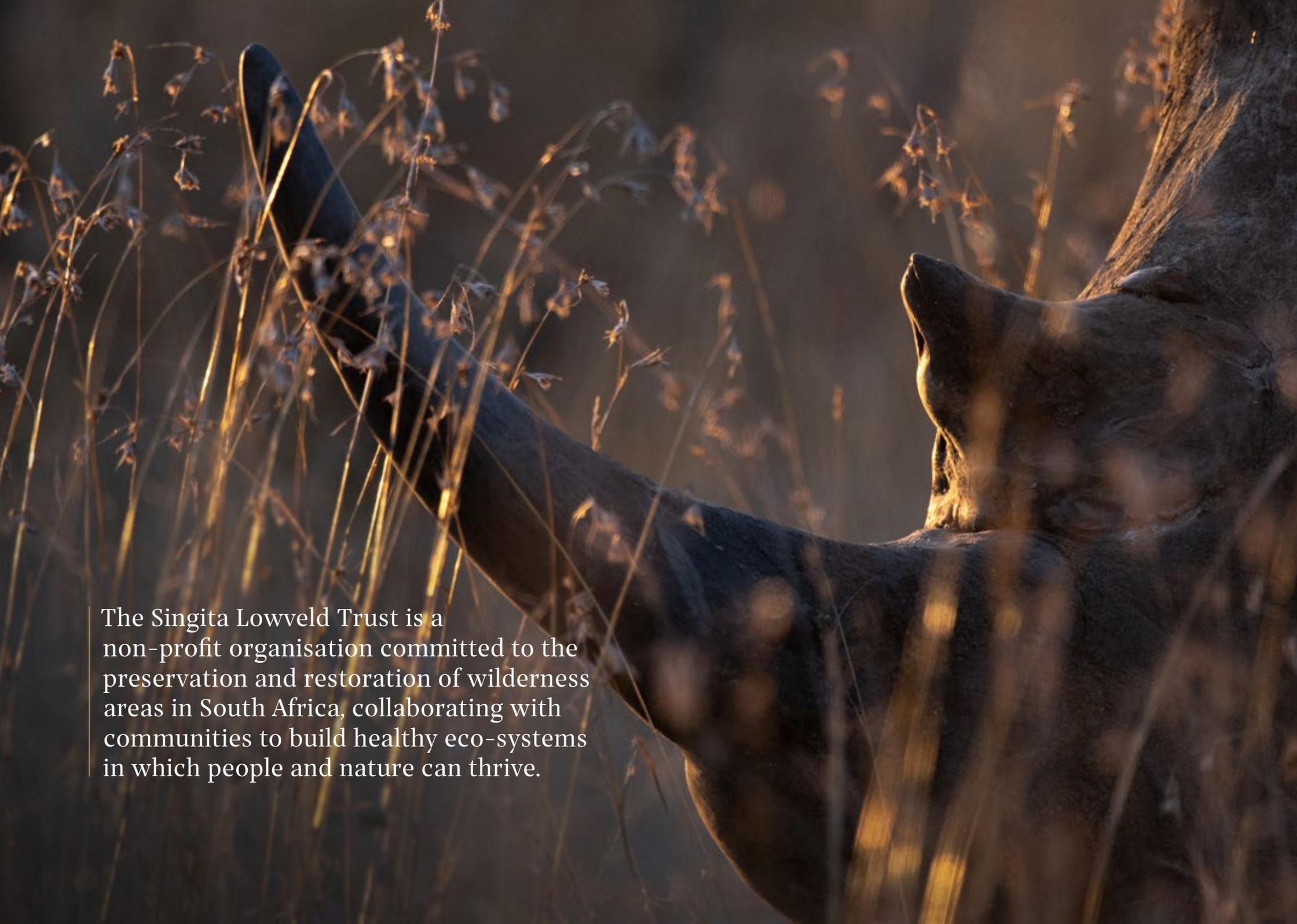




Singita Lowveld Trust

YEAR IN REVIEW 2022



The Singita Lowveld Trust is a non-profit organisation committed to the preservation and restoration of wilderness areas in South Africa, collaborating with communities to build healthy eco-systems in which people and nature can thrive.



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2022 – Looking Back

The words “collaboration” and “resilience” come to mind when we look back on 2022.

In a world where we continue to lose nature faster than we can restore it, we have an important role to play in reversing biodiversity loss and mitigating and adapting to climate change. These are both global and local challenges that will define our lifetime and shape our world for generations to come.

Post Covid-19, we are seeing the results of building collaborations to support resilient communities with generous contributions from guests and partners. This annual review highlights and celebrates the many local champions spearheading these partnerships within our neighbouring communities and wilderness areas.

Seventeen years ago, the Singita Lowveld Trust (SLT) was established as Singita’s non-profit conservation and community development partner in South Africa. The aim is to safeguard the unique wilderness and wildlife of this region, while enabling the socio-economic development of neighbouring communities – supporting a region where people and nature both thrive.

SLT manages a variety of conservation programmes and community partnerships in and around the greater Kruger Park - areas within and surrounding Singita Sabi Sand and Singita Kruger National Park.

2022’s challenges and successes are highlighted in this annual review, and we invite you to read more about our community partnerships (page 03) and wildlife protection (page 14).

The generous support from our guests and sponsors enables the SLT to scale our impact in safeguarding the iconic wilderness and wildlife within the Greater Kruger National Park and grow our reach to support community partnerships in education, rural enterprise and skills development, and land stewardship.

These include wildlife monitoring, research, and protection initiatives to ensure effective conservation, land management and restoration, as well as long-term community partnerships that support education, rural

enterprise and skills development, environmental awareness, and sustainable land use. Looking forward, in 2023, Singita will be celebrating its 30-year anniversary as leaders in luxury, nature-based tourism - a journey that started in 1993 with the opening of the Ebony Lodge in Singita Sabi Sand, in the heart of the SLT landscape.

This gives us the opportunity to reflect and celebrate the solid conservation foundations laid down to safeguard and preserve these landscapes for the future, and then double down on our collaborative efforts to support healthy catchments, resilient communities, and flourishing wildlife.

Many individuals and organisations continue to walk this journey with us, recalling a favourite African proverb, “If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together.”

To our staff, partners, donors, and supporters – thank you for joining us on this journey. We look forward to continuing to be part of shaping the world we wish to leave as a legacy.

Inge Kotze
Group Head of Conservation, Singita



The beautiful lilac-breasted roller is known as the bird of peace or unity



The Singita Lowveld Trust's logo - the beautiful lilac-breasted roller (*Coracias caudatus*), is known as the bird of peace or unity, symbolising harmony between communities. One of Africa's most striking, vibrantly coloured birds, it is often spotted perched on a tree branch or gracefully taking flight with its turquoise wings outstretched - it is territorial and monogamous. It is an iconic species, synonymous with summertime in the African bush for residents and visitors alike. Notably, the male and female birds have an identical appearance, a rarity in nature.

In many African traditions (including the Zulu and Shangaan cultures, both of which have a strong presence in this region of South Africa), a marriage ceremony would include the tethering together of two people using the feathers of the lilac-breasted roller. If the bond between the feathers was strong and successfully held the couple together, the community would give them their blessing to proceed with the marriage. This wedding theme can also be seen in the Venda culture, in the northern regions of the Greater Kruger Park landscapes, who used these feathers as wedding bands.

This custom filtered into Afrikaans culture too (which was formed by the Dutch, French and German settlers in the 17th century), with the feathers used in their wedding dresses. This lends context to the Afrikaans word for the lilac-breasted roller, the "troupan", which, when directly translated, means "wedding band".

Its symbolism across many South African cultures and its association with unity makes it a fitting symbol for the importance of harmony among neighbouring communities and peaceful co-existence with nature as a vital foundation for conservation.

| A fitting symbol of connection, hope and harmony for all that the Singita Lowveld Trust aims to achieve.



Community Partnerships

Singita Lowveld Trust's long-standing community partnerships help neighbouring communities to thrive socially and economically.

Our community partnerships have three main objectives:

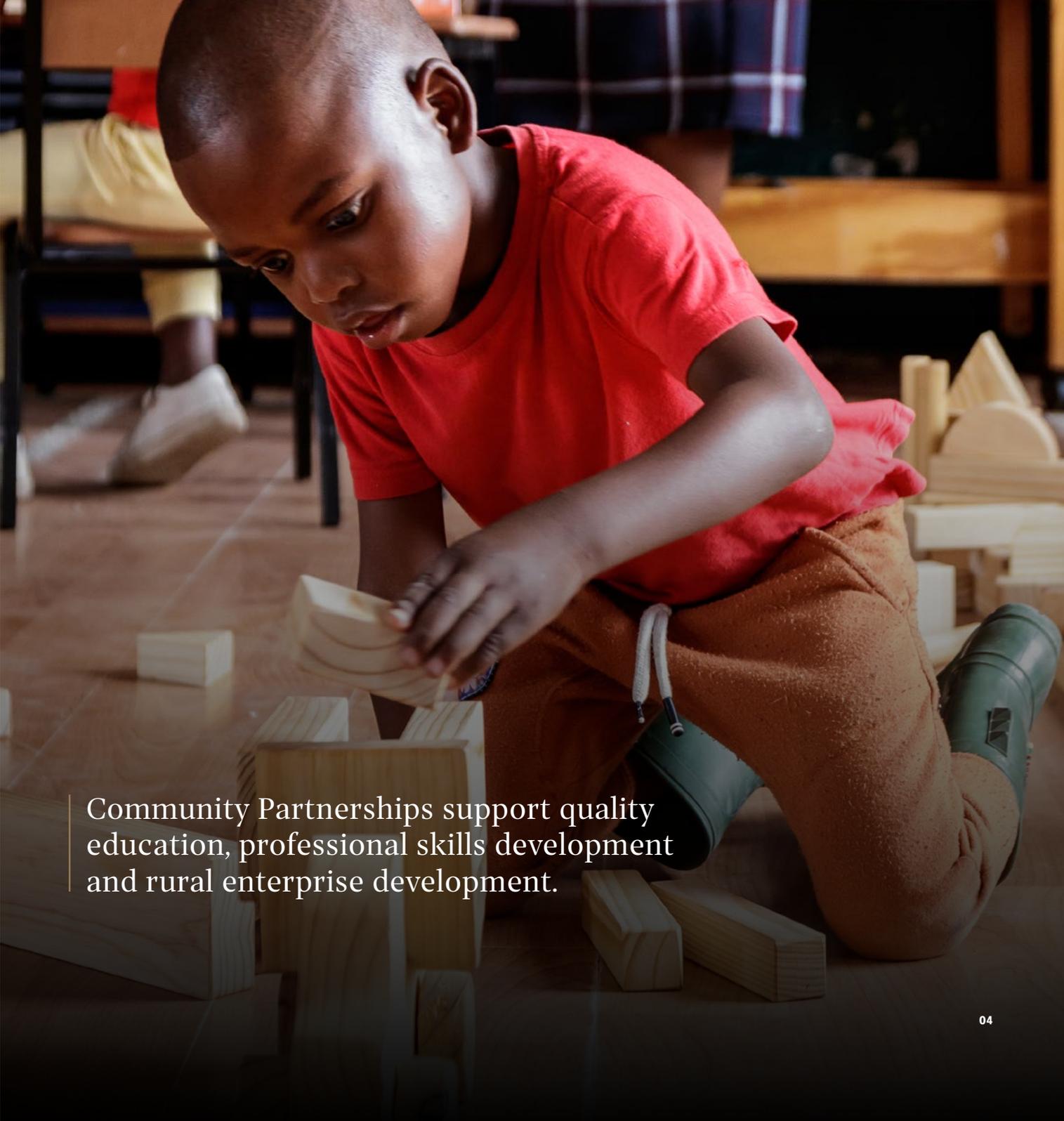
Supporting quality education and professional skills development

Developing rural entrepreneurs and small enterprise

Promoting environmental awareness and sustainable natural resource management

These partnerships provide socio-economic opportunities and support resilient livelihoods to enhance diversified income streams for the deeply impoverished rural communities residing in villages. They support a spectrum of initiatives spanning all stages of life, from early childhood development to formal schooling and income-earning opportunities for school-leavers and the many unemployed youth in the region.

A brief overview of each partnership is provided in the following section, sharing the highlights and key successes from 2022.

A young child with a shaved head, wearing a bright red t-shirt and brown shorts, is kneeling on a wooden floor. The child is focused on playing with several light-colored wooden blocks on a white table. The child is wearing green rubber boots. In the background, another person's legs and feet are visible, suggesting a classroom or play area setting.

Community Partnerships support quality education, professional skills development and rural enterprise development.

Early Childhood Development

WHY THE FOCUS OF ECD?

Research has found that 85% of brain development occurs in the first five years of a child's life, including executive functions (self-control, working memory and cognitive flexibility), which contribute to school-readiness. It is during this critical window that the foundations for physical and mental development are established, unlocking the full potential of formal learning capabilities.

Despite its significance, historically, the ECD sector has been under-resourced and poorly regulated and supported, especially in rural areas. The SLT has made a strategic commitment to invest in ECD, recognising it as a vital mechanism for supporting local children to reach their full potential.

SLT currently supports:

17 ECD centres across 9 villages.

In 2022: just over **1,700** children enrolled*.

* A fluctuating annual enrollment of between 1,700 and 2,000 preschoolers each year.

A full-time dedicated ECD specialist trainer and team provide regular centre manager and practitioner (teacher) **training, workshops and onsite support.**

A holistic support programme aims to offer support on the following six competency areas that form a basis of a best-practice ECD model:

Effective implementation of the national curriculum - supporting age-appropriate learning and developmental milestones



2022 - PROGRESS AGAINST EACH FOCUS AREA AND DEGREE OF COMPETENCY REACHED

● **Achieved**

(90% + completed across all centres)



Stimulating learning programme

The programme supports **80 centre managers** and practitioners and just over **1,700 children**. At least **90%** of practitioners excel in five key areas of ECD practice, including their daily programme, classroom layout, teaching practice, group activities and effective use of classroom resources.

● **Partially achieved**

(70-80% achieved across all centres)



Healthy, safe and secure learning environment

100% of ECD centres received ongoing replenishment of Covid-relief health and safety PPE materials, hand-wash basins, cleaning materials, and disinfectant.

70% of ECD have a staff member with a current first aid qualification.

● **Not achieved yet**

(<60% ongoing support)



Engaged caregiver and community support

100% of ECD centres hold parent-body meetings (to orient new parents, verify income for subsidy purposes and plan for graduation). However, attendance is low.



Well-resourced classrooms

All 80 classes were resourced between 2019 and 2022. The 2022 annual resource drive was valued at **R1.8-million**, equipping all the four- to five-year classrooms, outdoor play areas and music equipment for the centres.



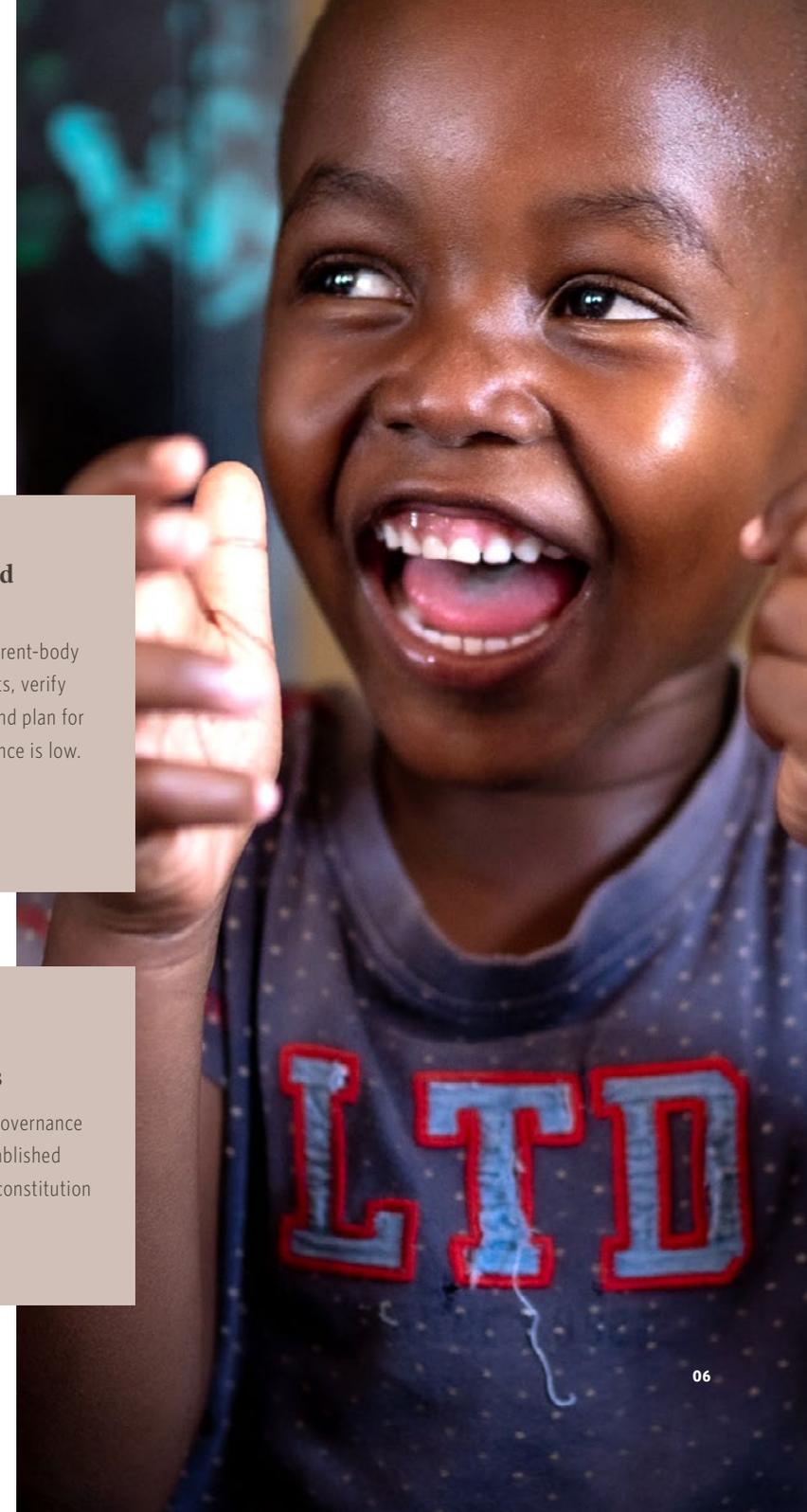
Access to government funding and support services

88% of ECD centres are receiving the government subsidy, which contributes to staff salaries, food for children and operational costs.



Functional management systems

82% met all criteria for the governance section, which includes an established school governing body with a constitution and regular, minuted meetings.



ANNUAL ECD RESOURCE DRIVE

Rural schools often lack even the most basic safety equipment, educational toys and furniture.

The resource inventory developed by an ECD specialist includes **over 500 age-appropriate and durable** items per school.

Deliveries occur once a year and are celebrated community wide; they are distributed equitably to all **17 centres**.

Teachers are **trained to use resources** to provide a stimulating, age-appropriate learning environment.

Resources include:



Safety equipment: first aid kits and fire extinguishers



Furniture: tables, chairs, storage, cots and changing tables for babies, carpets, sleeping mats



Reading corners: libraries of 430 local-language books



Educational toys: blocks, puzzles, bean bags, memory and counting games, cars, pull-along toys



Fantasy corners: rag dolls with baby care accessories, play kitchens, housekeeping toys, dress-up costumes



Arts and crafts supplies: musical instruments: tambourines, drums, bells, castanets, shakers, cymbals, triangles, claves



Outdoor play equipment: balance beam, sand play toys, skipping ropes, stilts, push wheels



Kitchen equipment: dishes and utensils



The annual SLT resource drive 2022:
four- to five-year classrooms equipped
Value: US\$105,000.

A PASSION FOR PURPOSE

Meet Frank Mkwakwa, ECD Specialist Trainer

The success of delivering well resourced, well-trained ECD centres rests largely on the passion and knowledge of key individuals like Frank Mkwakwa. As SLT's EDC specialist trainer, he provides daily training support and encouragement for the centre managers and their staff. Frank oversees the training of all teachers/practitioners across all 17 ECD centres in the region, who received training on the National Curriculum Framework.

During the crucial four- to five-year-old age group, which is a significant period leading to school readiness, access to resources and guidance from practitioners is vital. This is the year where children's skill must be at a level that they are ready to enter the formal education system.

The South African ECD sector has recently been placed under the Department of Basic Education. ECD resourcing and teaching support is now recognised as a key government priority to improve school readiness and maximise each learner's potential during their formal schooling years.

This is an important milestone for the formalisation and support for this critical sector, and the SLT is proud to have a model of best practice that can be adopted and expanded across the district to fast-track the support for this sector.

The SLTs recent annual Monitoring and Evaluation Survey has highlighted the value and appreciation of Frank's specialist knowledge and trainer role as the critical success factor for this programme.

"The progress is heartening and tangible. When you look at the children and see how they have matured in quite a short time once they enter the ECD programme, it is remarkable."

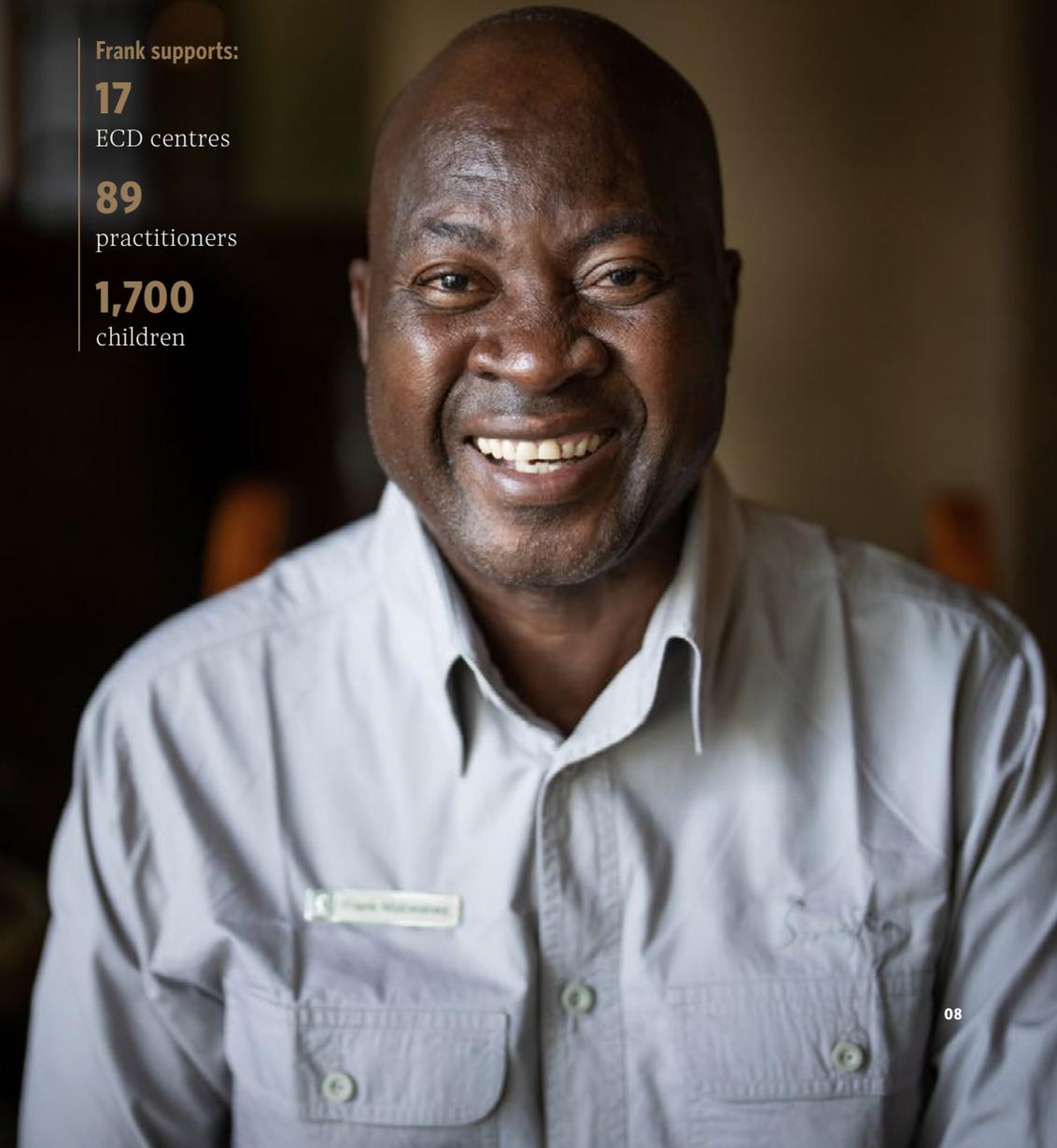
The model will be building upon this learning and it is clear - many more "Franks" in the system are needed. Therefore, the SLT team is working on a "train the trainer" model for 2023, partnering with key stakeholders and the Department of Basic Education to enhance capacity and support in the ECD sector for numerous centres still in urgent need of resources and assistance.

Frank supports:

17
ECD centres

89
practitioners

1,700
children



Professional Skills Development

SINGITA COMMUNITY CULINARY SCHOOL

The Singita Community Culinary School (SCCS) is one of Singita's long-standing, flagship community partnerships, developing local talent and aspiring chefs to support the hospitality and tourism sector across Africa.

This programme gives school-leavers and young adults (aged 18-24), selected from neighbouring rural communities, the opportunity to participate in an intensive, year-long, Singita-crafted, professional cheffing course.

The SCCS promotes professional cooking as a highly skilled career option that offers promising prospects for both formal and self-employment - and helps students to secure much-needed skilled employment to support their families and communities

91%

of employed graduates are professional chefs





The SCCS holds the vision of producing “the best chefs in Africa”. In 2022, the SCCS launched a new partnership with the esteemed Prue Leith Culinary Institute, an acclaimed Academic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Partner, to enhance the programme’s excellence.

SCCS students now graduate with an internationally recognised City & Guilds Level 2 Diploma in Professional Cookery. In addition to this academic diploma, graduates complete the WSET Level 1 Wine, Fire, and First Aid Level 1 Certifications. After final year-end practical and theory examinations, our SCCS graduates then embark on a paid-for six-month work internship from July to December each year. Collaborations with industry partners ensure secure job placements at other renowned lodges and hotels to obtain their work experience.

Many of these scholarships are generously funded by guests and proceeds from SCCS Cooking Classes. Guests can participate in an SCCS Cooking Class to meet and interact with students in the purpose-built, state-of-the-art cooking studio on-site at Singita Kruger National Park.

The annual SCCS alumni survey, comprising 103 graduates to date, revealed the following promising statistics for 2022:

SCCS graduates:

92%
of currently employed.

91%
are professional chefs

25%
progressing through Singita’s
professional chef ranks

25%
commis chefs

44%
progression to junior sous
chef level or beyond.



SHAPING AFRICA'S YOUNG CHEFS

Meet Thys Taljaard, Head of Singita Community Culinary Schools

Thys Taljaard, regional head of SCCS, has trained and personally guided many students over the years. He also provides formal training and mentoring to all the Singita Chef Skills Developers responsible for the academic teaching programme at each campus. He says each class and student is unique, and all leave an impression and form strong bonds with their classmates and mentors. The greatest reward for Thys is following their progress, and this is made easy with the many graduates who enter careers as professional chefs in the Singita kitchens.

Thys's pride shines through when he gives an update on the latest graduates from 2022.

“Three students from last year’s graduating cohort were employed within the Singita lodges, and all are from local communities. I was so impressed by their commitment and dedication.”

Reabetswe Moreko and Thembinkosi Nxumalo, who hail from Welverdiend and Hluvukhane, were placed at Singita Sabi Sand, and Sibusisu Ubisi (also Welverdiend) was placed at Singita Kruger National Park.

And they all have a story: Reabetswe initially studied biokinetics but due to a lack of funding had to pause her studies; Sibusisu was accepted into the South African Police training programme but found it wasn't where his passion lay; and Thembinkosi, who has always been passionate about cooking, made every effort to get herself into the SCCS programme.

Thys was impressed by the students' commitment from the word go when the programme started in July 2021. Each came upon the programme in their own unique way – and their enthusiasm and love for learning made them stand out from the rest.

All the effort and hard work pays off in witnessing the growth in each individual from the early stages. When the learners arrive to unfamiliar kitchen equipment, knife skills and many ingredients, all having to learn new and unfamiliar flavours, to see their growth in confidence over time – not just through exposure to culinary skills, but also to the values that Singita upholds as a community – is proof of how transformative this programme is.

LOCAL PARTNER PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY SLT

Further along the life-stages pipeline are additional education interventions, enterprise development and the support of local businesses.

Justicia Digital Learning Campus

GOOD WORK FOUNDATION (GWF)

The SLT supports other local organisations like the Good Work Foundation (GWF). GWF delivers digital-era literacy education and career training via community-driven digital learning centres of excellence. The SLT is the primary sponsor of the Justicia Digital Learning Campus (JDLC), located in the rural village closest to Singita Sabi Sand. Without access to technology, the teachers and learners of many schools in rural areas are at a significant disadvantage compared to their urban counterparts.

In 2022, the SLT also facilitated a donation of nine laptops/tables from the Lenovo group based in the US.

JDLC operates at various stages, ages and levels:



The Open Learning Academy for children from Grade 4 to 8 includes four curriculum streams: Coding and Robotics, Conservation, Creative Arts, and Citizenship.



The Bridging Year Academy creates an access bridge between school and work or further education and training, preparing rural school-leavers for life in modern business environments. A one-year programme, it includes seven formal streams: Employability, Career Interest Profiling, Ready to Work, English, International Computer Driver's License, Media and Online.



The Career-Training Academies provide vocational skills courses and digital literacy tuition to adult learners. There are four options for students to choose from: Hospitality, Conservation, Information Communication Technology (ICT), or Facilitation.



Re-imagining rural education by creating innovative and accessible digital learning centres.



Hustle Economy Programme

A PARTNERSHIP WITH AFRICA FOUNDATION

Entrepreneurship and the development of alternatives to formal employment are key to combatting unemployment.

The Hustle Economy Programme, is an enterprise development project implemented by Africa Foundation Trust South Africa (AFSA) and supported by SLT and other partners. It responds to the challenge of rampant youth unemployment in South Africa.

The Hustle Economy Programme is run by community-based facilitators focusing on emerging micro-entrepreneurs to assist young entrepreneurs build self-sustaining ventures.

Support is provided through four interventions:

- The identification of local cohorts of “hustlepreneurs” - community members who have demonstrated a passion and commitment to developing their own micro-enterprises.

- **Phase 1:** An initial three-month capacity building process, aimed at building basic business and financial literacy skills and refining enterprise concepts through a peer review process.
- **Phase 2:** The facilitation of a nine-month mentorship process aimed at helping the hustlepreneurs to implement these insights into their businesses and work towards a minimum net income target equal to the South African minimum wage.
- The provision of seed funding in the form of a participation grant and loan pool funding.

The “Hustle Economy” provides income opportunities for

1 in 6 South Africans.

This Greater Kruger region, home to 80% of Africa's white rhino population, is at the epicentre of relentless poaching.

Wildlife Protection & Species of Concern

The Sabi Sand Nature Reserve (SSNR), home to Singita Sabi Sand Boulders, Ebony, and Castleton lodges, lies on the western edge of the Kruger National Park. In 1993, the reserve dropped its fences, becoming part of an open reserve system connected to the Kruger National Park and an area renowned for an abundance and diversity of species. The Singita Kruger National Park concession - including the Lebombo and Sweni Lodges - is found in the central area of the Kruger National Park, along the eastern boundary that shares an international fence with Mozambique.



Guardians of Wildlife

This region has seen a dramatic decline in vulture populations, and other large birds of prey, while incidents affecting large carnivores, including lions, leopards, wild dogs, and hyenas, are also sharply on the rise. Dedicated, highly skilled anti-poaching teams remain a cornerstone of wildlife protection in the region.

SLT supports the 24/7 anti-poaching and law-enforcement efforts, which are critical to safeguarding these species.

Well-versed in poaching tactics, the APU field rangers and trackers are trained in fitness, bushcraft, tracking, communication, first aid, and arrest procedures, as well as the use of night gear. They are fully equipped to navigate the continuously changing challenges of locating, apprehending, and deterring would-be poachers.

The escalating wildlife poaching, snaring and poisoning of wildlife is cause for concern.

The Game Changers

OUR K9 (DOG) UNIT

The unit's success is in part due to the use of highly trained K9 dog and ranger teams.

Dogs have been a critical success factor since 2012, an important bolster to the anti-poaching presence, deterrence and offensive, maximising detection, tracking and apprehension.

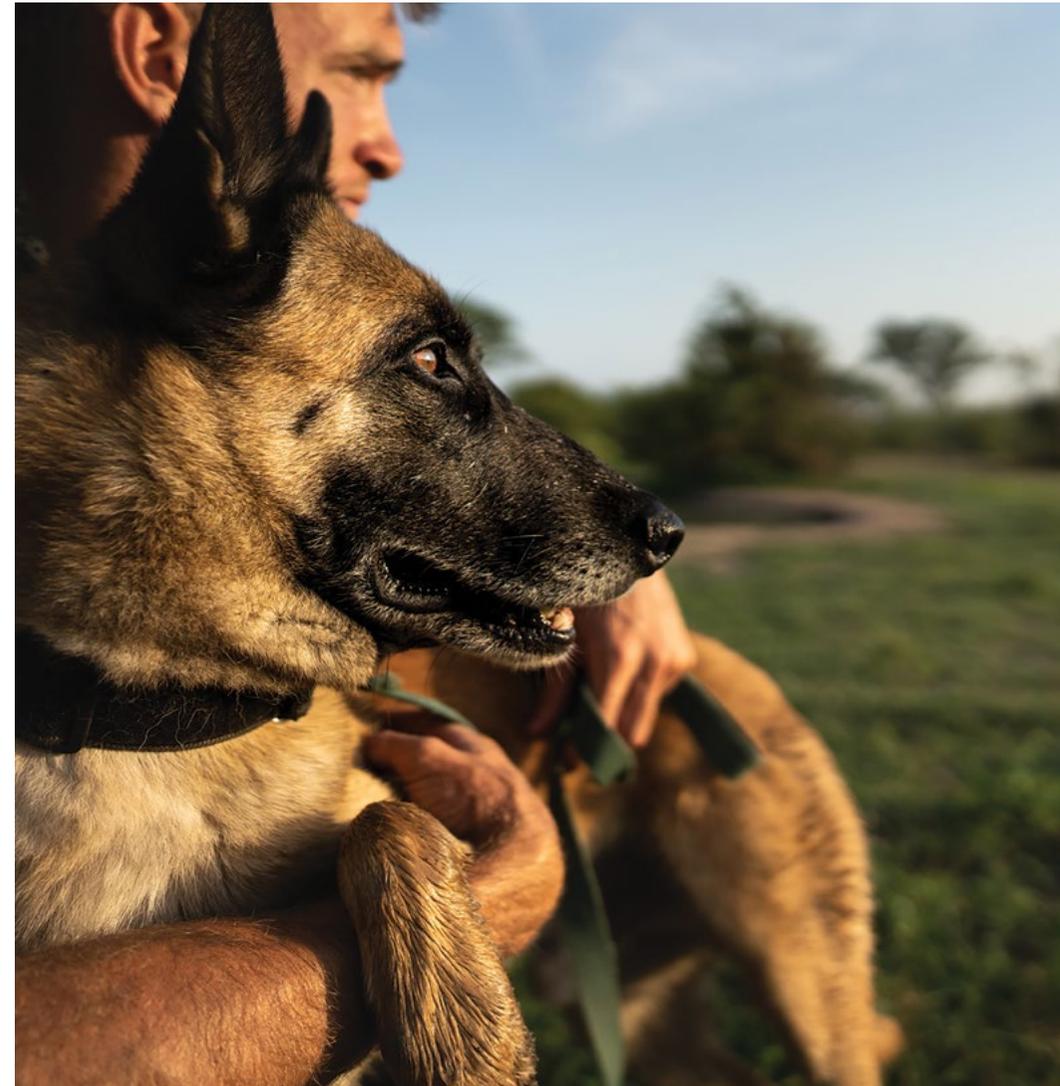
These trained dogs offer exceptional tracking and scenting capabilities and the ability to cover ground rapidly, and have proved a powerful deterring force, producing a remarkable reduction in poaching incidents. This unit's track record demonstrates their effectiveness, with only one rhino lost in the past eight years. This is testament to their tenacity and commitment and a result of expert training, complemented by the SLT support for testing and installing state-of-the-art technology, night-vision equipment, fence-line detection, virtual tracking harnesses for the K9 dogs, and 4x4 all-terrain vehicles for rapid response and increased mobility and off-road tracking.

To remain at the forefront and cutting edge of the ever-evolving tactics used by poachers demands a multi-pronged approach including:

- Elite-level training
- Intelligence gathering
- Innovative technology for surveillance and early warning systems
- Aerial support for rapid mobility
- Boots-on-the-ground ranger patrols

This relies on funding by donors and guests, whose invaluable support ensures our ability to keep testing and implementing the latest innovations in technology, as well as supporting the resource intensive costs of a full-time dedicated, elite team safeguarding our wildlife.

Guests of Singita Sabi Sand can participate in an interactive K9 session and meet with a senior dog handler and dog to learn about the anti-poaching work being done, as well as participate in a routine tracking or scenting exercise to experience first-hand the exceptional talent of this team.





2022 - A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS

Sponsorships and donations made a significant impact:

Singita Sabi Sand



10 trail cameras and mobile solar packs (US\$4,545)



1 drone – DJI Mavic (US\$7,280)



AI thermal surveillance camera on perimeter fence line (US\$14,000)



K9 unit – Rogz pet gear sponsorship (a generous in-kind contribution of leads, collars, harnesses, and balls)

Singita Kruger National Park



ATV trade in and upgrade replacement (US\$10,000)



Ops costs – service/maintenance and repairs (US\$1,539)



1 Handheld GPS (US\$606)



1 night-vision drone (DJI Mavic Advanced Enterprise) (US\$7,280)



3 trail cameras (US\$1,363)



Field rangers (US\$1,212)

This support was made possible with generous guest donations and proceeds from the K9 guest experiences.

Species of Concern

RHINO

Previously home to 80% of Africa's rhino population, South Africa is the epicentre of rhino poaching in Africa, showing an alarming 75% decline in the population in the last decade. The mounting pressure to protect this species requires a multipronged conservation strategy, implemented by various conservation partners, to prevent poaching and to stabilise, and wherever possible grow, the remaining population.

This includes 24/7 protection through the anti-poaching units, as well as the interim support for rhino dehorning; and the rescue and rehabilitation of orphaned rhino calves, if found after a poaching incident. SLT continues to support all these approaches in a concerted effort to protect and bolster the Greater Kruger rhino population.

The Greater Kruger Park rhino dehorning project

SLT has supported the funding of the strategic dehorning of rhinos in both the Kruger National Park and Sabi Sand Nature Reserve. This is a drastic but necessary interim measure to reduce and deflect the sustained poaching pressure on the rhino population in this Greater Kruger Park region, an area that remains at the epicentre of organised crime syndicates' poaching efforts.



Recent figures show that poaching pressure has declined by 45% in 2022/early 2023.

WHY DEHORNING?

Rhino dehorning is part of a multipronged approach to the Greater Kruger Park Rhino Conservation Management Strategy:

- This region was traditionally Africa's stronghold for rhino – home to 80% of the white rhino population, now at the epicentre of a poaching crisis.
- 2021 – Kruger National Park (the internationally renowned national park in South Africa) took the decision to dehorn its rhino population.

Their GOAL: to deflect the escalating poaching pressure to maintain a stable, growing population of rhino as a viable population.

- Dehorning is a short- to medium-term intervention to reduce the poaching pressure on the current rhino population to protect breeding cows and dominant bulls and to maintain overall reproductive potential supporting a stable or growing population of rhino.
- This is one of the only species where the part removed (i.e. the horn) can grow back fully over time.
- By the end of 2022, the KNP and SSNR have both completed about 98% of initial dehorning, now focussing their efforts on annual maintenance trimming of the horn regrowth (every 12-18 months).

SLT has partnered with the South African National Parks (SANParks Kruger Park team) to offer a VIP Safari with Purpose experience for our guests interested in playing a role in ensuring the future of our rhino.

98%
of initial dehorning completed

While enabling the anti-poaching and ranger teams to continually focus their resources on containing the hotspot regions, SLT will continue to support the annual maintenance trimming of rhino horns that regrow at a rate of 5-10cm a year, for as long as it is necessary to protect and stabilise the existing population of rhino across the Greater Kruger region.

In 2022, SLT raised just over US\$242,121 to support the dehorning of rhino across the Greater Kruger region:

2022 - KNP & SSNR Rhino dehorning:

A once-off donation from SLT to support the procurement of veterinary supplies and aerial helicopter hire (US\$29,091)

KNP "Safari with Purpose" donations: (US\$208,485)

Sabi Sand Nature Reserve (SSNR) dehorning (US\$4,545)



THE STORY OF MAVIC

Heartbreak and Hope

The Greater Kruger National Park, experiencing relentless poaching pressure, must often mount rescue operations for orphaned calves left vulnerable when their mothers are ruthlessly killed.

After eight years of no rhino lost in Singita Sabi Sand, in late August 2022, a rhino cow was poached and her seven-month-old calf left abandoned. This led to a well-coordinated rescue by the anti-poaching teams across the Sabi Sand Nature Reserve. The calf was found in the late afternoon, with fading daylight making it impossible to mount a helicopter rescue. The anti-poaching teams remained with him throughout the night, monitoring him with DJI Mavic drones to keep scavengers at bay. At first light, a helicopter and veterinary team safely sedated him, gave him infield treatment, and then transported him to a well-established rhino sanctuary. Mavic, named after the drones that kept him safe all night, is a heartbreaking reminder of the devastating impact of poaching.

Mavic's recovery, rehabilitation and ultimate rewilding involves a multi-year process. In the best hands, he is undertaking this recovery and rewilding journey at the Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary (CFW), a rehabilitation centre set up near the Kruger National Park to provide emergency care and long-term rewilding of all orphaned rhino calves in the region.

SLT is covering the multi-year costs of care to support Mavic's rehabilitation and rewilding journey.

Through the generous support of individual guests, and other donors and organisations, the SLT has raised the full funding required to sponsor his care for the next three to four years.

Mavic's story – a journey of recovery and re-integration with other rhino orphans – is a testament to the tireless efforts of those at the forefront of saving a species.

It takes a range of partners, our dedicated 24/7 anti-poaching teams, field rangers, helicopter pilots and wildlife veterinary teams, and a remarkable team and many volunteers at the Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary – all working to save many of Africa's vulnerable species.

Unfortunately, Mavic won't be the last orphan calf to need help. The aim is to grow the SLT sponsorship to not only see Mavic's rehabilitation through to his eventual release into the wild, but to continue to support the rehabilitation and rewilding of other rhino orphans to ensure every life is given the best chance possible of survival.



LEOPARDS

Despite inhabiting the most widespread range of habitats, leopards are among the most persecuted big cats in the world. And while it's often assumed that their conservation status is secure, illegal hunting, habitat loss, and the bushmeat trade severely impact their numbers.

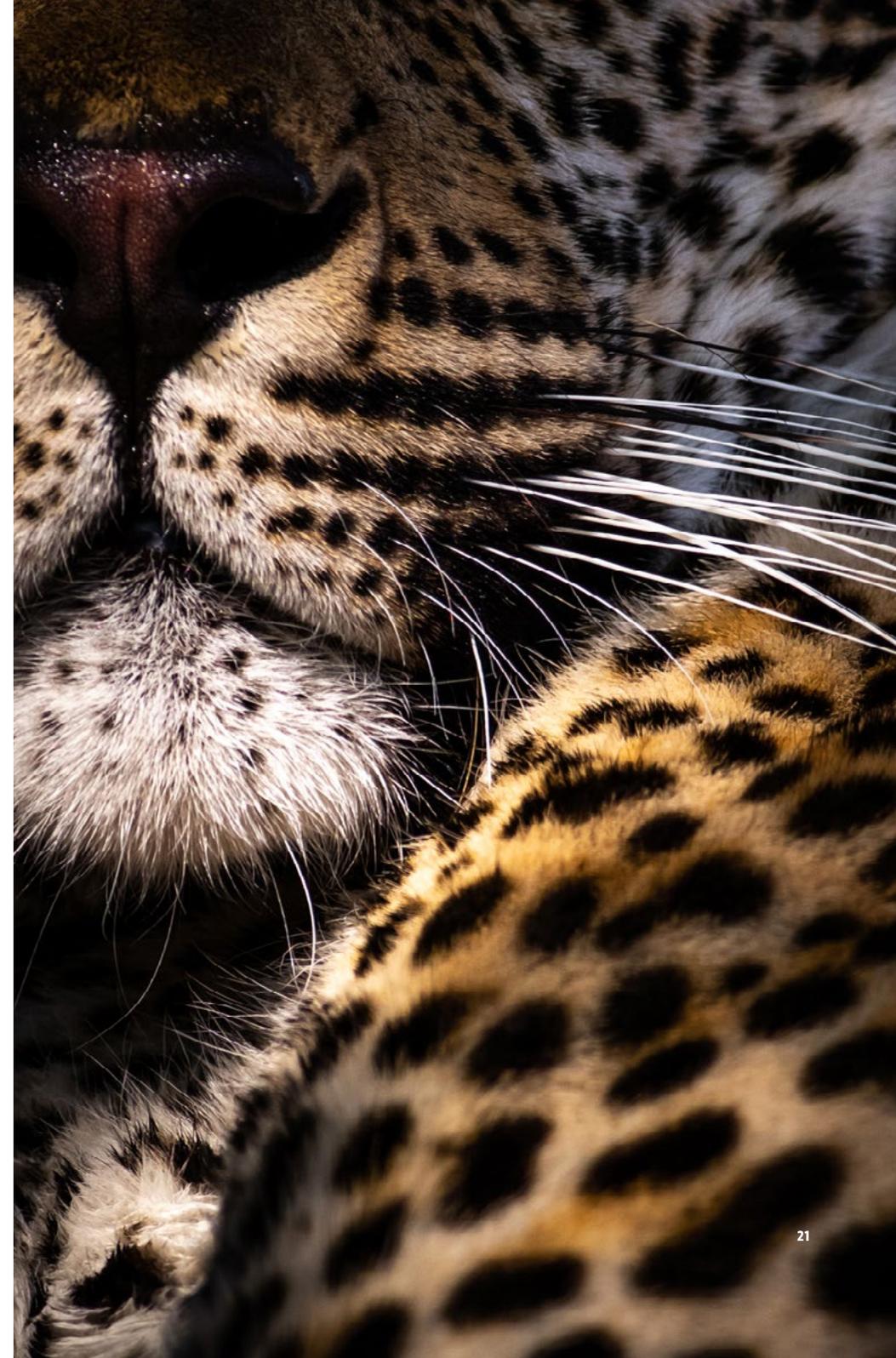
Panthera Leopard Research: Using science to restore and protect leopard populations

The scientists at Panthera - the world's leading wild cat conservation organisation - are dedicated to understanding where sustainable leopard populations currently exist or can be restored and implementing strategies to reduce leopard killings. Their efforts focus on monitoring leopard population trends, stopping the illicit fur trade, reducing human-induced conflict, stabilising and increasing prey populations, and reducing unsustainable legal trophy hunting.

Sabi Sand Leopard Project – a global flagship in leopard conservation

Launched in 2009, the Sabi Sand Leopard Project is the most extensive and longest-running global leopard research programme to date. Boasting a density of one leopard per 12km², it is set in a global flagship area with one of the world's most stable and best-protected leopard populations.

A well-protected environment and sensitive game-viewing practices have ensured an extremely relaxed demeanour in the leopards in the Sabi Sand Reserve. The project harnesses this relaxed nature - as well as the knowledge and experience of expert field guides in the region - to convert daily sightings into high-quality data, which is critical to inform leopard ecology and conservation strategies in South Africa and beyond.





Panthera has also:

- Gained unique insights into the spatial organisation, foraging behaviour, and the dispersal of leopards
- Harnessed advances in DNA technology & forensic analysis for anti-trafficking operations and to augment leopard life histories and develop genetic profiling.

The SLT supports Panthera through:



Funding support for research and monitoring.



Singita field guides' assistance with population monitoring, participation in the collation of citizen sightings, photography, observations, and support with ongoing and new research.



Singita field guides in the Sabi Sand also collect the scat (faeces) of known leopards for Panthera.

No other leopard population in the world can be so comprehensively sampled. This information helps the Panthera researchers to track family lineages and gain a greater understanding of the spatial-temporal behaviour of leopards to inform the development of broader conservation policies across the continent.



The long-term data helps to identify the patterns and the processes that govern leopard population trends over generations.

In less than 15 years, the Sabi Sand Leopard Project data shows:

932
leopard life histories have been compiled since 1979

508
litters of leopard cubs have been documented

14,230
leopard kills have been recorded

112,180
unique leopard sightings have been logged

Poisoning and Snaring

RAPTOR AND CARNIVORE CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH (ENDANGERED WILDLIFE TRUST)

The Greater Kruger Park Region represents one of the most raptor- and carnivore-rich and diverse landscapes on the continent.

It is also an area that is currently experiencing concerning declines in many threatened raptor and carnivore populations, driven by a wide range of threats. Vulture and large carnivore populations are rapidly disappearing from the landscape, mainly due to poisoning and snaring.

With seven of the 11 vulture species found in Africa classified as critically endangered or endangered, their populations are suffering a rapid decline. As scavengers, vultures are vital for cleaning ecosystems. However, they are also extremely vulnerable to poisoning when they feed on carcasses laced with lethal pesticides set by those who snare predators such as lions and leopards for their bones, body parts and pelts.

In the Greater Kruger National Park region, the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) collaborates with the Kruger Park and other reserves, to ensure vultures' survival, and safeguard lion and wild dog populations. Gathering important data about densities, demographics, habitat preferences, and activity areas, they undertake real-time monitoring of these species and respond to threats such as poisoning and poaching.

SLT supports the EWT Large Raptor, Wildlife Poisoning Rapid Response and Carnivore Conservation Programmes through funding and Singita field guides are trained to assist with rapid response to poisoning events and population monitoring.



80% decline in SA's vulture
populations over past 10 years



Furthermore, as part of its aim to offer secure habitat strongholds on its concessions and reserves, Singita will align with the Vulture Safe Zone Alliance. Vulture Safe Zones create safe spaces for vultures to breed, forage and thrive; and reduce threats such as persecution, poisoning, powerline collisions and habitat loss.

Trained as rapid responders for vulture poisoning incidents, Singita's field guides swiftly report suspected poisonings, to ensure affected vultures are rapidly and safely transported to facilities for treatment and rehabilitation as soon possible.

They also support population monitoring, continued participation in the citizen science collation of sightings of tagged vultures/collared wild dogs and lions, photography, and observations.

By supporting the EWT's research, monitoring and conservation projects through sponsorships, SLT is contributing to collaborative efforts that address raptor and carnivore population declines in this region.



2,300:
estimate of remaining
wild lions in SA



The wild dog is one of the
**world's most
endangered mammals**

LOOKING FORWARD - 2023

The success of our programmes in 2022 is due to the ongoing support and encouragement from so many friends and supporters of the Singita Lowveld Trust, which has made it possible to continue to scale the reach and grow the impact of these partnerships. We thank every individual that made this possible.

People and meaningful long-term community partnerships remain central to our vision and to achieving our goals, ensuring neighbouring rural communities living adjacent to these protected areas derive benefit and value from them, while also enhancing the management of the surrounding communal areas through sustainable rangeland and responsible natural resource management.

The existing strategic partnerships aim to support the direct needs and future aspirations of these local partners, ensuring that they benefit beyond traditional job creation. This includes local supply chain sourcing and procuring of arts, crafts, fresh produce and supporting the growth of local rural economies through enterprise development and use of local service providers.

Communities that derive benefit and value from these protected areas and surrounding catchments are often proud conservation ambassadors and long-term custodians supporting the persistence of these remarkable wilderness areas and wildlife for generations to come.



HOW TO SUPPORT:

Should you wish to support any of these SLT programmes or partnerships, please click on the following link to the SLT website for more information:

<https://www.singitalowveldtrust.org/>

DONATE

