



SA's Gender Imbalance Extends to Giving

A salute to women for their support of non-profit organisations this Women's Month

August 2022: Despite earning less than their male counterpartsⁱ and being more likely to be without a jobⁱⁱ, women in South Africa tend to give more than men. According to a recent report by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), 86% of South African women donate to good causes compared with 74% of men, although men are more likely to make larger donations - R1,884 vs R1,256 for womenⁱⁱⁱ.

According to Deb Zelezniak, Chief Executive Officer at the [Santa Shoebox Project \(SSB\)](#), "This imbalance is evident even within the Santa Shoebox database." Of the organisation's 104,000 registered supporters, fewer than 1,500 - or 1% - are men. "In light of these findings, SSB, on behalf of the country's non-profit organisations (NPOs), would like to thank the women of South Africa for their continued support this Women's Month."

Ubuntu remains active in the face of difficulties

She says that women in the country are facing enormous challenges with the rising cost of living due to the higher petrol price and skyrocketing inflation putting further pressure on their already constrained finances. "In fact, a recent study has revealed that they feel more stressed about their financial situation than men^{iv}. Yet, in spite of this, they still choose to give, particularly to charities that focus on children from vulnerable communities and support Early Childhood Development."

"The desire among women to uplift the disadvantaged is amplified when children are involved, being not only those who are most vulnerable but also those with the most potential, which makes the act of giving an investment in the future," explains Zelezniak. "Through donations of time and money, women are taking it upon their shoulders to ensure the protection, the nurturing and the education of children. And this has become cyclical, with former beneficiary children returning to assist the next generation as donors, volunteers, and people of influence."

Sharing the Love

She notes that this spirit of ubuntu is something that has endured even in the face of the pandemic. "For the past two years, while it has been difficult for many to give to strangers when they have been battling to feed their own families, South Africans have remained a giving nation. This is evidenced by the country's ranking among the world's most generous nations rising from 45 to 21^v. In line with this, people have continued to give what they can."

From this idea of doing what you can with what you have, SSB developed its theme for 2022, Share the Love. This year, donors are encouraged to duplicate an item in their box which will enable the beneficiary child to gift that item to a loved one of their own. "This not only empowers the child to be able to give, but also teaches them the joy of giving. After all, doing good feels good and it yields good results."

More help is needed in 2022 and beyond

“Help is needed now more than ever from all South Africans as record-level inflation is driving up the costs of basic necessities which is having a disproportionate impact on the country’s poor and, particularly, their children,” shares Zelezniak.

To this end, 12 000 [Virtual Santa Shoeboxes](#) are being made available year-round, for distribution to underprivileged children living in remote areas of South Africa. Due to the lack of donors in rural areas, these children would otherwise not receive a Santa Shoebox and quite possibly no end-of-year gift at all. These boxes contain a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, facecloth, school supplies, toys, sweets and a PEP voucher redeemable for clothing, as well as books and other age-appropriate extra items.

Additionally, pledges to Santa Shoebox open on 1 September, while [Team Pledges](#) of more than 20 shoeboxes launched on 1 August.

Volunteers are sought to help pack Virtual Santa Shoeboxes over the next two months, as well as to receive and distribute traditional Santa Shoeboxes in October and November.

“South African women are survivors and thrivers. Power rests with the country’s women and we have witnessed first-hand over the past 16 years that the best way to mobilise this is within the charity sector. Many NPOs would not have been able to achieve what they have without their support, and this includes the Santa Shoebox Project,” concludes Zelezniak.

To share the love or for more information, go to <https://santashoebox.org.za>.

ⁱ <https://www.fedusa.org.za/2022/03/08/fedusa-calls-for-gender-pay-transparency-as-the-world-marks-international-womens-day/>

ⁱⁱ https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=14606&gclid=Cj0KCQjwidSWBhDdARIsAloTVb0iIMhnHJOSNTsZqNQ54JJuRJvXVVcl3Q_AKPy0rmxZYDTQVraHNYaAs7BEALw_wcB

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.cafonline.org/docs/default-source/about-us-publications/caf-southern-africa-report-2018-v14.pdf>

^{iv} <https://debtfreedigi.co.za/money-stress-tracker-survey-results/>

^v <https://www.cafsouthernafrica.org/global-study-shows-how-covid-19-upended-charitable-giving-south-africa-however-has-rallied/>

About the Santa Shoebox Project

There are three initiatives within the Santa Shoebox Project:

Traditional Santa Shoebox: Over the last 16 years, 1 077 289 Santa Shoeboxes each containing eight specified items of treats and essentials have been given to underprivileged and socially vulnerable children throughout South Africa and Namibia. From 01 September each year, Santa Shoebox donors choose their beneficiary child/ren by name, age and gender and are given the child's clothing size. Each personalised shoebox reaches the very child for whom it was pledged. Using the Santa Shoebox app, donors are able to track their shoebox from the moment it is pledged to the magical moment it is handed to the child.

Virtual Santa Shoebox: These shoeboxes are purchased online by donors and are available year-round, meeting the needs of donors who live too far from drop-off points, are too busy to shop or are perhaps Covid-vulnerable. Components are chosen by the donor on the Santa Shoebox website, the shoeboxes are packed by the Santa Shoebox Team and delivered to children attending far-flung rural facilities. A Virtual Santa Shoebox contains the eight specified items, as well as additional items, such as masks, a lunchbox and books. A Virtual Santa Shoebox costs R450 plus an optional delivery fee of R30.

Santa Shoebox Legacy: All Santa Shoebox Project operating costs are covered by corporate sponsors. Privately donated funds have been accruing under the SSB Legacy Fund which are now being used to bring permanent change to the lives of Santa Shoebox beneficiary children and the impoverished communities in which they live

Fiduciary information: As a Level One Contributor to B-BBEE, the Santa Shoebox Project earns 100 points on the generic scorecard, and with Section 18A status, is able to provide a tax-deductible receipt in recognition of donations. The Project is an initiative of the JOG Trust (IT2671/2009). The Trust is registered as a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO-930031301), a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO 102-098) and holds a current ICPR in support of 100% SED compliance.

Social media:

Facebook: /SantaShoebox

Twitter: @SantaShoebox

Instagram: /santashoebox

YouTube: The Santa Shoebox Project

Pinterest: /santashoebox