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Social investing in 2022: Education takes precedence



At M&G Investments Southern Africa, our social purpose is to empower individuals, and communities to enable inclusivity and socioeconomic equality. As long-term investors, we believe that success comes from lasting commitment and that true empowerment stems from more than just a donation; it requires consistency, dedication, and a willingness to make a difference over many years. Our country faces many social barriers, and if we are to make it better, not just for today, but for future generations, then what we do today needs to have the capability to empower into the future.

We believe that education lies at the heart of breaking the cycle of poverty in South Africa, and if we can sow the seeds for good education then surely generations to come will reap the rewards. Education empowers and is something that can never be taken away! It is because of this deep-rooted belief that educational investments are at the heart of our corporate social investment (CSI) programme.

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Nelson Mandela once said that education is the most powerful weapon to change the world. At M&G Investments, we have taken this to heart and put it into action by building strong and sustainable partnerships with organisations who share in this belief. We aim to help develop human talent, realise individual potential, and transfer practical skills to those young people in our

communities most in need. We believe that by doing this, we will be helping to increase the number of previously disadvantaged individuals actively participating in the South African economy.

We are tremendously proud of our long-standing relationships with The LifeMatters Foundation, LEAP Science and Maths Schools, Fun Learning for Youth and SAME FOUNDATION. These organisations are passionate about educating our youth and providing the infrastructure and support systems necessary for that education; they share in our social purpose of doing good for today and for tomorrow.

LifeMatters: Supporting literacy and numeracy centres

Through our partnership with LifeMatters we have been able to build and support literacy centres in Westlake Primary and Sullivan Primary in Cape Town. Just this year, the team and volunteers at Life Matters have managed to complete 3,000 paired reading sessions with eager students. Growing and nurturing a love for reading has seen learners streaming through their lending libraries, and just over 4,000 library visits were counted across all beneficiary schools this year. M&G Investments has also invested to create and support a Numeracy Centre at Capricorn Primary in Cape Town. Mathematics skills are vitally important in the foundation years. The Numeracy Centre runs an intervention programme where students receive one-on-one sessions twice a week. The results from the numeracy intervention programme are quite remarkable, with participants improving from an average of 40.4% in November last year to 78.6% in June this year. We are extremely proud of these achievements and our partnership with LifeMatters. Congratulations must go to all the teachers and volunteers who clearly are empowering young minds.

LEAP: Boosting emotional development

In LEAP we have found a like-minded partner that makes a difference in transforming the lives of those that need it most. LEAP provides much-needed consciousness education that focuses on the systemic emotional and cognitive development of young minds, assisting them to have the necessary foundation so that they too can be the best that they can be. The goal is that these learners become economically active citizens who can do more than focus on day-to-day survival, but succeed in breaking the generational cycles of poverty. We have provided funding to three LEAP schools this year: Gauteng Alexandra, Diepsloot and Ga-Rankuwa. Each school has facilities to support the holistic development of the learner and focus on a learner-centred approach incorporating a variety of programmatic activities implemented as part of the consciousness education model.





The LEAP schools offer a full curriculum of subjects as per the national CAPs Curriculum. All schools have an extended school day (nine hours), Saturday classes and holiday programs with extra lessons in maths, science, and English. Students write the National Senior Certificate exams. In the 2021 exams, all the Gauteng schools achieved an incredible 100% pass rate. We are in awe of the dedication that the teachers have at these schools and at a recent Matric breakfast that we attended, it was evident that the matriculants from these schools are ready to take on the world and solve its challenges! We can't wait to see their success and its impact on our people and country.

Helping tertiary students FLY

Our partnership with Fun Learning for Youth (FLY) enables us to help students at a tertiary level. FLY provides students in need with bursaries and funding of textbooks and stationery, computers, student accommodation and living expenses, and all of these

are made possible by the investments that we make here. FLY also has tutors that check in with students to help them with the challenges that come from tertiary education. Extra tuition is made available, and counselling is also offered to ensure that students stay on the path of success. At M&G Investments we believe that this investment will no doubt make a difference to these deserving students, and we may even make some dreams come true!

Rebuilding KZN schools with SAME Foundation

In Kwa Zulu Natal, the deadly effects of climate change resulted in severe flooding and landslides caused by heavy rainfall in April this year. Some 448 people lost their lives, over 40,000 people were displaced, and homes and schools were destroyed. We partnered with SAME Foundation to help rebuild schools where the infrastructure had been severely damaged. Additionally, we



donated much-needed new desks to Brettonwood High School in Umbilo in Kwa -Zulu Natal. This has not only made a difference to the physical classroom environment, but it has also had a positive impact on the learners' morale.

Industry and staff initiatives

As a long-standing member of the investment industry in South Africa, we are proud to play our part in government- and industry-related programmes that are aimed at improving equal education in our country. To this end, we contribute to the Ikusasa Student Financial Aid Programme (ISFAP) as well as the Fundisa savings fund. By partnering with industry and government we are playing our part in making the futures of many brighter.

Part of our social purpose centres around uplifting the communities in which we live and operate; we therefore extended our support to worthy causes that our staff are involved in. "Care and empathy" form part of our core values as a business, and we are supportive of staff who live this value, not only when they are at work but also when they are at home, in their communities. We are proud to have partnered with our staff to fund soup kitchens, old age homes, youth programmes and sports programmes.

Our staff have also given generously to our in-house CSI days. We had a very successful stationery drive for Youth Day with our beneficiaries' receiving boxes of much needed stationery. We celebrated our heritage by hosting a Heritage Day bring-and-share lunch. At a global level, M&G plc donated money for every plate of food brought in by staff and we matched their contribution, resulting in us being able to secure beds for five nights at The Haven Night Shelter for 347 homeless people on the streets of

Cape Town. On Women's Day we celebrated the strength of our female colleagues by contributing to the Saartjie Baartman Centre, who do phenomenal work helping abused women in our society.

“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead”.

— Nelson Mandela

At M&G Investments we are proud of these partnerships and the opportunities they provide for us to make a meaningful difference, but we also recognise that there is still much more to be done and we are committed to keep going for the long term, day after day. □

Sumayya joined M&G Investments in 2012 and is currently the Head of Marketing and Retail Client Services. She is responsible for the M&G Investments brand, overseeing all of company's marketing and advertising activities as well as the retail client experience enabled by the retail Client Services Team. Sumayya also looks after the direct retail client's distribution strategy and is a member of the MandG Investment Managers (Pty) Ltd. Board. Prior to joining M&G Investments, Sumayya worked for Old Mutual Investment Group as the Head of Marketing where she was responsible for the full suite of investment companies within the Group. She has a wealth of advertising and marketing experience, having worked on brands such as Quaystone Asset Management and Nedbank earlier in her career. Her qualifications include an MBA (University of Cape Town) and a Post Graduate Marketing and Advertising Degree (Red & Yellow School).