



 Building 2 Jacaranda Place, Western Woods Office Park,
145 Western Service Road, Woodmead, 2191

 +27 11 262 7700

 info@seriti.org.za

 www.seriti.org.za

Press Release

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Seriti's 3rd Annual Partner Networking Event Unlocks Collaboration for Impactful ECD Initiatives.

Johannesburg, 21 May 2024 – Seriti Institute, a leading non-profit organisation dedicated to building resilient communities, hosted its 3rd aRe Bapaleng Annual Partner Networking Event on 17 May 2024.

aRe Bapaleng, a unique ECD and Parental Support programme launched in 2020 with the generous support of Standard Bank SA, is making a significant difference. It aims to empower parents and caregivers in marginalised communities by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to foster a nurturing environment for their children's early learning and development.

“Early childhood is a critical stage that lays the foundation for a child's future success”, said Rebotile Matoane, aRe Bapaleng Programme Lead. “By equipping parents and caregivers with the tools and support they need, we can create a ripple effect that positively impacts entire communities”.

The event was a success thanks to the active participation of key stakeholders, including government representatives, private sector partners, civil society organisations, and community leaders. Their presence and contributions were instrumental in exploring collaborative efforts to support Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Parental Support initiatives.

The event was not just a gathering but a platform for meaningful discussions. It featured panel discussions and expert forums that delved into various aspects of ECD, including public employment opportunities, building caregiver networks, and leveraging partnerships for sustainable impact. These discussions were designed to bring about real change in the ECD landscape. Participants had the opportunity to engage in networking sessions, exchange ideas, and explore potential collaborations.



Board Members: Wandile Sihlobo (Chairperson), Sakhile Masuku (Chair of Audit Committee), Shenilla Mohamed, Mmadika Moloi, Pam Yako and Juanita Pardesi (CEO)
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“Collaboration is at the heart of our approach”, said Seriti CEO Juanita Pardesi. “By fostering partnerships and leveraging the strengths of various stakeholders, we can amplify our impact and create a more comprehensive support system for early childhood development”.

The panel discussions delved into strategies for building caregiver networks, sharing best practices, and addressing challenges faced by parents and caregivers in underserved communities. Experts from organisations and government, including Standard Bank Tutuwa Community Foundation, Standard Bank SA, Cotlands, The Learning Trust, Year Beyond, DPME, DBE, Grow ECD, and Sesame Workshop, provided valuable insights and shared success stories from their respective initiatives.

Kate Philip (Programme Lead: Presidential Employment Stimulus) highlighted the significance of public employment programmes (PEPs), emphasising that Public Employment not only provides employment opportunities but also creates avenues for social value creation. By supporting initiatives like aRe Bapaleng, we can harness the potential of PEPs to strengthen ECD ecosystems and empower communities.

The event also showcased the aRe Bapaleng Programme's achievements; by April 2024, aRe Bapaleng had reached over 30,314 parents and caregivers, worked with 821 ECD centres, and created over 6,821 work opportunities in ECD through the Social Employment Fund and National Youth Services across all nine provinces of South Africa, impacting the lives of 69,395 children.

As the event concluded, Sandy Dlamini Zhanda, Programme Manager: Seriti Partner, expressed gratitude to the partners and stakeholders, stating, “Together, we can create a brighter future for our children by investing in their early years. This event has reinforced our commitment to fostering partnerships and driving impact in ECD initiatives.”

The 3rd Annual Partner Networking Event solidified Seriti Institute's position as a catalyst for positive social impact, bringing together diverse stakeholders to collaborate and amplify their efforts in nurturing the development of South Africa's youngest citizens.

Seriti is a non-profit organisation established in 2009 to develop resilient communities. Our mission is to help vulnerable people stand on their own two feet so that they can build meaningful lives for themselves and their families. Our approach is collaborative: we work with communities and social partners to help them achieve their goals. We focus on delivering innovative and sustainable solutions that yield a positive socioeconomic impact. This includes technical support, programme management, implementation services, facilitated learning, and the promotion of community-driven change.

For more information about the aRe Bapaleng Programme and Seriti Institute's initiatives, please visit <https://seriti.org.za/> for more information about Seriti and register as a caregiver at <https://arebapaleng.co.za/#/>.

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