



ANNUAL REPORT
2020



Photo: Timothy Hacksley

www.gadraeducation.co.za





2020 **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**
PROF. KENNETH MLUNGISI NGCOZA

NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION

2020 was unprecedented in global history. The world has previously faced devastating pandemics, such as the Black Death, the Spanish Flu and HIV/AIDS, but never before has 'lockdown' been the most prevalent and pervasive governance response. One of the most unfortunate and controversial dimensions of lockdown was the closure of schools. There is considerable research that has quantified and qualified the devastating effects that the closure of schools has on the educational, social and physical development of children and youth.

GADRA Education responded to the unfolding disaster by joining the likes of Nic Spaul in advocating for minimal loss of teaching time as well as by seeking to lead the way in both readying for face-to-face resumption and adapting existing programmes where necessary.

GADRA took considered but bold decisions in dealing with the challenges of Covid-19 and the associated lockdown. Principally, it re-opened its premises and facilities as quickly as legally permissible. Specifically, the office re-opened on 3 May and GMS resumed face-to-face teaching from 1 June. A testament to wonderful unity and organisational cohesion that has been built up over the years, the entire staff cohort rallied behind these decisions and carried out their respective roles with single-minded dedication. Thankfully, the organisation managed to operate uninterrupted after its resumption, without being affected by a single Covid incident. The organisation would like to convey its condolences to everyone, both in South Africa and around the world, who lost loved ones during the course of the year.

GADRA's swiftness and success in prompt re-opening and resumption did not detract from its determination to innovate and adapt existing programmes where this was required. The quality of the organisation's staff throughout its programmes was on marvellous display in 2020; GMS teachers seamlessly switched to virtual teaching (mainly using WhatsApp), the high school team worked closely with their Rhodes counterparts to reimagine and redesign '9/10ths' as a virtual mentoring programme, and all the primary school staff worked around the clock to prepare suitable and stimulating educational materials and distribute these to hundreds of learners and their parents. In addition, the staff took up whatever responsibilities and roles were required to enable partner public schools to re-open and offer quality teaching.

The efforts and effectiveness of the organisation were recognised and applauded by the community of Grahamstown/Makhanda. It was thus fitting that GADRA was named as Rhodes University's community partner of the year for 2020.

Notwithstanding these accolades, the funding environment has become less favourable in recent years. Covid compounded the fund-raising challenges since some donors diverted their resources to the state Covid relief fund and/or food support, whilst others delayed their decision-making processes. Under the circumstances, GADRA should be applauded for concluding the year in a sound financial position, but even greater uncertainty lies ahead. I therefore urge the donor community to rally around this exceptional organisation and its programmes.

FINANCIAL REPORT

For the year ended 31 December 2020

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

	2020 (ZAR)	2019 (ZAR)
INCOME		
Donations	8 919 888	11 239 633
Interest and Sundry Income	2 877 072	2 068 153
Fees	1 466 630	1 181 980
TOTAL	13 263 590	14 489 766

EXPENDITURE

GADRA Matric School	3 844 027	4 151 943
Primary Education Programme	3 682 556	3 848 414
Bursaries	277 900	349 016
Advocacy	707 163	893 309
Administration	264 132	252 500
Fixed Asset Expenses	1 799	62 360
TOTAL	8 777 577	9 557 541

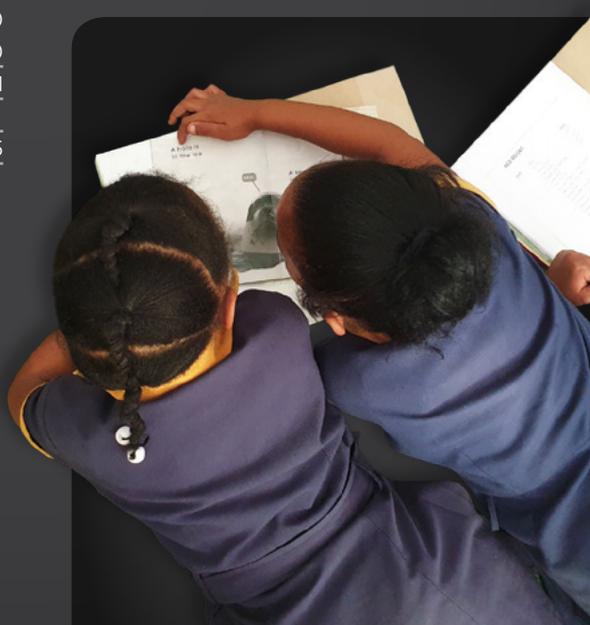
Surplus for the year	4 486 013	4 932 225
-----------------------------	------------------	------------------

BALANCE SHEET

	2020 (ZAR)	2019 (ZAR)
ASSETS		
Non-current Assets	21 605 107	17 760 455
Current Assets	4 435 710	4 082 516
TOTAL ASSETS	26 040 817	21 842 971

EQUITY AND LIABILITIES

Equity	24 534 691	20 073 559
Liabilities	1 506 126	1 769 412
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	26 040 817	21 842 971



MITIGATING THE DEVASTATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The educational devastation wrought by the protracted closure of and disruption to public schools in 2020 will be experienced and demonstrated for the next decade at least. The basic and most immediate consequences on educational development and performance are graphically depicted on the poster at the back of this report.

Unlike the GADRA Matric School, public schools closed in late March in a headlong rush, without giving any attention to contingency planning or even the provision of basic educational resources. The vast majority of South African children were sent home without a single book in their satchels. Public schools started re-opening in dribs and drabs from 8 June, but they were closed again in mid-July. Some grades (5 and 8) only returned to school on the final day of August. Even after schools had 'fully' re-opened, many operated on a 'platoon' basis, meaning that learners continued to miss out on daily teaching.

GADRA watched the devastation unfolding around it with sadness and deep concern for the children of the city (and, more broadly, the country). Aside from using its public platforms to advocate for the opening of schools, in Makhanda GADRA focused on mitigating the educational damage in those public schools with which the organisation had established partnerships. Some of these efforts required adaptation and innovation, all required commitment and doggedness. A selection of these contributions is summarised below.

FOUNDATION AND INTERMEDIATE PHASES: According to respected educationist Nick Taylor, "by far and away the most useful channel for providing learners with study materials is through print". GADRA spent the month of April designing and producing work-packs containing a range of grade-appropriate educational resources. These were distributed to well over 500 learners and their parents from May to July. Moreover, once public schools were permitted to re-open, GADRA deployed its professional teaching staff flexibly and generously, with the purpose of enabling partner schools to overcome comorbidity-related staffing problems.

SENIOR PHASE: Grades 8 and 9 were particularly hard hit by the protracted public school disruptions, despite the reality that learners must select their six FET subjects at the end of this phase of schooling. A particularly important choice is between Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy. Thus GADRA worked with its partners at Rhodes to redesign all Mathematics support programmes. An outstanding outcome of this was far greater local participation and better performance by local learners in the South African Mathematics Olympiad (SAMO) competition in 2020 than in previous years.

FET PHASE: The flagship offering under the Rhodes Vice-Chancellor's Initiative to Revitalise Public Schooling in Makhanda is the '9/10ths mentoring programme'. After schools were closed in March, GADRA and Rhodes redesigned the programme entirely, so that mentors could offer effective support to their mentees virtually. This was successfully done, to the extent the number of Bachelor passes produced in the final examinations matched the historic highs produced in recent years.

THE GADRA MATRIC SCHOOL (GMS) - PAVING THE WAY

Kaizen is a key term in management theory, referring to 'continuous improvement'. In 2020, GADRA had to think deliberately and creatively to deal with constraints and disruptions of lockdown.

The year had opened with the usual flurry of applications. Intake, in excess of 200, was again at record high levels. Teaching proceeded well from late January until late March when government summarily ordered the immediate closure of schools. At that stage, government communicated that schools would re-open in mid-April, but GADRA had followed Covid-related developments around the world and therefore knew that this was highly unlikely. The organisation thus advised the school management team to keep the school open for as long as was necessary to put contingency teaching plans in place.

This foresight and planning paved the way for the implementation of these plans from mid-April (when school closure was indefinitely extended). For the following seven weeks, GMS teachers taught significant sections of the subject curricula virtually, mainly utilising WhatsApp. In order to ensure accessibility, GADRA provided data to those students in need. Subsequent evaluations indicated that both the teaching and learning dimensions of this experience were positive.

From April, it was predictable that schools would need a set of resources in order to re-open. Basics in this regard were: face-masks, thermometers and sanitiser. GADRA duly went about procuring these resources in line with its standard procurement processes. On 19 May, Minister Motshekga announced that schools would be permitted to re-open from 1 June, subject to stipulated conditions. In order to ensure its compliance, GADRA

produced a raft of documented policies and procedures, including comprehensive GMS Criteria for Re-opening (GADRA's attempt to demonstrate compliance with envisaged regulations); a student Code of Conduct; and a revised 'block teaching' timetable. The GADRA Matric School re-opened on 1 June. It proceeded to operate uninterrupted until the teaching programme for the year ended on 16 October. Throughout this time, the school screened students on a daily basis, sanitised classrooms and implemented its reinforced Code of Conduct. As a result, together with considerable good fortune, the school did not record a single case of Covid-19 throughout the year, amongst either staff or students.



GMS was the first school in Makhanda to resume face-to-face teaching after hard lockdown. It paved the way in demonstrating that schools could be re-opened without undue delay, in a safe and responsible way.

Once the school re-opened on 1 June, the immediate priority was to re-cap those sections of the curricula that had been covered virtually, in summary form in class. This was completed by early July, allowing the scheduling of mid-year examinations for late July. After a short break, the third term commenced in early August, allowing adequate time to complete curriculum teaching before the commencement of Trial examinations in early September. Then instead of taking a final holiday break after the Trials in October, GMS decided to go straight into a two week block of revision, ending on 16 October. This gave the students an extended block of self-study time before the Final NSC Examinations commenced on 5 November.

GMS - THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING IS IN THE EATING

The brief narrative account provided in the preceding panel outlines the extraordinary and bold steps taken by GMS in order to adapt to the constraints and challenges of Covid and the associated lockdown. This panel details some of the outcomes of this impactful top-end bridging school.

GMS has a proud history and track record. Amongst other things, it has been the largest feeder school of Rhodes University since 2015. 2020 again saw GMS dominate 1st year intake at the leading university in the Eastern Cape Province. If one factors in the highly successful Bridging Programme, then the school again assisted over 70 students to register at Rhodes in January 2020.

The way that GADRA maintains this outstanding throughput to Rhodes is by sustaining and improving the quality of the teaching and learning processes at GMS. The adaptation, innovation and commitment exercised by Mrs Lancaster (GMS Principal) and her teaching staff in 2020 were aimed at ensuring that the school results would not be unduly affected by the lockdown disruptions. The efforts yielded the desired outcomes.

The significance of the pre-Finals examination results is that these are used by GMS students for purposes of tertiary applications. It was thus very pleasing that the school produced its second best mid-year and Trials results ever! On the basis of the results, GADRA supported approximately 75 students to submit compelling applications, primarily to Rhodes but also other universities and tertiary institutions.

The final examination results are crucial in securing university offers and opening up long-term opportunities. The results met up to expectations, with over 140 of the Class of 2020 obtaining Bachelor level passes.

At the beginning of 2020, Rhodes registered 36 GMS students as Occasional students for a 1st-year credit. This is referred to as the 'Bridging Programme', since it affords participants a clear and supported pathway into the university. Operations at Rhodes were severely affected by lockdown and the Covid-19 pandemic. All face-to-face contact, teaching and support on campus were suspended in late March and did not resume at all. The academic programme was entirely virtual for the remaining nine months of the year. Under these circumstances, GADRA is satisfied with the final results; 33 students passed at least one semester course, with the vast majority of these securing both.

Finally, GADRA attempts to assist its students to gain both physical and epistemological access to Rhodes University. The former requires meeting entrance requirements, whilst the latter needs adequate academic literacy and competence. The organisation focuses on the latter through its enrichment programmes.



One of the strongest long-term outcomes produced by GADRA was that 42 GMS alumni graduated from Rhodes in 2020. THIS IS A RECORD ANNUAL NUMBER OF GRADUANDS FOR GMS.

NEGOTIATING, REINVENTING, FINDING ALTERNATIVE WAYS...

GADRA's adaptability and innovation during the months of lockdown was widely acknowledged and heralded in Makhanda. In November, Rhodes University named the organisation as its community partner of the year for 2020. Part of Rhodes's award citation reads as follows:

"The complexities of this year have caused all of us to re-think education. For GADRA this has meant a significant shift into the virtual world. The current digital divide in our country prompted programme leaders to think innovatively about the implementation of their programmes by using low-cost media and continuous volunteer development.

The GADRA team has been vocal during lockdown, negotiating, reinventing and actively finding alternative ways to rescue the schooling year for many. They have worked tirelessly and creatively to keep their programmes going and servicing our community in the face of many adverse challenges that this year brought...

GADRA's success must be owed to the warmth of their relationships with pupils and students, their firm focus on social justice and their commitment to Community-University partnerships."



LOCKDOWN DEFORMATION

of Performance Distribution

**PRE-LOCKDOWN
NORMALITY**

Large Middle



**POST-LOCKDOWN
DEFORMATION**

Missing Middle



**AN ILLITERATE AND
INNUMERATE CITIZENRY**

WORSE DROPOUT

PERVASIVE FAILURE

MORE 'NEETS'

DEEPER UNEMPLOYMENT

SMALLER MIDDLE CLASS



GadraEducation.co.za

 **gadra**
EDUCATION



*GADRA's resilience in 2020 is
testament to the wonderful
unity and organisational
cohesion that has been built up
over many years*

MORE INFORMATION

Dr Ashley Westaway GADRA Education Manager
Tel: 046 622 4837 **Email:** ashley@gadraed.co.za

www.gadraeducation.co.za