



FROM
Ruth's
DESK

Reflecting on 2024/2025

A YEAR OF GROWTH AND MILESTONES ACHIEVED

Dear friend of the ASISA Foundation

As we close our February 2025 year-end and look back on 2024, we're incredibly proud of what we've achieved together. All our programmes have remained relevant, responsive and powerful in addressing the needs of our beneficiaries. A highlight has been our ability to provide useful and timely insights to the market about the new Two-pot Retirement System which came into effect in September 2024. Our strategies to scale both our **Retirement Fund Trustee Education (RFTE)** programme and **WageWise** enabled us to reach significantly more beneficiaries compared to prior years, with growing demand from union members. By September, **WageWise** had reached over **100 000 beneficiaries** since its launch in 2015 through in-person workshops across all provinces – an incredible milestone! This was made possible through the annual and growing commitment of our strategic partner and anchor funder, the Sanlam Foundation, together with funding from a number of other contributors to the ASISA Foundation.

The success of the RFTE programme was made possible through our collaborative partnership with Ninety One, together with pooled contributions received from numerous other asset managers. The programme reached 3 802 trustees, with about 50% being organised labour and union trustees. Additionally, 30% of all trustees participated in the Two-pot Retirement System workshop, while 19% attended the Foundation's Retirement Fund Trustees preparatory workshop, in compliance with the Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA).

'Let's Talk Two-pot' radio campaign



In September and October 2024, we launched a four-week financial education radio campaign, 'Let's Talk Two-pot', focused on the Two-pot Retirement System. It aired on Power FM, Gagasi FM and Heart FM, and brought retirement planning awareness to an audience of over 300 000 listeners. The campaign featured weekly discussions on retirement, savings and investment, with insights from financial planners. We also launched a 12-week campaign on our Facebook page to share informative snippets related to the radio campaign and reach a broader audience. Evaluations showed positive shifts in listeners' understanding of the Two-pot Retirement System and attitudes towards saving, with 65% feeling more motivated to plan for retirement. The campaign was successful in increasing awareness, but highlighted the need for further financial education interventions and to promote more proactive retirement planning.

Build Up: Free State close-out event



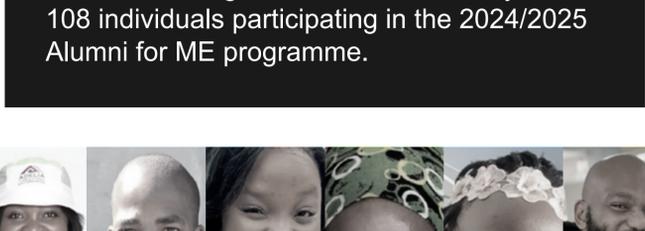
February 2025 saw us hosting a strategic Free State close-out event with the **South African Housing Co-operative Association (SAHCA)**, bringing together key national stakeholders, including representatives from the office of the Premier, the Department of Small Business Development and the National Housing Finance Corporation. The engagement highlighted the power of financial literacy to equip community members to better manage funding received from other agencies.



This event followed the very successful delivery of our **Build Up** programme for members of the Free State Secondary Housing Co-operative (a member of SAHCA) across 10 towns in the Free State. The Wellness Days incorporated in this programme facilitated strategic collaborations with national agencies such as the Financial Planning Institute of Southern Africa (FPI), the South African Revenue Service (SARS) and the National Credit Regulator to provide individual insights to participants concerning their financial status and well-being.



A new chapter for entrepreneurs



We launched our Alumni Programme for Micro-Entrepreneurs (Alumni for ME) on 20 November 2024 during Global Entrepreneurship Week.

It was a celebration of growth and ambition, with over 60 graduates from our **FLAME** and **L+EARN #BIZ** with over 60 graduates for small business owners coming together to mark this exciting milestone. The alumni programme is designed to keep the entrepreneurial spirit alive by offering:

- Engaging virtual workshops
- Peer-to-peer coaching sessions
- Access to industry experts
- Supply chain and networking opportunities with fellow graduates and stakeholders

Since 2016 we've supported over 460 micro-entrepreneurs. This programme will ensure that the journey doesn't end at graduation. We currently have 108 individuals participating in the 2024/2025 Alumni for ME programme.

L+EARN ends the year on a high

The L+EARN #BIZ 2024 close-out event, held on 27 November 2024, celebrated the entrepreneurial achievements of participants and marked the successful conclusion of the programme.

By the end of the programme, participants demonstrated a strong commitment to applying their learnings to their businesses. Across all four cycles, there was a 31% increase in the use of budgets and financial record-keeping, and a 37% increase in the adoption of the programme's pricing and costing tools.

100% of participants rated the programme positively, with 79% describing it as life-changing. Additionally, 90% reported improved financial well-being and increased entrepreneurial confidence.

Looking ahead to 2025/2026

We're excited about the prospects for this new year. We've already received so much affirmation from our existing key sponsors, partners and collaborators, with a continuous call for us to do more and to expand our reach even further through the outcomes we produce and the impact we achieve.

The lessons we've learned from scaling our programmes during 2024 will guide our efforts to strengthen and refine all our teams' operational capacity and internal processes as we journey through this growth phase of our organisation. We're focused on building a sustainable model that can expand even further in the years to come. To do this, we invite you to join us, stay with us and engage with us, as partners and co-creators of a society that's financially more capable – and thereby able to be more financially resilient, financially included and financially well.

All financial contributions made to the ASISA Foundation can immediately be recognised for Consumer Financial Education (CFE) or Socio-Economic Development (SED) points on your BEE Scorecard, and you can have the comfort that your funding is well governed, spent in accordance with compliance requirements and achieving its intended purpose of positively impacting society.



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