

# Mann Made Media inspired by The Lunchbox Fund

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"There are millions of pictures of food shared on the internet everyday," says South African-born Topaz Page-Green, founder of non-profit organisation The Lunchbox Fund, which is committed to feeding thousands of orphaned and vulnerable school children in townships and rural areas around South Africa. Brand experience agency Mann Made Media has thrown its weight behind the campaign in support of the good work Topaz and her Lunchbox Fund team do at nine schools in Gauteng, Limpopo and the Western Cape.



*Topaz Page-Green, the founder of The Lunchbox Fund*

"There are millions of pictures of food shared on the internet everyday," says South African-born Topaz Page-Green, founder of non-profit organisation The Lunchbox Fund, which is committed to feeding thousands of orphaned and vulnerable school children in townships and rural areas around South Africa.

She is using this statistic to leverage support for the organisation's newly launched Feedie app that allows its users to become "humanitarian foodies" by turning photos of the meals they are eating into real lunches for children who desperately need it through partner restaurants.

Brand experience agency Mann Made Media has thrown its weight behind the campaign in support of the good work Topaz and her Lunchbox Fund team do at nine schools in Gauteng, Limpopo and the Western Cape after she visited the company's office in September.

Her visit formed the first part of an "Inspiration at work" series started by Mann Made Media management to help employees find deeper meaning in their own jobs and inspiration through the work other people are doing to uplift communities.

"Topaz is a breath of fresh air. She is the real deal. After spending ten minutes with her, you quickly realise that you are very somebody really special. The work she is doing is beyond inspiring and we feel proud to be associated with her in any way we can," says managing director, Shayne Mann.

Topaz's visit certainly made an impact. "Wanting to help our communities and making it happen without thinking twice about it was what inspired me most," says head of events for Mann Made, Adele Engelbrecht.

"I would love to help within communities."

The provinces the Lunchbox Fund currently assists are Gauteng, Western Cape, and Limpopo and Eastern Cape, with the organization looking to expand in Kwa Zulu Natal early next year.

Started in 2005 as a split-second decision based on Topaz's personal reaction to the hunger she saw in schools on a township visit with an old school teacher just prior to her return to New York, she vowed to make a difference.

Expecting an endless struggle to raise the first \$5,000 necessary to get the organisation on its feet, she was surprised to find she beat this target by raising over \$6,000 after standing up in front of a group of strangers in a class she was taking.

The Lunchbox Fund has grown exponentially since then, but Topaz says she is no stranger to obstacles and "banging [her head against barriers]". It's been a long road pitted with potholes, and there are many miles to cover and mountains to traverse before the 4 million+ students unreached by South African government nutrition programs are helped, but the Fund has certainly made strides with the 240 000 meals it currently provides annually.

Under the motto "feed a child, nourish a mind", The Lunchbox Fund works with a school-based support team, school principals, small local businesses and entrepreneurs to provide these students with healthy meals consisting of protein-rich peanut butter sandwiches and a piece of fruit or soups and vegetable-based stews or enriched porridge with soya mince that enhances brain activity and academic performance.

The diet the children receive is nutritionally balanced and designed to get optimal results. "The kids eat what I eat, it's healthy and I don't believe in any artificial ingredients," she says.

The Lunchbox Fund also works on a 90:10 total expense ratio - 90% of incoming funds go towards feeding kids, and 10% to admin costs - which very few non-profit organisations can boast.

What also sets The Lunchbox Fund apart is its progressive Feedie app, which was developed pro bono by Tribal Worldwide and Media Monks, and released a few months ago with renowned chefs Mario Batali, Jamie Oliver and South African Pete Templehoff as spokesmen.

This is how it works: a restaurant signs up as a partner of The Lunchbox Fund. It currently costs an annual donation of \$5 to sign up (R2500 in South Africa) and that money is credited to the restaurant's account. Each time a customer eats at a participating Feedie restaurant and simply takes a photo of their meal and shares the photo on the app, The Lunchbox Fund feeds a child in South Africa and 25cents (R2.50) is deducted from the restaurant's balance. Analytics on a restaurant's profile, as well as the user's profile show how many meals have been shared.

100% of all funds raised by Feedie feed school children. You take a photo, you feed a child.

Feedie is available worldwide, with restaurants signed up across the USA, South Africa, and presence developing in Europe as well. Feedie is a very special concept. "It's not geo-politically limited," she says. "It doesn't take energy, it gives energy."

This could also be why it counts some famous names like Elton John, Flea from the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Sting, Charlize Theron and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu among its patrons and supporters.

Feeding a school child The Lunchbox Fund way - the facts right now:

- R2.50 can feed a child for a day
- R100 can feed a child for a month
- R1,200 can feed a child for a school year
- R50,000 will provide tools and equipment required to implement an organic garden into a school
- R75,000 will provide tools and equipment required to implement a kitchen into three schools
- R100,000 can sponsor a school for an academic year

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