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Plettenberg Bay
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2025 has been a year for the books, and probably the busiest year for Born in Africa to date! The workload executed by the Born in Africa team and volunteers in 2025 is mammoth, so one does not know where to begin! We would like to start by paying homage to each sponsor who has played a role in supporting our program this year, because without your support, none of what you are about to read, would have been possible!

Uniforms

Our school year begins in January, and we fondly remember our uniform drive this year when our team gathered in full force to form our mobile school uniform drive. Thanks to our incredible team of staff, thanks to Born in Africa Meetjesland and volunteers, we were able to hand out uniforms in The Craggs, Green Valley, Wittedrift, Kranshoek, Harkerville, New Horizons, Kwanokuthula and Bossiesgif to all 340 learners in our program- coincidentally, these are the areas we work in. All dapper in their new uniforms and shiny shoes; our school year began.

Mentorship & education outings

Each day after school, our 5 mentors waited eagerly to host carefully crafted group sessions. This year, our group sessions were based on what the learners were interested in. Can you believe that Study methods were top of the list! We also equipped our learners to understand more about Protective behaviors. Keeping memories is a very sacred experience and revisiting those memories are now possible because of Isabelle and her brilliant idea to guide each Born in Africa child the art of constructing a memory box from scratch. This year's epic holiday outings included a visit to Natures Valley where our kids learned about our precious freshwater biome of the Groot Rivier as well as the rich diverse ocean life the rockpools the Tsitsikamma Coastal Park harbors. Our annual Gr 12 visit to Oudtshoorn was an absolute treat! We visited the world famous Congo caves and spent the afternoon meandering through the Congo Wildlife ranch where we had up-close and personal experiences with Cheetahs, crocodiles, otters, giant bats, birds of prey and many other creatures.

Education camps

This year, we were incredibly lucky to host several leadership camps at Outward Bound, Sedgfield. Our Gr 10 and 11 learners were treated to a Career Guidance/ Personal leadership curated camp at the camp of Outward Bound. The aim of the camp was to foster an understanding in each participant of the importance of questioning one's future. Under the professional guidance of the Outward Bound facilitators, along with the input

from our UK chair Nick and Penny, learners explored important matters such as why we think the way we do, where we want to be in 10 years, how we will get there and when we need to decide. The younger generation of Gr 8 and 9 learners were treated to a similar challenging experience based on a “Leadership” theme. Outward Bound’s activities which included the “Berlin Wall”, “Jacobs Ladder”, “Spiderweb”, the Canoe experience, camping, hiking, all had so much relevance to the topics we selected for this year, and they delivered! Tired, but hearts filled with motivation, our kids thoroughly enjoyed camping in 2025! Our grade 2 to grade 5 learners were treated on an adventure camp next to the Bitou River. They loved the sleepover in the tents.

Career Guidance & Tertiary students

Career guidance is vital to the success of one’s future and this we already begin instilling the minds of our Gr 10-12 pupils, throughout their school careers. Whether they work in group form or one on one sessions with our career guidance councillor Belinda, their mentors, volunteers and other staff members, by the time they reach Gr 12, they have a very clear understanding of what study field they would like to start pursuing during their tertiary education experience, which forms part of Born in Africa’s mission. This year, we supported a total number of 42 tertiary students, all studying at various tertiary institutions, which include universities and colleges across the Eastern and Western Cape. Each year, we are extremely lucky to experience the graduates concluding their studies and stepping into the big world and onto the job market.

Volunteers

We are extremely grateful to our group of volunteers of 2025 who have dedicated themselves to enrich the lives of our 385 learners. By working hand in hand with the WCED and alongside our mentors, volunteers assisted with academic, sports, cultural and personal developmental support. Workshops where our kids learned how to cook, budget, play soccer, woodwork, experience the world through volunteer classes, all formed part of this incredible partnership with our volunteers who give up a minimum of three months to a year of their time, travelling from Europe to our little coastal gem, we call home. Several of our volunteers also join our program to complete their internships social work, socio-educational care work, applied psychology and much more. We are so blessed to have their expertise and without our volunteers, nothing would be possible. This article pays homage to them. During their stay at Born in Africa this year, a group of volunteers raised funds and supplied each learner in the Born in Africa program with his or her very own water bottle. What a very generous gesture, one which we will always remember very fondly!

Academic support & food provided

Academic support for our children is a daily activity which takes place each afternoon at our centres and classrooms where our children come to feel safe. Once they have enjoyed lunch or a snack they complete important tasks such as homework. We are so grateful to our sponsors for providing healthy meal options. With tummies full, our kids can focus on their “Slimkoppe” books, IXL online program and other Mathematics assistance we provide. In 2025, we hosted an award-winning times table competition for all the primary school learners in Born in Africa. They spend months in preparation for the big finale, held at the Kranshoek BIA centre. Events such as this, not only cements the foundation of mathematics, but does so in such a fun way!

Born in Africa also boasts 2 extensive libraries and multiple reading nooks where our bookworms love to lose themselves to the art of writing.

Medical support

This is also often where we can pick up who's eyesight is problematic, and the solution is found in eye testing and where prescription glasses needed are provided.

The difference that our medical support program has made to more than 50 learners in 2025 is life changing. Not only have we literally assisted in our children seeing the world clearly now, but we have also helped children who needed dental work and emergency medical care for various conditions. A healthy child is a focused child and where we can make a difference to assist, we do thanks to our medical support system.

Swimming, surfing and woodwork skills

Thanks to our swimming pool and coach Pierrette at BIA, we have been able to swim throughout 2025. Our indoor pool had its full 1st year of service, bringing such an important life skill to the child. To be able to swim, opens so many doors to a young person. Not only are you able to swim, you can visit the beach without fear, but you also have the possibility of future employment and most importantly- you have the gift of possibly saving another person's life, who cannot swim! Our Born in Africa swimming program, given the fact that we live at the coast, has opened the opportunity for Born in Africa to form part of the Adopt a Swimmer program where advanced swimmers gain the experience and be selected to form part of the future lifesaving swimming program. We are also very active with the Development Surfing program and this year alone 2 of our surfers participated in the National championship.

Another skill we worked on this year was the woodwork skills. All primary and high school learners learned to work with drills, hammers, burning pens, etc. Over 150 memory boxes were made. A skill they will carry with for the rest of their lives.

Dream project & extra support

Our Dream in Africa project realised a huge number of dreams in 2025, adding to the quality of life and giving children the opportunity to dream bigger than they thought they ever could! Thank you to all our dream sponsors who have worked so tirelessly at raising the necessary funding to promote this. We have also to thank our sponsors who have provided countless food parcels to families without food.

Special fundraising projects are held each year for a specific goal, this year was no different. Each child received a pair of woolly winter pyjamas, a vest, socks and stationery as a token of our appreciation for our learner's hard work and ongoing dedication to the program as well as their personal development. Thank you to our sponsors who worked so hard, at ensuring we were able to realise this project.

Wittedrift high study bursary students

We have a special bursary system, very dear to our heart, where we reward our Gr 7's learners who work extremely hard at their academic career. They strive for the opportunity to receive a full scholarship to attend Wittedrift Highschool, the small school with the big heart! There our learners enjoy the benefit of attending boarding school so they can focus on their studies, participate in sports and cultural activities. Hard work pays off, and we are in the game of rewarding greatness! Born in Africa has established

its very own chess club at boarding school and this year we established the Rotary Interact club where our boarders give back to the community by organising projects to help the less fortunate. See how the Born in Africa program works in full circle? Our kids who have experienced the joy of receiving, start sharing that gift of giving at school level already! Leaders are born during this experience at Wittedrift high school where many of our students form part of the school's leadership team each year. Our kids shine on stage during cultural activities and perform at top level on the sport field. Thank you, Godparents, and sponsors, for backing our group of 43 bursary recipients of 2025.

Social media

Thanks to Veronique, we can navigate our way very successfully on social media and reach so many people across the globe daily. Please feel free to visit our newly refurbished website at www.borninafrica.org or Facebook-Born in Africa, Youtube and Instagram- borninafricaza. We look forward to seeing you virtually!

Thank you

We would like to pay tribute to our staff members in Plettenberg Bay who work tirelessly each day to be there for our children, thanks to the volunteers who bring joy to our kids' faces each day. We are incredibly grateful to our Board members in South Africa, Belgium, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom for your unwavering support and your guidance.

We would like to use this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones a blessed festive season. We would like to thank you as sponsors for enabling us to work with these amazing children and we endeavor to do all we can to progress the education and personal development of the children.

Yours in community service, The Born in Africa team!