

Making SHINE Port Elizabeth a Safer Place for Children

October 30, 2025



Making SHINE Port Elizabeth a Safer Place for Children

Challenge

In 2021, IRFF UK learned that SHINE, an educational project based in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, was struggling with serious safety and maintenance issues. After years of theft and vandalism, the site's fencing had been stolen, the classrooms damaged, and the facilities left exposed to the street. With little funding available, both staff and children faced a daily security risk.

Goal

To make the SHINE learning centre safe and welcoming again, a place where local children could read, learn and play without fear, and where teachers could continue their work with peace of mind.

Solution

IRFF UK began supporting SHINE financially and practically, first by helping cover the team's basic needs and later by funding the major repairs and security work that the project urgently required. This included replacing broken windows, repairing electrical wiring, and finally installing a brand-new secure perimeter fence around the site.

Result

Thanks to IRFF UK's consistent support and the collaboration of SHINE's local volunteers, the centre is now fully enclosed and protected. The children and teachers can enjoy a safe, clean environment again, free from vandalism and intrusions. What began as an unsafe and open area is now a secure, thriving learning space that continues to serve the local community.

The Story

SHINE, located in the township of Walmer in Port Elizabeth, is an annex of Walmer Primary School. It operates out of two bright yellow converted shipping containers that serve as classrooms and reading spaces for local children.

When IRFF UK first heard about SHINE's situation in 2021, the centre had already established a strong presence in the community, but its facilities were in trouble. The metal fencing surrounding

the property had been stolen during the early months of the Covid-19 lockdown, leaving the site completely exposed to the public street. Local cows often wandered through the grounds, and the lack of security made both staff and pupils vulnerable.



Walmer Primary School on Yoyo Street



Local cows wandering into the complex

Early Support from IRFF UK

At that time, funding for SHINE’s daily operations was also uncertain. The manager, **Pat Hippert**, and her small team were doing everything they could with very limited resources. Even Pat’s modest monthly stipend had to be covered personally by members of the Walmer Angels Board.

IRFF UK stepped in to help. The first donation, made in October 2021, allowed SHINE to cover Pat’s stipend and purchase essential items for the children including books, school shoes, white shirts, and school bags.

By mid-2022, IRFF UK began sending **£600 every two months**, giving SHINE the financial stability it desperately needed. This ongoing support helped maintain day-to-day operations and enabled long-overdue repairs.

Restoring the Facilities

By January 2023, IRFF UK’s sponsorship had already transformed much of the centre. Pat wrote:

“Your sponsorship made long-overdue repairs possible. The electric connections had been vandalised, windows broken, and rust caused leaks and rodent problems. Thanks to your help and a dedicated team, welding repairs, new window frames, shatterproof glass, and underground electric cables have made our centre safe and ready for a comfortable future.”

However, one major issue still remained: the missing fence.

Solving the Fencing Problem

Throughout 2022, SHINE explored different options to rebuild the fence. Metal fencing had proved too easy to steal, and PVC fencing was initially too expensive. The team experimented with creative eco-brick solutions made from donated wooden pallets, a labour-intensive but practical short-term fix.

Finally, in early 2023, IRFF UK agreed to fund a professional and permanent solution. After careful negotiation with local suppliers, the most secure and affordable option was chosen: **2.1-metre-high PVC-coated fencing with anti-climb features and a pedestrian gate**, covering roughly 80 metres around the property.

In March 2023, IRFF UK transferred **£5,690** to fund the installation. By April, the new fence was completed just in time for the Easter holidays.





The finished fence

A Safe and Secure Future

The installation did not come without challenges. During the final stages, the fencing team was confronted by local individuals questioning the construction. With patience and communication, the issue was resolved, and the fence remained intact.

Soon after, SHINE learned that the South African Department of Education planned to fund fencing for all government-run schools. Thanks to IRFF UK’s quick action, SHINE had already completed this work ensuring the safety of its learners months ahead of schedule.

Today, SHINE Port Elizabeth stands as a secure, vibrant hub of learning. The children can play and study without fear, and the teachers can focus on education rather than repairs or security concerns.

IRFF UK’s support didn’t just provide materials, it gave this small community the chance to rebuild with dignity, hope, and lasting safety.



The finished fence

Help Keep SHINE Port Elizabeth Safe and Thriving

Your donation can make a lasting difference for the children and teachers at the SHINE learning centre in South Africa. Thanks to your support, the centre is now secure and continues to provide a safe space for education and growth, but ongoing maintenance and learning materials are still needed.

Please donate today and select “**SHINE Project**” from the dropdown menu on our donation form. Whether you give regularly or just once, your contribution will have a real impact.

💛 **Monthly gifts of £10, £20, £40, or £100** help sustain vital projects like SHINE — but every amount matters.

👉 [Click here to donate](#) — thank you for your generosity!

If you’re based in the UK, you can also send a bank transfer (so every penny reaches the cause):

International Relief Friendship Foundation

Account Number: **96497645**

Sort Code: **60-05-29**



Empowering Communities
and Changing Lives

Charity Number: 281776

Period Poverty

Period Poverty Intro

What is Period Poverty

Ending Period Poverty

More Info

About Us

Blog

Contact Us

Past Projects

Charity Gambia

Jigger Mobile Medical Team

Subscribe To Our Newsletter

98 Dyke Drive, Orpington, BR5
4LZ

Period Poverty Projects

Volunteers

Keep up to date with exciting news from the
field.

Donate To Period Poverty

Enter your email 

→

Every donation counts

Empower a Child's Future: Your donation can provide the education that will transform lives. Join us in making a lasting impact—because every child deserves the chance to learn, grow, and thrive.



Your £3 donation can help provide essential learning materials for a child.



With £7, you can contribute to a child's daily nourishment, ensuring they're ready to learn.



A £10 donation can support a child's education for a week, giving them the chance to succeed.

Choose amount      

One-time

Monthly

£10

£25

£100

£ Custom Amount

Designation

I am happy for IRFF to choose

Next →

Powered by Donorbox

Join us in making a difference

Every donation counts

You will directly be improving the lives of those in need around the world. Every donation, no matter how small, can make a significant impact.



Empowering Communities
and Changing Lives

Charity Number: 281776

98 Dyke Drive, Orpington, BR5
4LZ

Period Poverty

[Period Poverty Intro](#)

[What is Period Poverty](#)

[Ending Period Poverty](#)

[Period Poverty Projects](#)

More Info

[About Us](#)

[Blog](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Volunteers](#)

[Donate To Period Poverty](#)

Past Projects

[Charity Gambia](#)

[Jigger Mobile Medical Team](#)

Subscribe To Our Newsletter

Keep up to date with exciting news from the field.

Enter your email

