



ASHA TRUST

Year End Report 2011



“South Africa can eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030. It will require change, hard work, leadership and unity. Our goal is to improve the life chances of all South Africans, but particularly those young people who presently live in poverty.”

National Development Plan

November 2011

INTRODUCTION

The National Planning Commission issued its draft National Development Plan in November. There is specific mention in the plan of making “ ***sure that all children have two years of pre-school.***” Those of us who work in the sector are encouraged that Early Childhood Development (ECD) remains a priority of national government.

However in a country with 4,5 million pre-school children who have no access to ECD programmes, this ambitious goal will only be achieved by working in partnerships of government, business and community. We are grateful to you for the lead you have already taken in this challenge through your support of ASHA.

The following report will provide an overview of our achievements this year. We have managed these through your generous support and that of all our loyal donors and volunteers.



Thank you.

ACTIVITIES

During the course of 2011 ASHA Trust has been engaged in a number of different early childhood development initiatives. These have ranged from construction and project management to hands-on work at centres in some of the poorest communities in the province.

We have come across some amazing South Africans who despite their own difficult circumstances are making an extraordinary contribution to the future of our country.

Highlights of our achievements include:

- The opening of a magnificent centre of excellence and outreach for ECD in Bram Fischerville. At this skills development centre a model pre-school, which opens in January 2012, will run alongside the adult education centre where our trainers provide ECD practitioners with the skills and knowledge to manage their own creches;



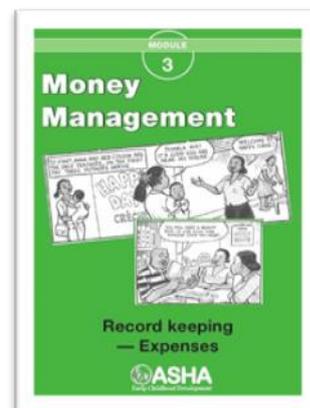
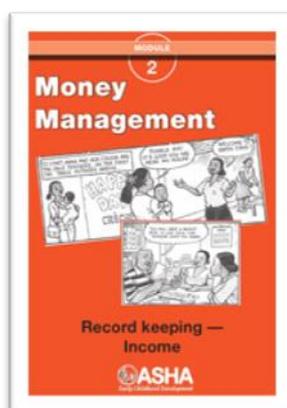
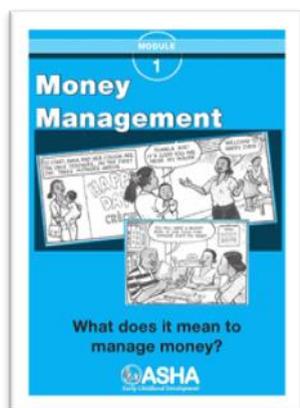
- Eleven companies are now investing their BBBEE Enterprise Development funds in ASHA projects. Through this we have been able to bring 35 informal creches on to our programme. With the training, materials and 'incubation' they receive through the scheme, they are upgraded to meet the minimum standards of the Child Care legislation and become financially self-sustainable. These creches cater for over a 1 000 children on a daily basis.



- Our trainers have rolled-out the ASHA C.A.R.E. programme with over 300 home-crèche owners and practitioners. This course addresses both the children's needs and a centre's administrative functions



- Our materials development team have conceptualised and published a financial management training programme for people with little formal education, as is the case with our home-crèche owners. The pilot testing of the course proved to be so popular with the 20 centre owners who participated that their colleagues from neighbouring creches are now desperate to be trained. We hope to have this programme fully fledged in 2012.



- ASHA established a Development Board during the course of the year. This is a group of specialists from various industries, who volunteer their time, to provide practical support in their areas of expertise for the ASHA Trust management.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

- During the year we hosted a team of MBA students from Duke University. We worked with them to refine an effective strategy for enhancing ASHA's financial sustainability. This is already being actioned.
- ASHA Trust is participating in an ECD consortium of Gauteng service providers to engage with the Early Childhood Development Institute (a specialised division of the Gauteng government) in response to the National Skills Development Strategy 111 (NSDS 111); specifically the call for "building partnerships for a skills revolution". The purpose is to work with government in a coordinated way to deliver more effectively to the sector in Gauteng.

Other members are Takatso Educare Training and Development Services, SAIDE, KELRU, HOPE, Edutak, ECD Projects, Basadi Pele Foundation, Gauteng BAOBAB Early Learning Training Programme, HIPPY and Woz'obona.

- In the Mid-vaal region we are working under the auspices of Kago Ya Bana, a private sector initiative set up to work with of the Departments of Health and Social Development in ECD in the district.

CONCLUSION

We look forward to expanding our role in Gauteng next year and, in time, respond to a number of requests we receive for help from other provinces.

There is a growing body of evidence that appropriate nutrition and intellectual stimulation in the early development stages of a child's life, not only avoids permanent physical and intellectual impairment, but significantly improves a child's potential to achieve success in all facets of adult life. Few other interventions make as much of a sustainable impact in breaking the destructive cycle of poverty.