

South African Mobility for the Blind Trust



Annual Review

2014/15



SAMBT

believes that with training in orientation and mobility skills, blind and partially sighted people can live independent lives without the assistance of a sighted person.

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anaging Trustee's Report: April 2014 - March 2015

Seventeen years of work with over 3 000 blind people and their families in rural and township areas, giving new hope for the future.

Training: An overview

This year we ran a total of 19 Independence Training Programmes for the Blind in Gauteng, North-West Province, Limpopo, Free State and KwaZulu-Natal. The average length of each programme was twelve weeks. Eight of the programmes took place in rural or peri-urban areas, six in urban townships and five at schools for the blind. 262 blind people and their families benefitted.



SAMBT specialises in:

Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Training which teaches white cane techniques and orientation skills and

Activities of Daily Living (ADL) Training which teaches ways of carrying out common daily tasks.

SAMBT makes contact with blind people through Occupational Therapists and Social Workers at local hospitals, clinics and through other organisations working with the blind in local communities.

The blind people we trained are now able to get themselves to places like the shop, the clinic, to church, to friends and family and, in some cases even, to their outside toilet. They are also able to carry out day-to-day tasks like using an ATM and recognising the different bank notes that the machine gives them. They can use a phone, cook the family a meal and sign their name - the kinds of things sighted people take for granted.

We also provided the trainees with various assistive devices, free of charge. These included folding white canes, liquid level indicators, talking watches and money templates. We used educational toys as well to train the smaller school children. The families and caregivers of the people we trained were included in the programmes. We also gave some basic counselling and made referrals to other professionals and to schools for the blind.

Management, supervision and evaluation of our training

Our Programme Coordinator, Ms Alison Williams, carried out 18 field visits for the purpose of supervising our Practitioners and evaluating their work. Our Practitioners are using more efficient admin systems which makes monitoring and reporting much easier. Ms Williams keeps in weekly contact with the Practitioners and Management carried out 3 field visits during the year.

RIGHT: A woman collects water for herself after receiving SAMBT Orientation and Mobility Training.

BELOW: Orientation and Mobility Training in practice.

BELOW RIGHT: Training also covers the use of a mobile cell phone.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Money identification is considered an important life skill.



R

eaching the remote

The Manguzi region of northern KwaZulu-Natal is one of the most deeply rural areas of South Africa. Organisations for the blind are seldom able to get access to this area. The few roads that are there are rocky and eroded. We would not be able to get to where many of the blind people live, without a vehicle designed to handle such conditions.

The people are extremely poor and live mostly off the land. There is no running water and virtually no electricity.

It takes a special person like our Practitioner, Bongani Maleka, to work in such isolated and difficult circumstances and to provide the kind of training the blind people there so desperately need.

Trainee data for this financial year

Programme	Date	Practitioner	No. of clients/ trainees	Female	Male	Blind	Partially sighted	Age range in years
Rustenburg	Apr-June 14	B. Manoto	9	4	5	9	0	21-75
Burgersfort	Apr-June 14	N. Msiza	8	5	3	8	0	36-75
Manguzi	Apr-June 14	B. Maleka	15	9	6	15	0	31-84
Thiboloha	Apr-June 14	M.Mokoena	17	10	7	12	5	5-27
Katlehong	Apr-June 14	T.Muofhe	15	5	10	15	0	19-83
Wolmaransstad	July-Sep 14	B. Manoto	10	3	7	9	1	31-84
Winterveldt	July-Sep 14	N. Msiza	12	3	9	11	1	49-86
New Castle	July-Sep 14	B. Maleka	17	10	7	17	0	34-73
Bartimea	July-Sep 14	M.Mokoena	25	11	14	17	8	6-20
Tshilidzini	July-Sep 14	T.Muofhe	12	10	2	9	3	5-17
Christiana	Oct-Dec 14	B.Manoto	19	10	9	16	3	7-18
Soshanguve	Oct-Dec 14	N. Msiza	11	8	3	10	1	21-64
New Castle	Oct-Dec 14	B.Maleka	10	5	5	10	0	31-73
Tsakane	Oct-Dec 14	M.Mokoena	18	9	9	8	10	6-29
Kagiso	Oct-Dec 14	T.Muofhe	10	5	5	7	3	8-73
Ekurhuleni	Jan-Mar 15	N. Msiza	10	4	6	10	0	31-76
Hammanskraal	Jan-Mar 15	B.Maleka	17	10	7	17	0	23-89
Prinshof	Jan-Mar 15	M.Mokoena	17	7	10	16	1	6-17
Sedibeng	Jan-Mar 15	T.Muofhe	10	5	5	9	1	24-75
Total:			262	133	129	225	37	5-89

School Programmes

Of the five school programmes run during the period under review, all were at schools which we have returned to regularly over a number of years. This is important for the younger children whose training needs change as they grow and develop. That means though, that we are not able to or can only occasionally help the many other schools for the blind. The long-term solution is that the Department of Basic Education must create subsidised posts

for O&M Practitioners at these schools.

One of the difficulties for us at schools for the blind is making contact with and/or meeting the parents of the children so that we can inform them about and involve them in their children's training. This is because the majority of the children's homes are far from the school and many of them are working parents. An example of how we try to address this was at the

Thiboloha School programme where our Practitioner, Ms Mmalomile Mokoena participated in a well-attended meeting of parents which the school had organised.

On the following pages are a few case studies compiled by Ms Mokoena who was running the Bartimea programme. These illustrate what it is like to work with children at a school for the blind.

BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Children are taught the basics of Orientation and Mobility in the Foundation Phase and these are built upon as the child matures.



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orking to build independence, confidence and hope

Some case studies.

Katleho 19 years old

Had car accident last year and lost her brother and her vision. She has pass grade 11 and was supposed to do grade 12 this year. But because she didn't know braille, she had to repeat grade 11 which she found unfair. She lost contact with her friends after the accident and had lots of questions why this has to happen to her. Before we started lessons we spoke and she shared her feelings and it helped a lot. She was worried about always asking for help from her classmates but I assured her that after the training she would be able to travel safely and become familiar with her environment. First lessons were to help her to travel with a guide followed by some pre-cane techniques where she learnt to protect herself if she were to travel without any assistive device. Then we moved onto the importance of the white cane techniques and practiced the touch technique in safe and familiar environments.

We are practicing and she is improving after each lesson. Katleho can now travel independently.

Karabo 10 years old

Is in grade 4. She is partially sighted and uses her remaining vision to her best advantage by using the touch technique. I gave her a folding cane as I promised her I would if she passed grade 3. She was very happy about that.

Now she can move around the her section at school safely and correctly and travels to her hostel by herself after practice. We had to practice dressing and undressing by herself as her training had progressed beyond the foundational phase. She is reserved by nature but at times now will start conversation which is a positive sign.

Thapelo years old

Is in grade R and he is new at school. He is a beautiful young man who is always smiling and willing to learn. He is on treatment for chronic diseases and he was in and out of hospital but it has never stopped him enjoying his lessons.

We did orientation training in his classroom because his teacher asked me to help. He is now able to move comfortably within his classroom and in his hostel he can move about on his own. He is improving with his touch technique but still needs practice and we are monitoring his progress.

We help children beyond direct training. Ms Mokoena, a Practitioner, together with the schools two Occupational Therapists, organised an outing for some of the children she was working with in Thiboloha. These were 15 children from grade R to grade 3. They took them to the local Wimpy where they had a meal and played in the children's recreation area. This was partly about the children demonstrating the table manners they had been taught. More importantly though, it was to make sure that they got experience of the world outside their school premises. It is also an example of the good cooperation between Ms Mokoena and the school staff.

A highlight for us and for the children and staff of Prinshof School was a video we made of our work there. Here, the children are given a voice. You can view it on YouTube and from our website: www.sambt.org.za.



“On the day when all of this becomes a reality, the lights will go on for tens of thousands of blind South Africans.”

SAMBT has been active in highlighting the urgent need for Orientation and Mobility Training.

Department of Basic Education

This year, Section 27, which is a NGO and a member of the Action Group, sent a letter to the National Minister of Basic Education as our legal representative. It stated that previous responses from the Minister’s office to our request for a meeting to discuss the situation at schools for the blind had been unsubstantive. That letter asked for answers to specific questions on the issue by a given date, failing which, consideration would be given to approaching the court to compel them to answer.

The result was a meeting in August last year between the National Director of Inclusive Education, Dr

Moses Simelane, and the O&M Action Group.

At that meeting, Dr Simelane confirmed that his Department saw O&M Training at schools for the blind as extremely important and agreed to work with the Action Group.

The College of Orientation and Mobility has also put forward and is investigating the possibility of creating an O&M Practitioner course designed especially for teachers at schools for the blind. This could be an effective way of staffing O&M posts at these schools, once those posts have been created.

Registration of O&M Practitioners

The O&M Action Group identified and has tackled a second and vitally important issue. That is the registration of O&M Practitioners with a recognised body. The government cannot create posts for or employ professionals unless they belong to such a body. The College of Orientation and Mobility, as a member of the Action Group, prepared and lodged an application for registration to the Health Professionals Council of South Africa (HPCSA) on behalf of the Orientation and Mobility Association of South Africa (OMASA). The application was for membership of the Professional Board for Occupational Therapy, Medical Orthotics and Prosthetics and Arts Therapy. This is one of a number of boards that fall under the HPCSA. We are awaiting final approval from the HPCSA.

Linked to the registration of O&M Practitioners was OMASA's Biennial General Meeting which happened

where, SAMBT's Programme Coordinator, Alison Williams, was elected as the Chair of OMASA's new Executive Committee. Our Managing Trustee was also elected to that Committee. OMASA will now take forward the registration issue together with the O&M Action Group.

Department of Health

The National Minister of Health established a Task Team on Rehabilitation and Disability last year. A draft report and recommendations were put out for comment earlier this year. There it is clearly stated that Orientation and Mobility Training must be part of the Department's rehabilitation service.

While there has been some positive progress, there is still a long way to go before we see O&M as a recognised, fully-fledged and growing profession and an integral part of government's health, social development and education services.



ABOVE AND BELOW: Learning to walk the streets independently with Orientation and Mobility Training.



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hair's Thanks by Zak Yacoob

I have read the report by the managing trustee which, once again, filled me with humility and pride.

The ongoing work of the Trust does not grab newspaper headlines as many do not want to know about poor African blind pensioners and their struggles in rural areas. Ian Hutton and his team provide services that enable these human beings to accomplish the daily tasks which enable these people to survive, such as fetching their own drinking water! This service is crucial preserving the right to life, dignity and a measure of freedom for society's most vulnerable.

BELOW: Navigating busy streets using white cane techniques.



The Trust has achieved phenomenal results on a budget which approximates to the salary of a single cabinet minister! We need to expand our work twenty-fold if we are to go beyond merely scratching the surface. We need more than money to do this. There is simply not enough Mobility Practitioners to meet the demand. We need to redouble our efforts to ensure that as many more Mobility Practitioners are trained and as soon as possible.

I would like to sincerely thank all the people who have worked in the Trust on very modest remuneration to help us achieve these impressive goals. At the coal-face were Bongani, Mmalomile, Beauty, Nyana and Irish. Alison, Christina, Wendy and, of course, Ian have continued to contribute wonderfully. Ms Smetherham deserves our gratitude for helping us out of a very difficult financial situation.

I thank all our donors, funders and partners. We will be looking to them and others to take our work forward in the coming year!

SAMBT's operating budget for the last financial year was R2,85 million.

By August, we had secured funding for 14 of the 19 training programmes that we planned to run. That was about 75% of our budget requirement.

Fundraising assistance

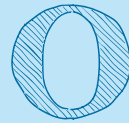
Funds were only coming in at a trickle, some of our applications were declined and other funders were taking an exceptionally long time to respond. We became concerned then that we may not meet our funding target. We were also aware that the funding environment had become much tougher in recent years. We decided to find help with our fundraising to avoid a possible shortfall and also to bolster our efforts for funding for the coming financial year.

As a result, we met in September with Catherine Smetherham, who had been recommended to us and who offered to help us with various fundraising services, including a coaching service. She has been helping us with fundraising and research and has identified a number of

new potential funders. She prepared a funding application for us as well, at our request. This was the sort of help we needed and it paid off. It was at Ms Smetherham's suggestion and with her advice that we were able to raise an extra R100 000 from the John and Esther Ellerman Memorial Trust, over and above their normal subsidy, and also R494 000 from the National Lottery's Miscellaneous Fund. As a result, we were able to meet our budget.

BELOW: Activities for Daily Living training at home in the kitchen.





ur Donors 2014/15

... funding

Overall, the funds raised this year came from 13 donor sources. These consisted of corporate and charitable foundations, trusts and the Gauteng Department of Health.

Particular mention must be made here of the John and Esther Ellerman Memorial Trust who have supported us in a consistent way over the past fifteen years. This has been in the form of a subsidy of a percentage of the salaries of two of our Practitioners. Such support creates a degree of predictability and, therefore, makes planning easier and allows for some flexibility.

Other major donors who have supported us on a regular basis include the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund and the Gauteng Department of Health.

The funds raised on our behalf by Mrs Naomi Davidson include contributions from a number of smaller donors who have consistently supported our efforts over a number of years.

Our deepest thanks for your ongoing support.

Anglo American Chairman's Fund
Consol Glass

Gauteng Department of Health
Harry Brunskill Educational and
Charitable Trust
HCI Foundation

Iqraa Trust SA

Joan St Leger Lindbergh Charitable Trust

John & Esther Ellerman Memorial Trust

National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund

Nelson Mandela Children's Fund

Nemit Trust

Timothy Hancock Charitable Trust

Victor Daitz Foundation

S Staff and Contract Support

Our O&M Practitioners are away from home for a good part of the year, bringing Independence Training to blind people all over the country. They are the real heroes of our team. This year they were: Beauty Manoto, Nyana Msiza, Bongani Maleka, Mmalomile Mokoena and Irish Muofhe. Mrs Beauty Manoto, SAMBT's experienced O&M Practitioner, retired in December. We decided not to try to replace her immediately. SAMBT employed five O&M Practitioners this year.

Alison Williams, our Programme Coordinator, is an asset to our organisation. Her responsibilities include the planning, monitoring and evaluation of our programmes and their day-to-day management.

Christina Pretorius is our general administrative assistant and also gathers and processes programme information.

Wendy Sadie and Ian Hutton manage the organisation. Ms Sadie has a number of key functions which she undertakes with energy and enthusiasm. These include day-to-day financial management; preparation of salaries; drawing up the draft budget; general administration; logistics;

supervision and finalising funding applications and reports.

Ian Hutton, our Managing Trustee, in addition to his general oversight and fundraising functions, has taken on an advocacy role.

Ms Marianne Christie ably maintained SAMBT's accounts, helped prepare for our annual audit and prepared financial reports and forecasts presented at SAMBT's financial meetings.

BELOW: SAMBT staff deep in discussion at a recent workshop.



Audited Financial Statements

SOUTH AFRICAN MOBILITY FOR THE BLIND TRUST,

TRUST NUMBER IT 10593/97

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 31 MARCH 2015

	2015 R	2014 R
ASSETS	2 124 154	1 932 524
Non current assets	211 348	317 617
Equipment	211 348	317 617
Current assets	1 912 806	1 614 907
Accounts receivable	5 363	1 550
Accrued income	20 595	-
Cash and cash equivalents	1 853 605	1 575 094
Inventories	33 243	38 263
Total assets	2 124 154	1 932 524
RESERVES AND LIABILITIES	2 124 154	1 932 524
Reserves	1 473 036	1 460 867
Trust capital	100	100
Accumulated surplus	461 588	443 150
Sustainability reserve	800 000	700 000
Equipment fund	211 348	317 617
Current liabilities	651 118	471 657
Accounts payable	25 192	38 743
Deferred income	599 494	403 887
Provision for leave pay	26 432	29 027
Total reserves and liabilities	2 124 154	1 932 524

	2015 R	2014 R
INCOME	2 770 546	2 599 663
Grants, subsidies and donations	2 685 904	2 545 537
Interest received	84 642	54 126
EXPENDITURE	2 658 105	2 598 219
Accounting fees	55 389	50 056
Advertising and marketing	12 341	-
Advocacy	193 551	73 801
Auditors' remuneration	48 707	93 150
Bank charges	8 843	8 684
Cleaning	4 281	3 981
Computer expenses	22 512	23 076
Conference and meetings	3 000	16 511
Fundraising costs	15 300	23 984
General expenses	450	7 129
Insurance	61 535	60 169
Motor vehicle expenses	159 994	186 432
Postage	13 692	16 821
Printing and stationery	13 090	9 118
Rent, water and electricity	46 793	58 404
Repairs and maintenance	257	145
Salaries and contributions	1 746 697	1 726 566
Security	11 700	10 762
Staff development and training	4 580	6 154
Telephone and internet	43 785	44 619
Training equipment	73 689	91 351
Travel and accommodation	117 919	87 306
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	112 441	1 444

**SOUTH AFRICAN MOBILITY
FOR THE BLIND TRUST,**

TRUST NUMBER IT 10593/97

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

SOUTH AFRICAN MOBILITY FOR THE BLIND TRUST,

TRUST NUMBER IT 10593/97

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN RESERVES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015

	Trust capital R	Accumulated surplus R	Sustainability reserve R	Equipment fund R	Total R
Balance at 31 March 2013	100	981 256	600 000	-	1 581 356
Net surplus for the year	-	1 444	-	-	1 444
Transfer to sustainability fund	-	(100 000)	100 000	-	-
Transfer to the equipment fund	-	(439 550)	-	439 550	-
Net book value at beginning of the year	-	(439 550)	-	439 550	-
Depreciation for the year	-	-	-	(121 933)	(121 933)
Balance at 31 March 2014	100	443 150	700 000	317 617	1 460 867
Net surplus for the year	-	112 441	-	-	112 441
Transfer to sustainability fund	-	(100 000)	100 000	-	-
Transfer to the equipment fund	-	5 997	-	(5 997)	-
Additions during the year	-	(12 653)	-	12 653	-
Transfer of the proceeds	-	18 650	-	(18 650)	-
Profit on motor vehicle written off	-	-	-	18 650	18 650
Depreciation for the year	-	-	-	(118 922)	(118 922)
Balance at 31 March 2015	100	461 588	800 000	211 348	1 473 036

“It was previously believed that disability was about health problems that limited people’s potential. Clear evidence now shows that it is mainly about societies like ours that, for no good reason, fail to provide basic access to the 10-15% of its population with physical, sensory, cognitive and psychiatric impairments.”

Dr Brian Watermeyer,

Clinical psychologist and post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Psychology at Stellenbosch University,

www.dailymaverick.co.za, 13 July 2015, 16h00.

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Trust registration no.: IT10593/97

NPO Registration no.: 007-220 NPO

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