

FACET & PEBBLES PROJECT

A collaboration of heart & soul



In 2011 Sophia Warner, Director of Pebbles Project, approached Delaire Graff Wine Estate in Stellenbosch to request sponsorship of 40 t-shirts for the learners in the Pebbles After-School Clubs. The response received was that Laurence Graff, owner of Delaire Graff Estate and founder of the FACET foundation, focused on much bigger projects ... and so a dream was born.

In 2013, a meeting between Pebbles Project and FACET culminated in a plan to launch a fleet of Graff Mobile Learning Centres to make education programmes more accessible on the remote farms in the Stellenbosch rural areas. Access to quality education is a major challenge which prevents many children from reaching their academic potential; the fleet of Graff Mobile Learning Centres sought to overcome these obstacles by making academic programmes mobile through the launch of specially modified vans.

In 2013, the Pebbles Project supported 222 After-School Club learners aged 6 – 18. The clubs provided support with homework, sport and art but there were few resources- a limited number of books and no computers. Most of the children living in agricultural communities

live within the confines of low income households where the minimum wage is R3200 (\$220) per month. Many parents do not have the financial means to pay for additional educational support and struggle to afford the basic school needs like school uniforms and shoes.

In 2014, the first two Graff Mobile Learning Centres were completed and on the road. Vehicle 1 was equipped as a mobile computer lab complete with laptops, tablets and a printer. A qualified teacher delivered computer skills training lessons to children and young adults from 10 farms.

Vehicle 2 was set up as a mobile library to enhance the children's literacy development, and included board games and DVDs for families to borrow over weekends for entertainment. The mobile library was complemented by literacy tutors whom focused on basic reading skills for the younger children.

Since then, the library has expanded to include hand puppets to develop theatrical skills, verbal communication skills and self-confidence.

FACET has also funded a mathematics tutoring programme, which currently reaches 329 children through a range of interactive, technological and traditional teaching methods. In 2018, a 96% success rate was achieved by the FACET learners in their end of year examination, proof indeed that the mathematics programme is highly effective. Weekend and holiday activities are provided for the children, which give them an opportunity to visit interesting locations such as museums, aquariums, beaches, the naval base, cinemas, nature park game drives and animal parks. Children also participate in weekend activities on the farms such as fashion shows, Valentine's Day ball, Mother and Son lunch, sports days and leadership camps.

These activities not only reward good behaviour and attendance, they also introduce the children to the wider world and help to develop the social interactions that are required in a range of circumstances. After seeing the two vehicles in 2015, Mr Graff generously offered to fund an additional 3 vehicles to be able to reach a greater number of children in the area on a more regular basis.

The three new vehicles arrived in 2016 and comprised of a second mobile computer lab, a mobile life-skills classroom and a multi-purpose vehicle which was deployed to farms in the Citrusdal area on the West Coast of South Africa to provide computers as well as a book and toy library to farm children there.

By early 2017, the fleet of Graff Mobile Learning Centres was impacting a total of 500 children aged 6 – 18 across the range of programmes and had started offering support to the younger children in farm pre-schools also. Early school drop-out continued to be a problem with many children failing to complete Grade 12, but over the years, as a result of the FACET programmes, there has been a steady increase in learners making it through Grade 12 and beyond.

2018 saw the 6th vehicle set up as a mobile classroom to offer academic support to children in the Citrusdal area, where access to educational programmes is limited. The sixth vehicle offers tutoring in mathematics, literacy/reading, life-skills as well as specific interventions for children with special educational needs. This specialized vehicle is equipped with an interactive whiteboard

and projector for interactive teaching and computer applications as well as a wide range of educational books and materials.

The entire fleet now reaches 1180 children in 38 centres. In 2019, Mr Laurence Graff approved the expansion of the fleet and plans are in place for the 7th vehicle which will offer support to an additional group of learners in Hermanus.

This vehicle will arrive in October 2020, when the Pebbles staff are hoping that all educational activities on the farms will be fully operational again and the fleet of Graff Mobile Learning Centres can resume their normal activities.

COVID-19 ACTIVITIES

South Africa went into lockdown in March 2020 in response to the global pandemic and all Pebbles ECD (Early Childhood Development) and ASC (After-School Club) centres were directed to close by the Department of Social Development.

The children from these centres had been at home for 2 months, but had been receiving educational support from our team of FACET teachers through educational resource packs which were delivered to the children on the farms before lockdown and subsequently additional school textbooks have been delivered.

During lockdown, Pebbles has continued to offer primary healthcare services at the Owethu clinic on Villiera farm and the Pebbles kitchen has been working flat-out to provide cooked meals to the children and families on the farms.

The Graff Mobile Learning Centres have been redeployed to deliver food to families in who are struggling with job losses and financial hardship as a result of the pandemic.

The Pebbles kitchen delivered nearly 300,000 meals during the two lockdown months of April and May 2020, including the provision of food parcels to local rural villages, soup kitchens and informal settlements. The Delaire Graff team have also volunteered their time to assist with packing food parcels in the Pebbles kitchen.



PEBBLES PROJECT & FACET OVERVIEW

There are 10 FACET (South Africa) programmes:

- Mobile computer (2 vehicles)
- Mobile book and games library
- Mobile life-skills classroom
- Mobile multi-purpose (2 vehicles)
- Maths tutoring programme
- Literacy tutoring programme
- Weekend and school holiday programme
- Special educational needs support



FACET (South Africa) has created 21 jobs:

- 13 full time staff
- 10 part time staff
- 7 part time admin support staff (HR, finance, management, cleaner, driver, Health & Safety officer)

FACET Pebbles timeline:

- 2014 | 2 vehicles (computer bus and mobile library)
- 2016 | 3 more vehicles (2 computer busses, life-skills, bus, and a multi-purpose bus)
- 2018 | 1 vehicle (second multi-purpose bus)
- 2020 | 1 vehicle to be added (multi-purpose classes)



Total number of children in the programme: **1180**

Total number of children supported 2014 – 2019: **4217**

Total number of ECD and ASC centres supported: **38**

Total number of facilitators trained each month: **48**

NOTES TO EDITORS

Delaire Graff Estate is dedicated to supporting the education, health and wellbeing of the people of sub-Saharan Africa through FACET, established by the estate's founder, Laurence Graff. Each guest contributes to Delaire Graff Estate's ability to better support FACET's many programmes, especially the Pebbles Project in the local community of which Delaire Graff Estate forms part. The estate provides funding, insight and support to these various projects, while working closely within our own team to build and foster a future that benefits all within our region.

For further information, please visit www.delaire.co.za