Book Dash](#) through our partnership with [Solon Foundation](#).

Book Dash gathers creative professionals who volunteer to create new, African storybooks that anyone can freely translate and distribute. Available in multiple languages, Book Dash books help boost language skills and enrich the home learning environment in rural communities.

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“We’re so thankful to be part of such a thriving network community where we get access to big opportunities such as Book Dash and SEF. With every Book Dash experience, the facilitators always bring in new strategies, making it fresh and advanced each time.”

- Princess Mzayifani, Lithemba Pre-School (Bizana)

LITTLE STARS: Lighting up story time

146

Through the [Wordworks](#) Little Stars programme, we’ve provided story-based materials, training, and support to ECD practitioners, helping them strengthen their teaching of language and early literacy through a series of carefully scaffolded, story-based teaching cycles.

Little Stars packs distributed to practitioners

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“Previously, when doing story time, we only focused on reading the story and ensuring that children follow the story. Little Stars has taught us the importance of introducing and focusing on the characters in the stories. This improves children’s retelling skills.”

- ECD practitioner, Mbalentle Pre-School, Flagstaff

Income and Expenditure 2024

Acquisition of Network Action Group, trading as Impande

In 2024, Impande Yotshani NPC officially concluded the legal acquisition of Network Action Group, trading as Impande.

Impande Yotshani NPC continued to demonstrate strong financial stewardship during 2024, achieving a net surplus of R2 814 865 for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Income

- Total income for the year amounted to R52 350 039, a 5% decrease from the R55 248 740 recorded in 2023.
- Funding remained diversified across key partners:
 - IDC Social Employment Fund contributed 53% of total income.
 - Nelson Mandela Foundation provided 12%, supporting Vangasali ECD registration and infrastructure improvements.
 - ELMA Philanthropies, FirstRand Foundation, and FNB accounted for 14%.
 - Impande Norway and UK entities contributed 14%, focused on ECD infrastructure and programme work.

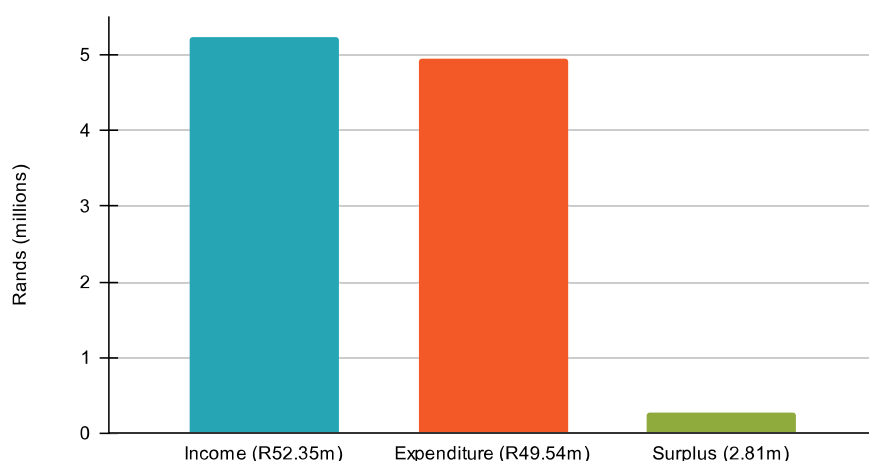
Expenditure

- Total expenditure was R49 535 175, down slightly from R51 476 613 in 2023.
- Major cost drivers included salaries, programme implementation, and community services, reflecting the organisation's continued investment in ECD delivery.

Resultant & Sustainability

- The resultant financial picture for the year reinforces Impande's financial resilience and positions the organisation strongly for 2025.
- The final closure of the Network Action Group bank account in November 2024 marked the completion of its integration into Impande Yotshani NPC, consolidating financial systems and governance.

Financial Overview - 2024



Thank you to all funding partners for the ongoing support of our mission.

Thank You

Our work is only possible through strong partnerships with our Impande colleagues in Norway and the UK, and the dedicated funders and implementing partners listed below. A heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you!



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



social development

Department:
Social Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



NELSON MANDELA
FOUNDATION

Living the legacy



FNB



Social
Employment
Fund

Work for the common good



NTAISE

To lead a young child by the hand

zero2five

Early Childhood Nutrition & Play



IDC

Industrial Development Corporation

DGMT

THE DG MURRAY TRUST



PUBLIC INVESTMENT
CORPORATION®
Est. 1911



DBSA

DEVELOPMENT BANK OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Building Africa's Prosperity



FirstRand

THE SOLON
FOUNDATION



PENINSULA
SCHOOL
FEEDING
ASSOCIATION



Impande South Africa is a non-profit organisation based in Port Shepstone, South Africa, working with community-driven ECD centres based in marginalised communities.



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