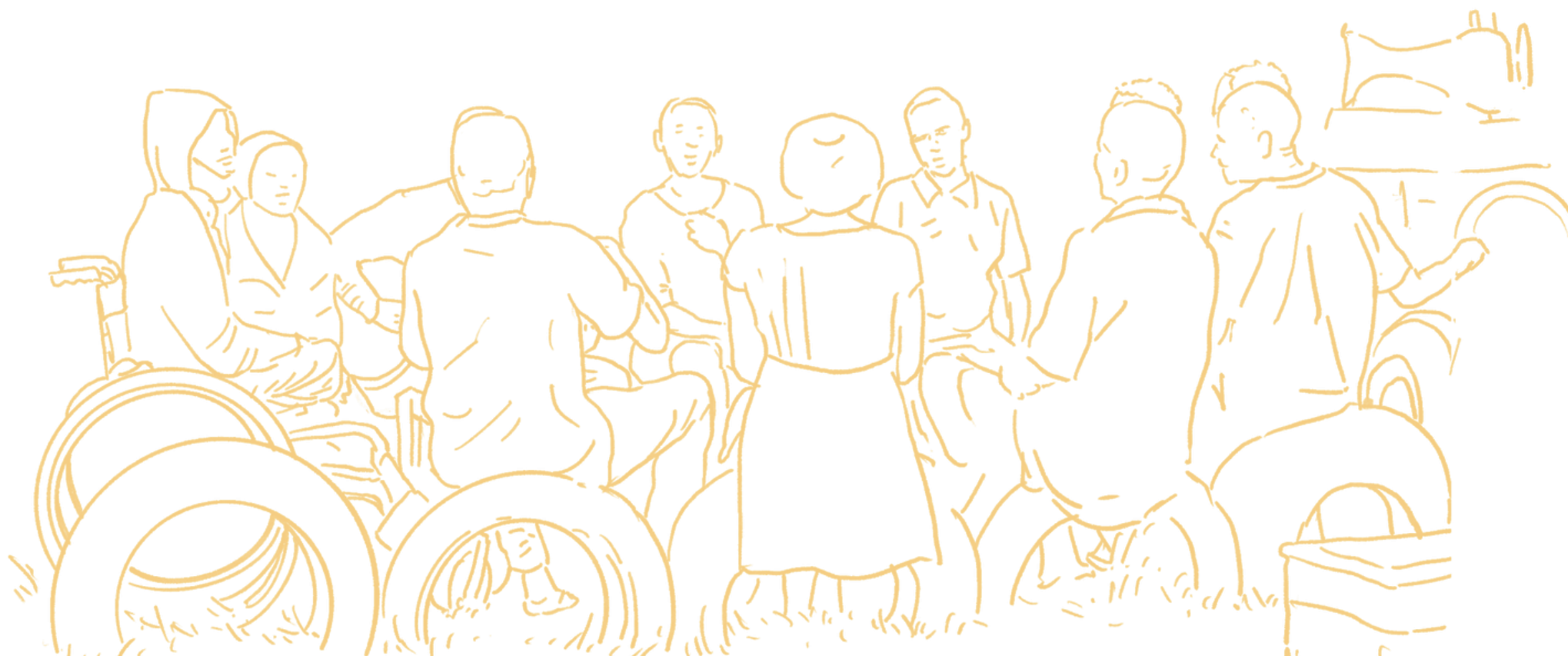




4th Cycle Impact Report - June 2024

on a journey of reimagining education



Contents

1. About the Matibi Nook Hub(MTB)
2. Three years of Matibi Nook Hub(MTB)
3. Cycle overview
4. Pedagogical impacts
5. Learner participation, goals and observations
6. Learner stories
7. Visual treats
8. The community life
9. Stakeholder engagement
10. The team



About Matibi Nook Hub(MTB)

In the heart of Matibi, **for three years** the Matibi Nook Hub has been a beacon of hope, a sanctuary for **learning and growth**. From its inception, it has nurtured dreams, turning them into tangible realities. Through four cycles of **perseverance and dedication**, the Matibi Nook Hub had birthed **small business prototypes**: welding sparks flying, ovens baking delicious treats, piglets squealing in delight, and poultry bustling with life. These ventures not only provided avenues for income but also instilled a sense of purpose and entrepreneurship within the community.

Yet, the Nook Hub's mission transcended mere economic prosperity. It delved into the depths of human resilience, offering **Psychosocial Support (PSS) life skills camps** to nourish the souls of the community. In a world plagued by uncertainty, these sessions became beacons of light, guiding hearts through the darkest of times. With each passing cycle, the Matibi Nook Hub witnessed a surge in learners during school holidays. It is a testament to the growing realization of the **power of alternative learning**—a tool wielded to transform lives and shape destinies.

However, amidst pressing **environmental challenges**, from rampant deforestation to soil infertility and acute water scarcity, the hub embraced a new initiative: **permaculture**. Together with eager learners, it embarked on a journey to cultivate sustainable farming practices. With each seed planted, they dared to envision a greener Matibi—a landscape not only teeming with vegetation but also thriving with harmony between **humanity and nature**. Thus, the Matibi Nook Hub is more than just a space; it is a beacon of hope, illuminating the path towards a brighter, greener future for all who called Matibi home.

Three Years of Matibi Nook Hub

Three years ago, we embarked on a transformative journey, shifting our focus from merely learning skills to **building a dynamic platform** for budding entrepreneurs. This strategic evolution has opened up **long-term engagement opportunities** for our learners, fostering deeper involvement in their entrepreneurial pursuits.

The idea behind the strategy was that in the first year, our learners delve into a broad array of interests, cycling through various fields to uncover potential business opportunities. This exploration phase would equip them with a **diverse skill set and the insights** needed to pinpoint promising ventures.

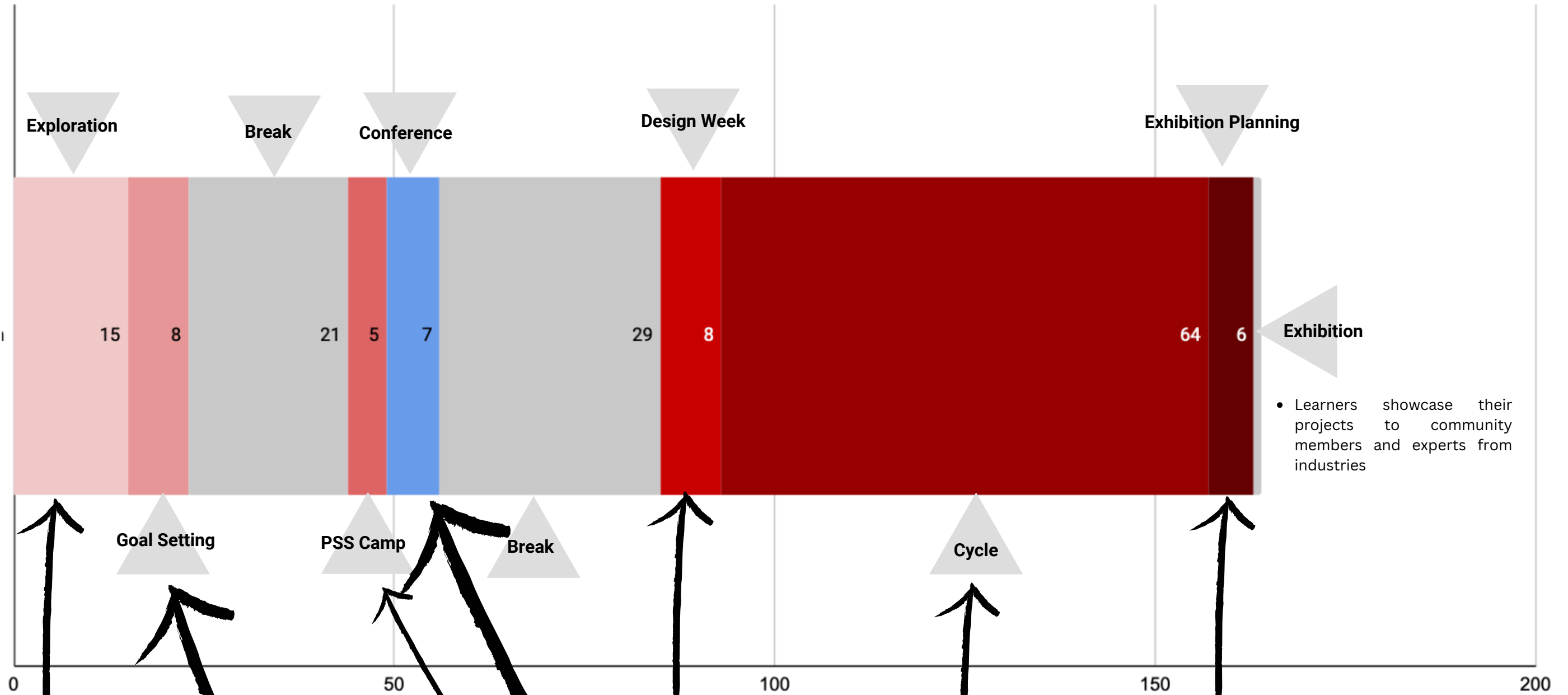
As the second year begins, our learners get ready to take the next step. With a solid foundation of knowledge, they would move on to **prototyping their business ideas**, applying the skills they had honed during the initial phase. Now, in the third year, we would be thrilled to witness the fruition of their hard work. The **businesses would be piloted** as standalone entities, each managed by a company registered under the Nook Hub. This would mark the culmination of our strategy, transforming learners into business leaders and innovators.

Out of the learners we have had since opening the Nook Hub doors, **three** have been able to establish **small income-generating businesses**. Take for example **Simba**, who now produces diamond fences while also rearing chickens and selling chicken cuts, or **Florence** who now bakes and supplies cakes starting from USD15 while also manufacturing various household detergents, or **Lovemore**, who now produces various metal products from cages to solar and water tank stands.

Process

Days

(Starting 18th Oct 2023)



Highlight Activities

- This is the introduction to Self Designed Learning and how the Nook functions.
- 18th October - 1st November 2023

- Learners critically think and design their projects as well as prepare and set milestones before commencing
- 2nd November - 9th November 2023

- Follow up community life skills camp for youths in and around Matibi
- 1st December - 5th December 2023

- Symposium "Seeding Local Cultures"
- 6th December - 12th December

- Empathise
- Prototype and user and community feedback
- 11th Jan - 18th Jan

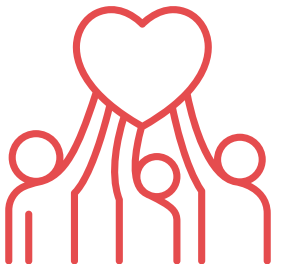
- Project making
- Discussions during morning and closing circles
- 19th Jan - 22nd March

- Exhibition Planning
- Internal review

- Learners showcase their projects to community members and experts from industries

Pedagogical Impacts

as Observed by Gilbert Tafara Rupere (Innovation Lead)



1. In the last Cycle at Matibi Nook Hub, what did you make of the motivation of the learners? How did they decide and approach the projects that they worked on?

In the last cycle at the Matibi Nook Hub, learners arrived with a **diverse range of motivations**. Some were driven by their **financial needs**, especially the older ones, while others were simply eager to **explore their interests**. As they stepped into the space, each learner followed a unique path: some came with clear goals in mind, while others took a more open-minded approach, ready to be guided by their curiosity.

Throughout the cycle, a beautiful synergy emerged among the learners. They not only pursued their own projects but also **lent a helping hand** to their peers. For example, you would find learners getting involved in their friends projects when theirs got tough, helping each other. This **collaborative spirit** created a rich learning environment where knowledge flowed freely, allowing everyone to explore not only their own projects but also other areas of interest.

2. Can you explain how has the community received the Matibi Nook Hub since its establishment? What are some of the most significant changes you have observed in the relationship between the Nook Hub and the community?

Since its humble beginnings, the Matibi Nook Hub has been embraced by the community like a long-lost friend returning home. At first, there were whispers of **doubt and uncertainty** swirling among the villagers. But as days turned into weeks, and success stories began to bloom, those doubts transformed into enthusiastic support.

Take **Simba and Florence**, for example. Once just ordinary members of the community, they now stand as shining examples of **growth and resilience**. They started as learners, became a keyholders and are now a part of the staff at the Nook Hub.

What's most remarkable, though, is the way the Nook Hub has become more than just a place to learn. It's now the beating heart of Matibi—a gathering spot where folks come together to **learn, connect, and even watch a football match**. As the days stretch into years, it's clear that the Nook Hub is destined to become the heartbeat of the entire community—a place where **education and leisure intertwine**, creating a brighter future for all who call Matibi home.

Pedagogical Impacts

as Observed by Gilbert Tafara Rupere (Innovation Lead)



3. How can newly acquired skills and knowledge be adapted and applied within the local context to create positive impact and sustainable change?

At the Nook Hub, we believe in providing our learners with platforms to further their projects beyond our doors. This quarter, we've seen incredible progress as our learners apply their newly acquired skills in **real-world settings** within the community, witnessing the **direct impact of their learning**. Take **Lovemore**, for instance. Over the past year, Lovemore has become a familiar face at the Nook Hub. He's been deeply involved in a project constructing **solar stands for community gardens**. This initiative not only **benefits the environment** but also **supports local food production**.

Beyond this project, Lovemore's dedication and growing expertise have earned him a reputation. He's now the go-to person for welding jobs, and you can often find him at the Nook Hub, skillfully working on new tasks. His journey exemplifies a sense of **ownership and empowerment** that we aim to foster in all our learners. Lovemore's story is a testament to how learning at the Nook Hub translates into **meaningful contributions** to the community.

4. What are the new learning areas being explored in the third cycle? Have there been any changes in the selection of learning areas among learners from the first to the third cycles?

In the fourth cycle, our learning areas expanded to include **music making and metal fabrication**. This evolution signifies our commitment to progressing from **foundational skills to more advanced, context-specific, and innovative subjects**. Our learners embraced these new areas with enthusiasm. Music making has unlocked **creative expressions**, while metal fabrication has provided practical, **hands-on experience**. These additions are not just about acquiring new skills but about empowering our learners to **explore and innovate**, preparing them for diverse real-world challenges.

This cycle's changes highlight our dynamic approach to learning, continually adapting to meet the evolving interests and needs of our community.

Learner Participation in Cycle 4

Matibi Nook Hub saw the engagement of a total of 128 learners (65 Male, 63 Female) in Cycle 4. *(Please see Table 1 for a break down of the participation by each stage in the Cycle)*

Table 1: Stage-wise Learner Participation by Gender in the 4th Cycle

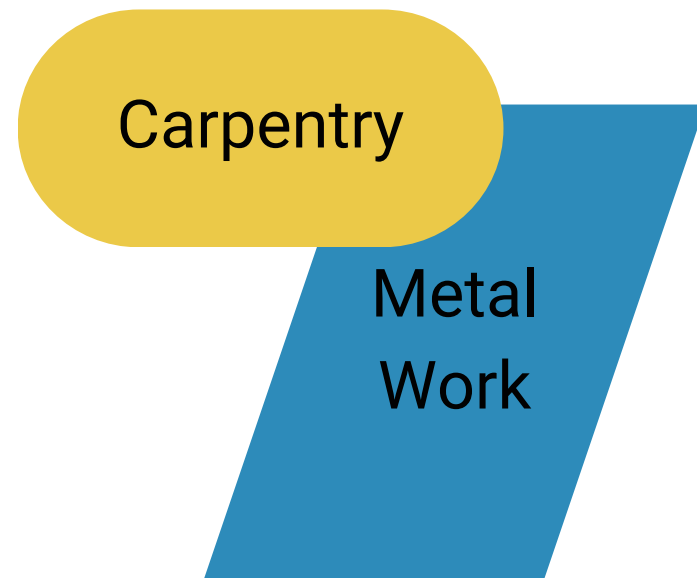
Stages	Males (N=63)	Female(N=65)
Exploration	8	12
Goal Setting	32	28
Design	33	40
Cycle	5	7

Insights from the Changing Levels of Learner Participation in Cycle 4

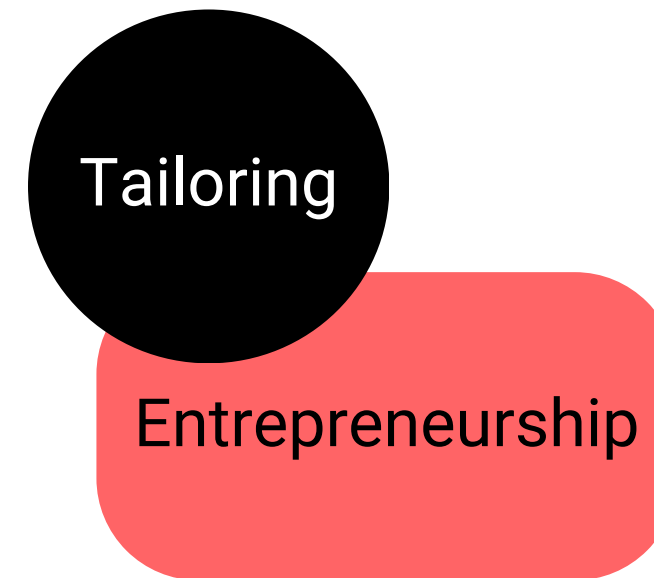
- Although there was an observable rise in number of learners coinciding with school closures for the academic year, these learners could not continue once their holidays were over.
- These learners were exposed to the Goal Setting and Design stage processes.

Learning Areas and Goal Achievement Rate

In Goal Cycle 4, 12 learners initiated 5 projects, spanning various chosen areas of study. Below is the interpretation of the project categories and how the projects were distributed.

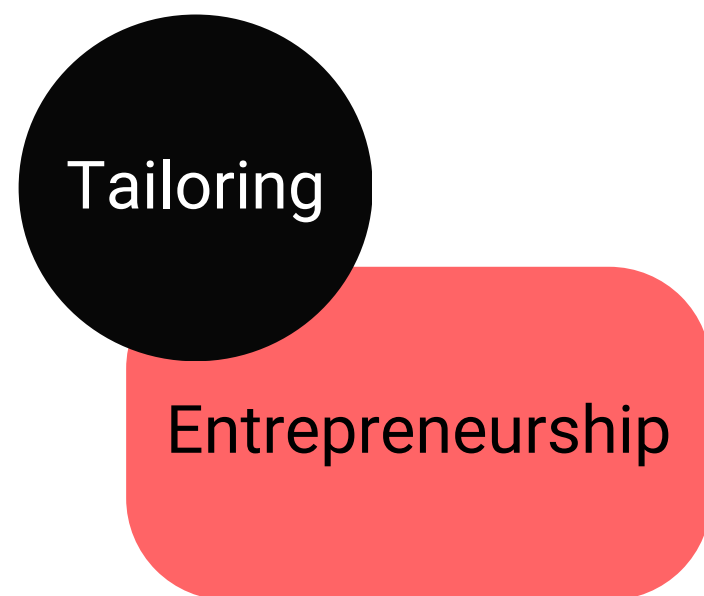


Goal: To make a bench with a backrest that can be converted into a bench with a table.
Female: 0
Male: 2

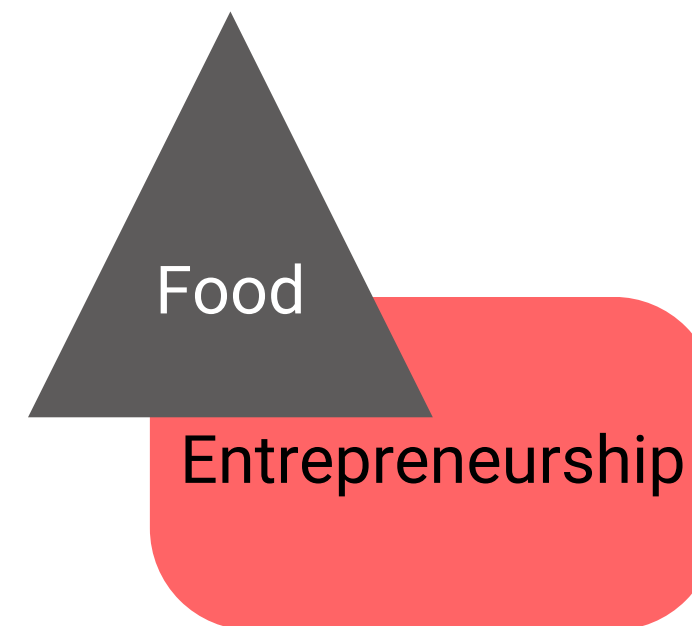


Goal: To sew 2 dresses and 4 fashionable shorts for young ladies aged 16 to 25.
Female: 2
Male: 0

Incompleted goal this cycle includes making 3 beats ,one Zimdancehall, one pop, one gospel and record one Zimdancehall track by 1 male.



Goal: To make 3 dresses, 3 skirts, 1 evening blouse, and 3 kids' shorts.
Female: 3
Male: 3



Goal: To bake small, affordable cakes for kids' birthdays, cream donuts, cupcakes, and biscuits.
Female: 2
Male: 2

Pictures of Learners' Projects



Achieved



In Process

Skills Explored this Cycle

Learning area 1: Music

Mixing, Sampling, Recording, Basic Keys, Song Writing

Learning area 2: Carpentry

3D Designing, Taking Measurements, Calculating Dimensions, Handling Tools and Machines, Cutting Woods, Assembling and Fixing the Woods, Sanding/Polishing the Wood

Learning area 3: Tailoring

Fashion Design, Taking Measurements, Cutting Fabrics, Operating Tailoring Machine, Stitching, and Sewing



Skills Explored this cycle

Learning area 4: Metal work

3D Designing, Taking Measurement, Cutting Iron, Welding, Painting, Fabrication

Learning area 5: Science

Measuring, Quantifying, Calculating Chemical Reactions

Learning area 6: Graphic designing

Designing, Photo Manipulation, Colour Combination



Relevance of Learning in the Nook Hub

All the learners selected their goals initially motivated by **curiosity**¹. Some interesting observations on their motivations are as given below:

1. Learners who pursued tailoring did not just want to improve their skill, they were also interested to explore how their project could be used to introduce new fashion styles which are not readily accepted in their communities owing to prevalent gender norms. Learners also said that the tailoring they had learnt at school before did not give them the opportunity to spend a lot of time on it and they now see the skill as a form of **self-expression**.
2. The project on carpentry also mentioned how they wanted to **explore ideas** and promote furniture models which were not yet used in the community.
3. **Entrepreneurship** was an interest in area in all the projects, even if not stated directly. Most of the learners were aware of and wanted to understand more about tapping the livelihood potential of their projects.

1 - Out of three options, viz., to solve a community problem, for curiosity, or personal needs, teams are asked to pick the main motivation for the selection of their goal during the Goal Setting Stage. All the teams picked curiosity as their main motivation in Cycle 4.

Learner Story: Fungai Shoko

“My name is Fungai Shoko. I was born on the 18th of December 2006. I come from a family of 7, being the eldest among 3 girls and 2 boys. I started coming to the nook after hearing about it from the boys and girls in my village. When I first started coming to the nook, I thought I would just do whatever I wanted, even though I had no idea what I wanted to do. What surprised me was the freedom and trust given to us. I tried welding, computers, and baking with the other learners before I started sewing. I learned how to sew and was amazed by the things I was making such as hats, skirts, dresses, and shorts for little kids. I would take old clothes from the nook and create something new as a way of learning. Now, I am able to design and sew clothes for people of all ages. Though I am not yet perfect, I am enjoying my learning process. I want to continue sewing and learn more since experience is the best teacher. In the coming cycle, besides improving my sewing, I would also like to learn welding.”



Learner Story: Tendai Macheza

“My name is Tendai Macheza. I am a 15-year-old boy from a family of seven, with two girls and three boys. I dropped out of school due to financial difficulties after my mother fell mentally ill and couldn't fend for the family as she was our main breadwinner. The first time I heard about the Nook Hub was through my father, who is a community worker in Ward 3. I quickly got interested because I had nothing much to do at home. The atmosphere at the Nook Hub was so welcoming that since I joined in September 2023, I have never missed a day.

During the early projects and exploration, I realized that I could do more than I thought. I ended up selecting music production. As I keep coming to the Nook Hub, I hope to perfect my skills and join the music industry in the future. One thing that draws me to the Nook is how welcoming the space is. I am able to share my problems with other learners, which has made it easier for me to understand life. Attending the psycho-social support and life skills camp has also helped me a lot to accept myself and has increased my self-esteem.

Since it was my first time actually working with a computer, my project was a bit difficult for me, and I couldn't complete it. But with time and practice, and continuously getting used to technology, I believe I'll improve. In the coming goal cycle, I want to continue focusing on music production since I have limited time in winter due to duties at home.”



Visual Treat: Learners' Projects and Exhibition



Community Life - Life Skills Camp for Learners

Learners and community youths between **the age of 15 and 24** had the opportunity to attend a life skills camp held at MTB. Many Nook Hub learners have experienced traumatic events that necessitate psychosocial support. Therefore, the Life Skills camp focused on addressing the physical, emotional, social, mental, and spiritual needs of the learners. There were **47 participants** in total.

This was the 2nd camp of this sort held in the area. The training camp was **planned and executed by our very own learners**, in collaboration with SwiZim and United Children Of Africa (Unica) from Victoria falls.

It aimed to equip participants with **essential life skills** such as **decision-making, communication, problem-solving and stress management**. The 5-day camp was filled with group discussions, team-building exercises, and experiential learning activities.



Community Life - Life Skills Camp for Learners



Symposium: Seeding Local Cultures

In December 2023, the on ground team along with DEFY CEO, Abhijit Sinha attended a week long conference titled Seeding Local Cultures. The conference was all about celebrating and learning about the interconnected components of the environment, as well as the **intergenerational transfer of knowledge** through Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). The event had various participants, including professors, doctors, teachers, parents, community members, and students, among others.

The organiser of the conference, SCOPE (Schools for Permaculture) Zimbabwe is interested in implementing a program similar to ours. Thus, the CEO of Project DEFY was invited to speak at the event. While engaging with the audience, he shared thoughts on how things we hear growing up can make us think we need to **follow specific rules to be happy and successful**. But is it really true? Is it about money, jobs or just being ourselves?



Stakeholder Engagement

Company/ Individual	Nature of Support
SCOPE ZIMBABWE	Offered training and implementation of permaculture in schools and communities. They also hope to open a Nook in their area.
Learner's parent	Appreciated the efforts of the Nook Hub and offered to do sensitization in their area, of which this was our first time having learners from that area
Local market attendants	Spread the word about alternative education being adopted at MTB. The local market is attended by buyers and sellers from all over the district.



The Team Making it Happen



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Thank you for joining us in this educational revolution that
Zimbabwe is seeing!

