

# South African Mobility for the Blind Trust

Annual Review **2018**



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COVER PHOTO: Ian Hutton connects with a learner at Thiboloha Special School.

# Managing Trustee's Report

It is one thing to have an idea. It is another thing though to turn that idea into action. The final test is, however, the test of time. Has that idea and what flowed from it, survived? And what of the future?

Our organisation, SAMBT, was born of an idea. The idea was to take Independence Training to blind people anywhere in the country – to rural and township places – to places where the blind people there would otherwise have no chance of getting Independence Training at all. This would need a radical outreach approach.

And so it was, in October 1997, that SAMBT was registered as an organisation. Within two months of that, we were running our very first training programme. This means that SAMBT is now twenty years old!

In the beginning, we were just 3 people and a fax machine. I was one of them. I have seen an idea become a reality and I have watched that reality grow. And now I can say we have passed that test – the test of time.

Throughout these years, we have stayed true to our mission to reach out to blind people rather than expect them to look for us. We are, and always have been, an ethical organisation and have worked together as a team.



It's not often that we train a blind person in a wheelchair. Here Emalina is learning how to visit her sister next door.



Thabelo in rural Limpopo teaching Suzie the value of coins.

We have earned the respect of funders without whom we could not have achieved what we have. And to date we have together helped to change the lives of around four thousand blind people and many more who are the families of those blind people.

And how does Independence Training change the life of a blind person? You change from being someone who is dependent on sighted help for so many seemingly simple things to someone who can do those things for yourself. You can now take your white cane and go where you want to go on your own like to visit a friend or family member or to the shop, to the clinic and to church, to university and to work. You can use a phone, an ATM and cook the family a meal. In the process, you regain your dignity, self-esteem and self-confidence. In short, Independence Training is the key to so much else.

And I can say these things because I am blind myself. But it is the people we have trained who should say it rather. Thembi put it simply when she said, "I feel human again." Jane had this to say about one of our trainers: "Me I'm say thank you, thank you for this training. I'm say to Nnyana, she come to me like an angel from God." Jack says, "Now I am not scared of going anywhere where I want to go on my own. I feel free and I feel great. I am a free man."

And so, as we move on to report on the financial year just past, we can feel proud of how far we have come and remember the many many places we have been - places where, along broken pavements and sandy paths, we can now see blind people walking. And we will remind ourselves too that there are many many more Thembis, Janes and Jacks out there who need to be found and given the chance they deserve.

## What have we done this past year?

My aim here is to highlight our main achievements in a succinct way and to give a picture of what our work is about. We will look at the two chief aspects of our operation: our training programmes and our advocacy work. I will report on the crucial area of funding and also touch on staffing matters. Finally, I will give an outline of our plans for this year.

### The Training Programmes

Our Practitioners ran a total of 17 training programmes during this past year. Each of them spent an average of 12 weeks in the various areas that we covered. Their work spanned five provinces: Gauteng, Limpopo, North-West Province, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape. 5 of the programmes were at schools for the blind. The rest were community-based. These ranged from those in deeply rural places like Manguzi in northern KZN to Kuruman/Kathu in the Northern Cape and those in urban townships such as Soweto and Katlehong – as well as everything in between.

Through this, our Practitioners reached a total of 190 blind people and trained them in white cane and orientation techniques as well as in a number of other independence skills. These were people of all ages. Of them, 36 were children and 11 were youth (19 – 30 years).



Alfred is on his way to have his cell phone charged at a house not far away.

## The people behind the statistics

To do what we have been doing for 20 years and to keep on doing it into the future begs the question, what is it that keeps you going?

Firstly, there has to be compassion. You must feel for the little blind child on his first day at school. It is a big scary place and so very far from home. You must feel for the young mother who has just lost her sight and who thinks that her life is over. You must feel for the delivery driver

who, for twenty years, has put food on the table for his children and now he can't work anymore because his eyesight has gone. Most of all, you must feel the pride and joy of a blind person when they have learned to do something they thought they would never be able to do again.

These are the people behind the statistics and they are the reason for carrying on. Let us meet just two of them.



## A bridge to cross

One day, Mpho decided to make her family a batch of dumplings – a kind of fried dough. Kidibone, our trainer, had shown her a way of doing that, even although she is blind. But then, oh dear, she had run out of yeast and there was no one there to go to the spaza shop to get some.

Now, Kidi had taught her exactly how to get to that shop. In fact, for her previous lesson, Kidi had phoned her and told her to meet her at that spaza shop. And she had got there by herself – with Kidi waiting there, heart in mouth. So now, Mpho needs yeast. If she could get to the shop last week on her own, she is thinking, she can do it now. So, that's what Mpho did. And hey presto! Dumplings!

I was there near Mahikeng soon after that. And Mpho told me that story. So, I asked if she could show us how she did it.

“Let's go,” she says taking up her white cane.

It is quite a tricky route. The area is kind of rural, with rough dirt roads and little paths between the scattered houses. And now, there is a dicey footbridge over a deep donga that needs crossing. It is That Bridge that terrified Mpho at first.

On the way to that bridge, there are a lot of children walking the other

way - home from school. They are watching now, as Mpho approaches the bridge. And Viva! She's over and across and standing now by the spaza – an old container festooned with bars and razor wire. We give her some money and say, “Buy yourself a coldrink. You deserve it.”

This she does, takes the change and checks it. No mistakes there either! And then, it's back across the bridge, all smiles, and home again.



Mpho safely and confidently crosses a perilous foot bridge.

Mpho at the spaza shop.



# A road ahead

I'm at a mall in Mahikeng and I'm in for a couple of nice little surprises. Kidibone, one of our trainers, is with me and Jack arrives. First nice surprise. She's only been training Jack for six weeks and he's got himself there on his own. Nice. Amazing. Wonderful. This is him speaking.

"Yes, I am a taxi owner. And I was also driving and then I can't see. And so I was scared people are laughing at me and they are saying, 'Yo Jackie, from taxi owner to street hawker.' But I can still see little, little from one eye. So, I am faking and trying to walk. Then I fall and hurt myself all the time. It was so hard for me before I met Kidi. Now I am no more scared. I am not shy to use a white cane."

"And so today Jack is going to cross the traffic lights, here outside the mall," says Kidi. "I have taught him

how he must do it. Today, he is going to do it by himself because he needs to go that way to get to the library."

"To the library?" I say.

"You tell them Jack," says Kidi.

"Oh well yes, they can teach us there to use the computer, with the JAWS programme."

My eyebrows shoot up. My second little surprise of the day.

"Oh, that's amazing. That's that screen reading software for blind people, of course. I know it. That's exactly what I use."

"Oh! You are blind also?"

"That's right. Like you."

But now the lesson begins.



Jack heads out of the mall and towards the parking lot – walking the pavements, across islands, between parked cars and bewildered pedestrians. I'm told he is very tall, slim and upright. Now I know why I can hardly keep up with him!

We then come to a difficult slipway that leads to the intersection and we are there! I'm exhausted already. And the traffic is hectic here!

This is not a sleepy little country town intersection with lights that have got nothing to do all day except change colour every now and then. It's a three lane each side intersection with an island in the middle and the traffic lights are three phase! And there are big trucks here, just waiting to run you over!



Jack makes ready to cross. His white cane is ready too and his ears are listening to what the lights are telling the traffic to do. He steps out! And there is no screeching of tyres or any other terrible sounds and now he is on the island. He waits, listens and, goes again! And yes! He is there! On the other side. No unwanted surprises here - thank heavens.

But I knew there wouldn't be. Kidibone knows exactly what she is doing. And so does Jack now. He proved it to me by doing the same thing again. He got himself right back across that road to this side. There you are.

But I must tell you, and this is strictly off the record, I, as a blind person, would have been scared out of my wits trying to get past that lot – white cane or not. But then, maybe I'm just getting old. No surprises there.

## Training statistics

Finally, we come to the statistics of the people we have trained. And these are important too. As I have already mentioned, we trained 190 blind people over the last financial year. But there are a few things that I would like to note:

Firstly, these are all people who would otherwise not have been able to get Independence Training.

Secondly, if you consider the number of family members who have benefitted as well – taking an estimate of four per blind person – close to 1 000 people in total have benefitted in one year alone.

Finally, if you were to look back to when we began our work in 1998, you will see that we have trained around 4 000 blind people. If you add their family members to that, we are talking about a total of 20 000 people whose lives we have helped change.



# Advocacy

The need for Independence Training out there is enormous. We need many many more trainers (O&M Practitioners) than there are right now and they need jobs to go to when they qualify.

The NGOs alone cannot create all those jobs. The government must come on board. They can't though until Practitioners are registered with a recognised body. And here is where the problem lies. The body in question here is the Health Professionals Council of South Africa (HPCSA). The organisation that represents the Practitioners (OMASA) put in an application to the HPCSA for registration in 2013. Only in the last year or so has there been any real movement on this. But still the procedures are slow.

The hope though is that this will happen by the end of 2019. This means that our efforts, together with others, to get the relevant government departments geared up to create posts for O&M Practitioners have ground to a bit of a halt. In the meantime, we have put our weight behind OMASA to make sure that things stay on track with the HPCSA. To that end, I am on the executive committee of OMASA.

All this is a hill to climb. But we will get there.



# Fundraising

Our donors are the backbone of our work. Without you, we would not have achieved what we did! The proof of that is not just in this report but out there in the places where we worked. It is also in our financial statements. There you will see that, not only did we raise enough funding for the last financial year, but enough to carry us into the next one.

I must thank you all on behalf of SAMBT and on behalf of the blind people whose lives you uplifted. And we must understand this too, for the Thembis and the Mphos and the Jacks of this world, it is also about knowing that somebody cares.

During the year under review, we had 19 donations from trusts, corporates and the Gauteng Department of Health. We also received gifts and support from private donors, both locally and from the United States.

One of our corporate donors increased their contribution from funding part of one of our training programmes the previous year to funding three programmes in full. This now makes them our second biggest donor. We also had two new funders joining us during the period under



Our first fundraising event: a blind wine tasting. We raised funding to train 2 blind people. See you all next year.

review. Here, I would also like to make mention of the John and Esther Ellerman Memorial Trust. They are our longest standing supporter. They have been with us since our inception in 1998.

Our efforts to enter the digital fundraising world carried on. This is very different from conventional ways of fundraising. Here, we have had the expert help of Market Dealer Holdings, who have given us their time free of charge. We have had a large response to our Facebook page. But the hard cold truth is that we have not raised a cent from this. It is a very crowded space and we will have to decide soon whether or not to carry on with it.

# Thanks to our donors and supporters

Anonymous  
Australian High Commission  
Craig Roberts  
Donaldson Trust  
Edna Burford Trust  
Gillian Gosnell  
Greenacres Remembrance Foundation  
Harry Brunskill Education and Charitable Trust  
Ingrid Opperman  
JAM Events  
Les Morison  
Michael and Denise Moys  
MS Parker Educational Trust  
Neil and Betsy Coville  
Nicholas Ferreira  
Picturenet  
Seena Yacoob  
Simmonds Hampton Trust  
Solomon Ruben and Ann Winer Educational Trust  
the fair labour practice  
Victor Daitz Foundation  
Vinimark



# The team

We employed 4 Orientation and Mobility Trainers, all of whom lived and worked away from home for extended periods of time to take Independence training to blind people who would otherwise not have had any access to it. It is because of their dedication and sacrifice that we are the organisation that we are. Thank you Thabelo, Kidibone, Queen and Bongani.

We would also like to thank Beauty Manoto, who worked for us for many years as a trainer and who is now retired, for coming back to help us with our workload. Beauty ran 2 programmes for us – one in North-West Province and one in the Northern Cape. This year for the first time, we contracted the College of Orientation and Mobility to run a programme for us in Tembisa. This worked very well.

Wendy with the help of Christina ran what I call “the engine room” – the day-to-day management of finances and the management of our other systems; all the logistics, the processing of information and so much else. An excellent job indeed.

We also worked with two specialist consultants in fundraising and supervision, Helen and Moira respectively. Both have been invaluable.

Marianne kept our books once a month, provided monthly financial statements and financial reports and organised the annual audit. She has been with us almost since the start of SAMBT. What would we have done without you all these years, Marianne?



SAMBT's dedicated O&M Trainers, Thabelo, Kidibone, Queen and Bongani.

# Plans for the coming year

We plan on running 19 training programmes during 2018/19. These will cover 7 provinces and will include 3 schools programmes. Except for some of the Gauteng programmes, we have identified all the areas where our community programmes will be run. To do this, we plan on employing a fifth Practitioner – hopefully from January 2019. Beauty has also agreed to run two more programmes for us.

We will also be looking hard at our options in our advocacy work. The registration of Practitioners with the HPCSA is particularly crucial.



## Conclusion

And so, we have reached a milestone – our twentieth birthday. And it is a happy one. And so, I think it is fitting to propose a small toast – A toast to those who have sat on our board, to everyone who has worked with and for us and supported us and also to our blind brothers and sisters.

It is they who are our reason for being.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "G. W. Duma".



# Audited Financial Statements

## SOUTH AFRICAN MOBILITY FOR THE BLIND TRUST

TRUST NUMBER IT 10593/97

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL  
POSITION AT 31 MARCH 2018

	Note	2018 R	2017 R
<b>ASSETS</b>		<b>3 968 687</b>	<b>3 105 752</b>
<b>Non current assets</b>		<b>355 352</b>	<b>59 848</b>
Equipment	2	355 352	59 848
<b>Current assets</b>		<b>3 613 335</b>	<b>3 045 904</b>
Accounts receivable	3	3 300	1 800
Cash and cash equivalents	4	3 335 988	2 940 042
Inventories	5	274 047	104 062
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>3 968 687</b>	<b>3 105 752</b>
<b>RESERVES AND LIABILITIES</b>		<b>3 968 687</b>	<b>3 105 752</b>
<b>Reserves</b>		<b>2 585 275</b>	<b>1 928 000</b>
Trust capital		100	100
Accumulated surplus		1 029 823	868 052
Sustainability reserve	6	1 200 000	1 000 000
Equipment fund		355 352	59 848
<b>Current liabilities</b>		<b>1 383 412</b>	<b>1 177 752</b>
Accounts payable	7	21 893	11 325
Deferred income	8	1 334 867	1 144 684
Provision for leave pay	9	26 653	21 743
<b>Total reserves and liabilities</b>		<b>3 968 687</b>	<b>3 105 752</b>

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	Note	2018 R	2017 R
<b>INCOME</b>		<b>4 156 304</b>	<b>3 276 543</b>
Grants, subsidies and donations	10	3 961 091	3 140 242
Profit on disposal of assets		-	15 000
Interest received	11	195 213	121 301
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>3 500 904</b>	<b>2 948 854</b>
Accounting fees		72 151	55 180
Advocacy		47 904	166 974
Auditor's remuneration	12	53 433	50 886
Bank charges		8 546	8 412
Cleaning		5 591	5 301
Computer expenses		65 192	56 785
Conference and meetings		53 570	6 800
Depreciation		91 729	69 242
Fundraising costs		7 850	7 000
General expenses		405	230
Insurance		63 078	55 069
Marketing and public relations		446 956	274 861
Motor vehicle expenses		297 314	184 291
Postage		11 461	12 685
Printing and stationery		32 153	25 889
Rent, water and electricity		88 632	82 794
Repairs and maintenance		68	385
Salaries and contributions		1 779 521	1 597 182
Security		11 384	14 882
Special events and campaigns		111 745	-
Staff development and training		25 498	15 260
Telephone and internet		46 398	40 007
Training equipment		92 384	120 446
Travel and accommodation		87 942	98 293
<b>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>655 400</b>	<b>327 689</b>

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## SOUTH AFRICAN MOBILITY FOR THE BLIND TRUST

TRUST NUMBER IT 10593/97

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE  
INCOME FOR THE YEAR  
ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

## SOUTH AFRICAN MOBILITY FOR THE BLIND TRUST

TRUST NUMBER IT 10593/97

### STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

	Note	2018 R	2017 R
Cash received from funders		4 151 273	4 128 972
Cash expended on programmes, suppliers and employees		(3 565 182)	(2 927 361)
<b>Cash generated from operations</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>586 091</b>	<b>1 201 611</b>
Interest received	<b>11</b>	195 213	121 301
<b>Net cash inflow from operating activities</b>		<b>781 304</b>	<b>1 322 912</b>
<b>Cash flows (utilised in) investing activities</b>		<b>(385 358)</b>	<b>(2 100)</b>
Acquisition of equipment		(394 358)	(17 100)
Proceeds from insurance claim on stolen laptop		9 000	-
Proceeds from disposal of motor vehicle		-	15 000
<b>Net increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>395 946</b>	<b>1 320 812</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year</b>		<b>2 940 042</b>	<b>1 619 230</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3 335 988</b>	<b>2 940 042</b>

## South African Mobility for the Blind Trust

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To donate:

Banking details, South Africa: Nedbank, Eastgate Branch

Account number: 1924260212

Branch Code: 192405

America:

<https://kbfus.networkforgood.com/projects/13797-s-kbfus-funds-south-african-mobility-for-the-blind-trust-za>

Together we have  
trained **4 000**  
blind and partially  
sighted people.

We have helped  
to change **20 000**  
people's lives!



[www.sambt.org.za](http://www.sambt.org.za)

