



## Case study

# Upskilling educators at Sicelo Primary School

Education is a fundamental human right and is crucial for the achievement of sustainable development. To address educational challenges in our surrounding communities, our Starch operations have partnered with Sicelo Primary School and Brainwave to empower teachers.

In the pilot phase of this project Brainwave assisted with curriculum and in-class support for the grade R, 1, 2 and 3 classes at Sicelo Primary School, in Meyerton near one of our Starch Mills. This benefited 21 teachers and 848 learners in the first year. The purpose was to equip the teachers to improve their English and maths teaching techniques, motivate them in their approach and attitudes and thus improving learners' results. In addition, weekly extra classes in maths and English were conducted for the grade 3 learners.

After the success of the first year, the next phase offered academic support to seven teachers in mathematics and grade 4 and 5 English first additional language subjects. In addition, grade R support for school readiness was addressed, benefitting the three grade R teachers at the school. As part of the academic support, teachers received resources in the form of manuals and guides, learner books and readers and were equipped with daily lesson plans and pace setters to ensure they kept up to date and made the required curriculum progress. They have been supported by assigned mentors who are seasoned educators, most of whom are now retired. The teachers attended various training sessions throughout the year, covering topics such as lesson planning, making practical teaching resources, assessments, creative writing and number concepts. The teachers also underwent brain profile testing to assess their dominant learning preferences, thinking and communication styles. They each received in-classroom support for two hours per month from their mentor.

Learners were assisted with remedial classes where required, at both the grade R and grade 4 and 5 levels, with remedial kits provided to teachers. A reading programme for all grade 4 learners aimed to improve English vocabulary and comprehension was also introduced. Baseline assessments of the teacher's learner's results were conducted and regular evaluations done thereafter to measure progress and determine the impact of the project on their results, and to identify areas requiring further focus in terms of teacher training.

An estimated 508 grade 4 and 5 learners and 97 grade R learners benefitted from this programme for the 2018 school year. Another initiative during the year was a career development workshop for the 210 grade 7 learners, focusing on easing the transition from primary school to high school. The initiatives were positively welcomed by the teachers, the principal and the school governing body and are progressing well to date. With the focus on upskilling the teachers, the benefits of this programme will be enjoyed by many learners in the years to come.