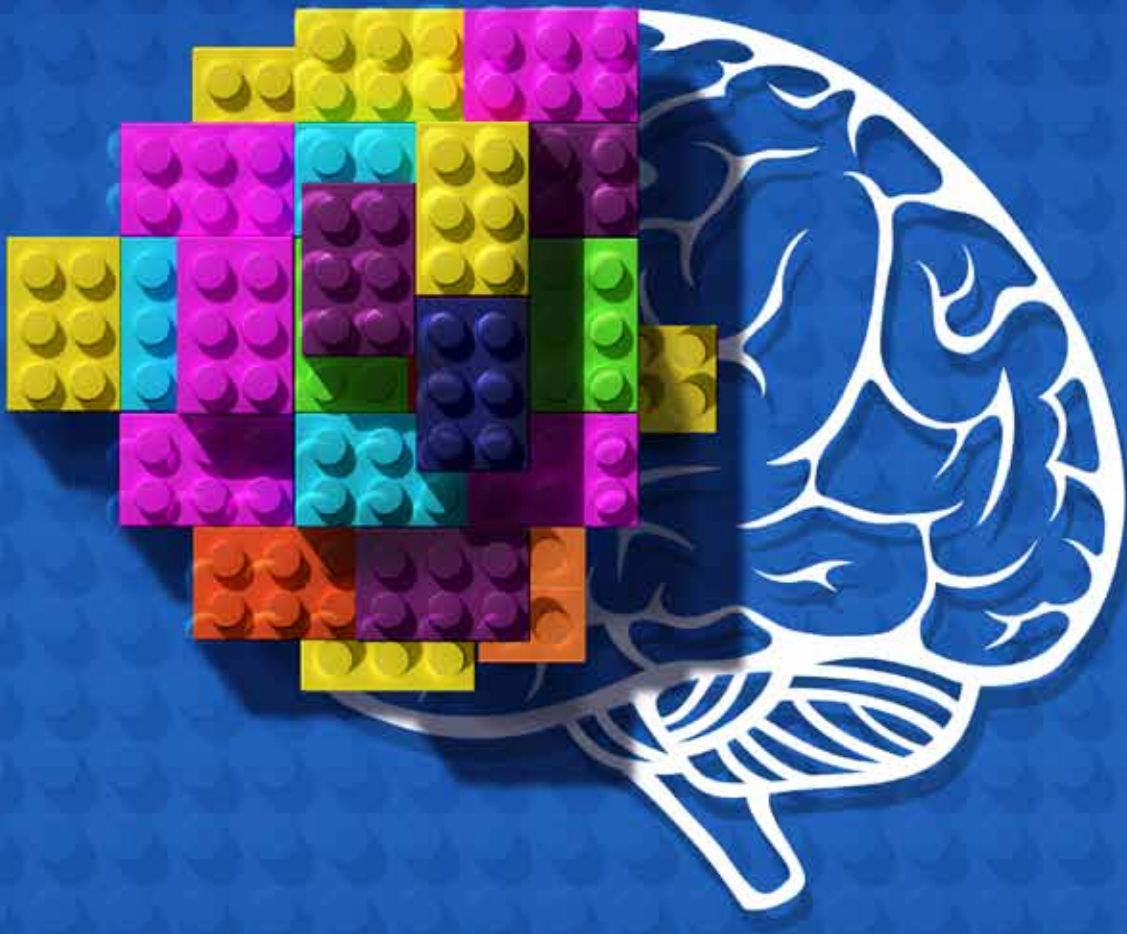


“Saving our Nation’s Brains”



Young Children, Our Future

Training and Resources in Early Education

OUR MISSION

TREE's mission is to promote quality holistic Early Childhood Development and Care for children ages 0-4 years through:

- The creation of an Early Childhood Development Enabling Environment.
- Capacity building focusing on quality education and training programmes for those responsible for the care of children.
- The provision of and increasing the access to appropriate Early Childhood Development resources.
- The promotion of sustainable programmes
- Lobbying, advocacy and establishing partnerships with relevant stakeholders
- Continuous monitoring, evaluation and reflexive review.

OUR VALUES

- TREE's Values statement guides the organisation in it's daily business.
- Respect for beneficiaries, colleagues and stakeholders at all times.
- Respect for diversity and culture.
- Think, act, speak and live positively.
- Practicing Human Rights and Values.
- Upholding integrity through professional commitment, conduct and accountability.
- Valuing and promoting co-operation and teamwork.
- Commitment to the well being and development of staff.

"TREE'S VISION

is to ensure that young children develop to their full potential in line with their rights and needs"



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THE TEAM AT TREE

BOARD MEMBERS

Chairman
Vice Chair
Treasurer
Secretary
Members

- James Martens
- Eric Apelgren
- Dr Myra Taylor
- Jill Sachs
- Jayshree Moodley
- Alan Beesley
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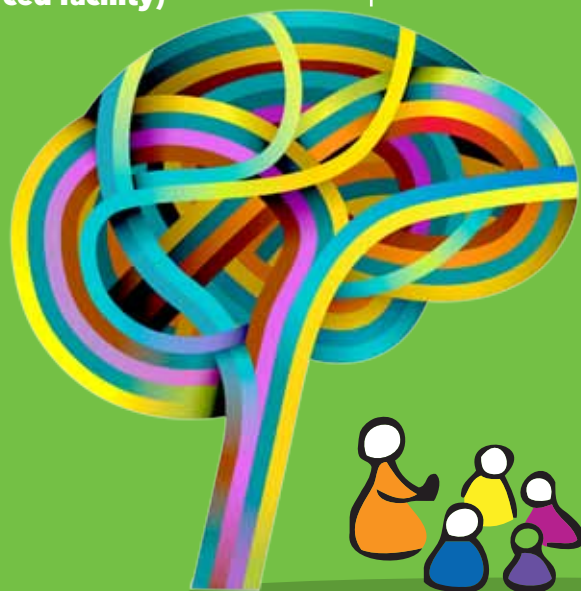
MANAGEMENT

Director
Senior Programmes Manager
Finance & Auditing Manager
Operations Support Manager
Business Development Manager
Donor & Compliance Manager

- Bertha Magoge
- Roseisha Ishwardutt
- Lynn Williams
- Lucky Khumalo
- Susanne Ramsunder
- Denise Ramsamy

TREE CENTRES

CENTRE	AREA	DISTRICT
The Emthonjeni Training Centre	DURBAN	eThekwini, Umgungundlovu & Ilembe
The Zamintuthuko Training Centre	LADYSMITH	Umzinyathi, Amajuba & Uthukela
The Tholuwazi Training Centre	PORT SHEPSTONE & EASTERN CAPE	uGu & Sisonke
Educational Science Centre (outsourced facility)	ZULULAND	uThungulu, Zululand & uMkhanyakude



TREE'S MISSION

is to promote quality holistic Early Childhood Development and care for children ages 0-4 years.

From the desk of...

BERTHA MAGOGE

TREE Director

Saving our Nation's Brains!

This year- we adopted the theme "Saving our Nation's Brains through Play". A theme that is so appropriate to the work our organisation has been predominantly engaged with for 30 years now! We are hugely inspired as we get to explore and understand that we are part of the formative years that contribute significantly to the structure and mindset of our future society. According to a well-known author Jack Shonkoff "children are born ready to learn... they are wired to learn and experience the world around them". What is imperative then is for adults around children to provide stimulating and enabling environments that increase the potential for learning and brain development. Depriving children of such opportunities leads directly to restricted learning and explorative opportunities for children and ultimately affects their future potential to participate actively in all aspects of society. What in fact Professor Shonkoff and others are telling us is, that supportive and responsive environments are crucial to early learning, and the extent to which we pay attention to these spaces, is the extent to which we can help in literally saving the nations brains!

Working with TREE's mission to promote Early Childhood Development (ECD) in South Africa has been an immense privilege for me. As an organisation we realise how critical it is to prepare children at a much earlier phase and to give children's brains the best chance of developing to their full potential. ECD is a crucial investment that leads to high returns for each child and a guaranteed future for the entire country! As such, we must start even earlier to ensure that children get the best start in life. It is true what they say ...the future belongs to those who prepare for it.

We are encouraged in our work by the fact that the Government of South Africa is taking serious and bold steps to put ECD firmly on the National Agenda. In terms of the 12 government focus areas; ECD falls into outcome #1 "Quality Basic Education" and is championed by The Department of Social Development in partnership with The Department of Basic Education as well as The Department of Health. A firm argument has been made that an integrated approach to ECD programming is by far the best alternative particularly, when working in resource constrained areas as we do in KwaZulu Natal (KZN) and the Eastern Cape.

While we have always believed in the notion that children learn through play, this year in particular we have been reminded of just how crucial and serious this really is. As such, through new partnerships with the Lego Foundation, we have become even more affirmed and further stimulated in ensuring that children in our programmes access stimulating and liberating play opportunities which encourage them to learn and explore their world. We have also had to learn, that often we ourselves need to learn to appreciate play even as adults and that our brain actually does better when we work in a playful manner. Not only does this motivate us and stimulate our own sense of happiness, but it reminds us every day how important this is for children. So simply put, if we want play to give children an opportunity to become lifelong learners, we must ourselves become willing to play! When we do this ourselves, we also find the language with which to influence those whose mindsets are set against playing as if it was not a serious means of learning for children!



NEW STATE OF THE ART MSINSI HOSTEL:

The organisation has been blessed to find sponsorship through the Afrisun KZN Community Trust to renovate one of our old disused buildings which had become an eyesore on the property into a stunning state of the art hostel accommodation for our learners. We are grateful to The Afrisun KZN Community Trust and The Victor Daitz Foundation for enabling us to realise our dream. We are now able to host our learners in a dignified manner and give them the dignity of a real learning institute. As you can see from the pictures below our learners will really enjoy their time spent acquiring new knowledge in early childhood education! Through this development we have increased our residential training capacity from a mere 35 to 85 at any one point in the Durban centre which is our main training hub.

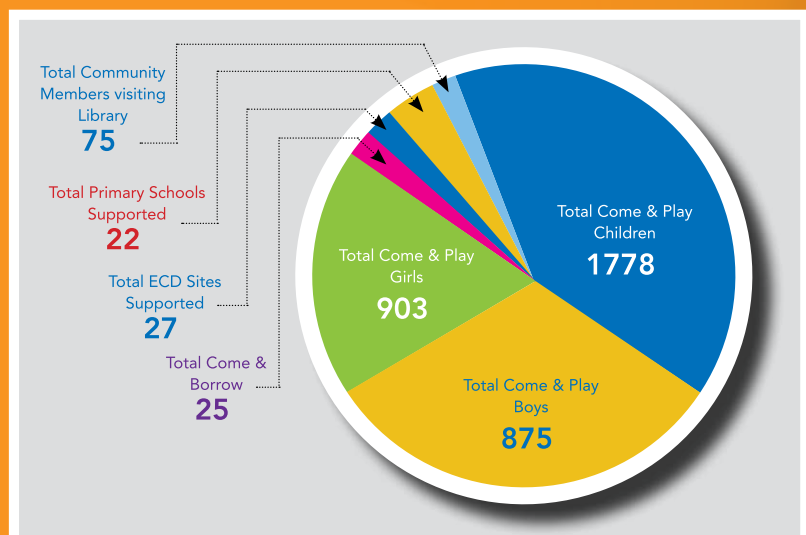


PROGRAMMES & SPECIAL PROJECTS

The growth and expansion of TREE has been phenomenal. We are prepared to think outside the box and will always aim to meet the real need on the ground. It is this openness, responsiveness and a strong desire to learn and improve that makes us attractive to funders and other partners. As an organisation that's been around for 30 long years, it is easy to become complacent and risk becoming irrelevant to new and developing challenges. We take special care to listen to our stakeholders, particularly the communities we serve. We desire more than anything else to innovate and remain current and relevant to the daily challenges faced by our children and their families. We remain open to learning and research as this is what enables us to put up programmes and interventions that actually change the lives of children. We are proudly a learning organisation!

EARLY LEARNING RESOURCE AND TOY LIBRARIES

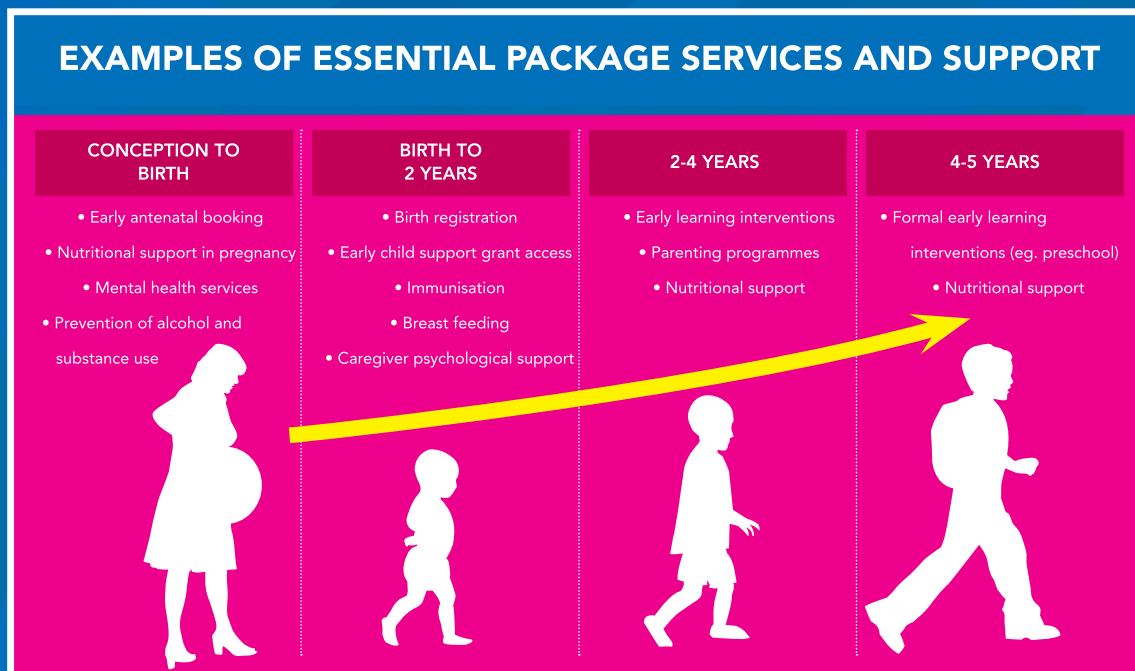
This has remained one of our fastest growing programme areas this year. This of course is justifiable given the resource constrained areas where we work throughout KZN and the Eastern Cape. After only launching the project 2 years ago, we are already putting up our 7th Toy Library in Weenen thanks to the Solon Foundation. The Toy Libraries are at the same time being turned into demonstration centres and becoming community resources where the general community also benefits. We also regularly appealing to the business and corporate sector to adopt each of these sites so that we can assist the community in putting up the necessary infrastructure that is needed to support the resource hubs.



REDEFINING OUR STRATEGY, FOCUS AND EMPHASIS

Firstly, through our ability to self-introspect, we are able to clearly understand and acknowledge the importance of qualification training for ECD at Level 4. However we are increasingly concerned with the quality that is demonstrated at the centres once this training relationship is ended. As such we are taking forward into the 2015 fiscal year a need to seriously develop a post-training support strategy that ensures that we remain on the ground supporting the practitioner long after the formal training has been achieved. We must develop through mentorship and day by day hand holding to continue to work with our practitioners and afford them a real chance in developing their teaching skills. We plan therefore on committing all practitioners into a one year post-training mentoring support phase that will enable them to hone in on their skills and develop in stature and confidence.

Secondly, although we have always had the essential package of services as the primary model through which we aim to serve children, we are learning that there is an urgent need to redefine this essential package. As demonstrated in the diagram, the Essential Package is envisaged in relation to the developmental continuum of the individual child. Some services are therefore targeted at children of particular chronological age or developmental stage, some at children who have particular risk profiles, whilst others are seen as relevant and necessary for all children. There is a need to review our Essential Package and align it more acutely to the priority needs at the different chronological ages. A gap in our programming is the "conception to birth" phase and more focused programming needs to be developed in this area. This will also entail a more robust intervention with parents, as this is the foundation through which all our interventions will gain traction. We must also sharpen our skills in measurement of these parental based interventions so that we find it easy to approach and converse with funders in demonstrating the importance or efficacy of our approach.

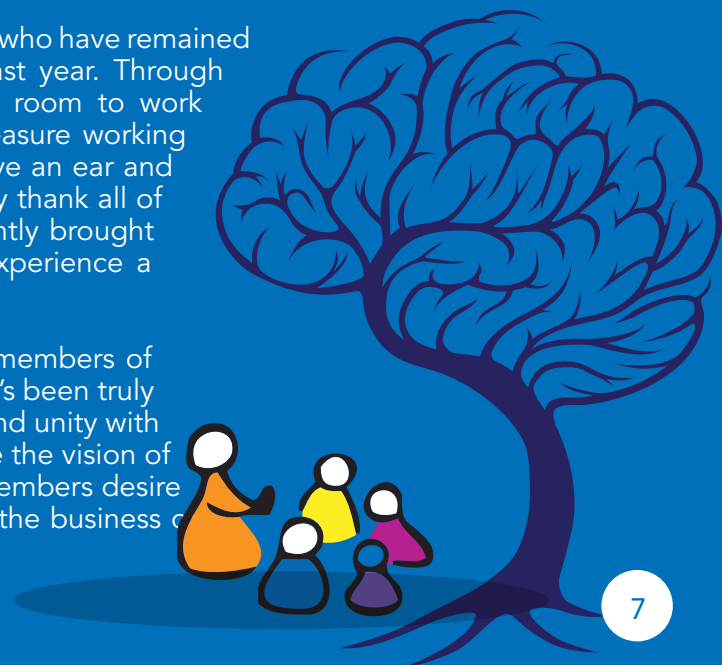


GOVERNANCE:

I am indebted to the strong Management Board of TREE who have remained passionate and committed to the organisation this past year. Through their support and encouragement I have been given room to work professionally in steering the ship. It's been such a pleasure working with each of them knowing that at all times I would have an ear and a shoulder to cry on when this was necessary! I sincerely thank all of them for being such wonderful colleagues who constantly brought in ideas and other perspectives that has made this experience a collective team effort.

I also want to pay special appreciation to each of my members of staff who have been a phenomenal team to work with. It's been truly an amazing experience to see the degree of cohesion and unity with which every one of the staff members has wanted to see the vision of TREE being realized. I have been encourage by each members desire and passion to identify with the brand that is TREE...in the business of saving brains.

Thank you!



Roseisha Ishwardutt

The South African National Development Plan recognises that the protection and promotion of the development of young children must be part of our vision for the society we want to live in. A good beginning, during pregnancy, birth and in early childhood lays the foundation for lifelong health, learning, productivity, and harmonious relationships with others.

South Africa is presently on the brink of significant development in relation to the realisation of children's right to quality early education. Government has identified the provision of Early Childhood Development (ECD) as key to our success towards achieving the goals of the National Development Plan (Vision 2030). To this end, government has committed to provide universal ECD services by 2017. This provision is against the backdrop of young children in South Africa who grow up in a profoundly unequal society in which poverty threatens the sound early development of the majority of children. Exposure to crime and violence is significant and South Africa's under-five mortality rate is inordinately high for a middle-income country. Malnutrition, HIV and childhood illnesses remain key drivers of under-five mortality. Unfavourable environmental conditions such as poor housing infrastructure, lack of access to adequate water, sanitation facilities and poor hygiene in the home contribute to infections and disease, particularly in young children. Malnutrition, childhood illness and a lack of early stimulation continue to compromise children's cognitive development and later school performance. Government's plan on the massification of ECD services have not been fully realised and as such, this threatens the vulnerable child today.

TREE's initiative and ability to adopt a more child- and family-centred approach to its already existing ECD work has been strengthened TREE's ability to integrate holistic ECD provisioning that is a prerequisite for vulnerable children. In 2014, TREE provided training to 1268 practitioners/facilitators through a combination of private grants, support from the government and private fees; TREE-supported sites and practitioners and reached 42102 children through sites and household visits. Both practitioners and community facilitators have benefitted from the child centred approaches, case management practices, training tools and referral linkages developed during this period, resulting in greater impact for the children and communities reached.

For these reasons, TREE has responded to the challenges in the ECD sector by shifting its focus to emphasise on integrated, coordinated and comprehensive processes targeting families and vulnerable children in early childhood (ages 0-4) with particular focus on monitoring, evaluation and project impact as well as quality assurance across all interventions.

In 2014, our measure of programmatic efficacy focused on the following measures of success outlined below:

- Increased number of children who enter primary school on good health and with appropriate cognitive social skills evidenced by:
- Improved cognitive learning and school readiness of children attending the TREE programme
- Increased number of children receiving immunisations, support and growth monitoring, nutrition and early identification and referral to primary health and social services
- Increased number of children enrolled and attending quality ECD programmes in close proximity to their homes as evidenced by:
 - Number of children receiving home visiting services
 - Number of children attending structured playgroups
 - Number of children accessing toy library
 - Number of children attending ECD sites supported by TREE
- Increased government prioritisation and support of ECD programmes as evidenced by
- ECD forum meetings quarterly with Department of Social Development
- The critical bottlenecks and promising practices identified by ECD Forums are documented and disseminated in Government ECD War rooms
- Traceable referral linkages are developed between ECD sites and government providers



PROGRAMME IMPACT

As a leading Early Childhood Development organization; TREE is involved in (and spearheads) a multitude of activities and interventions that are all aimed at securing and protecting the interest of Children in line with their rights and holistic development needs. Ours at TREE is to particularly reach economically marginalized communities whose Children face abject poverty, have limited or no access to essential services, and are disenfranchised in terms of accessing quality and holistic ECD services. A multitude of Programmes and interventions have been developed to ensure we make an impact in all our areas of operation; and that the Children get the necessary foundations that are essential for their development. All our Programmes

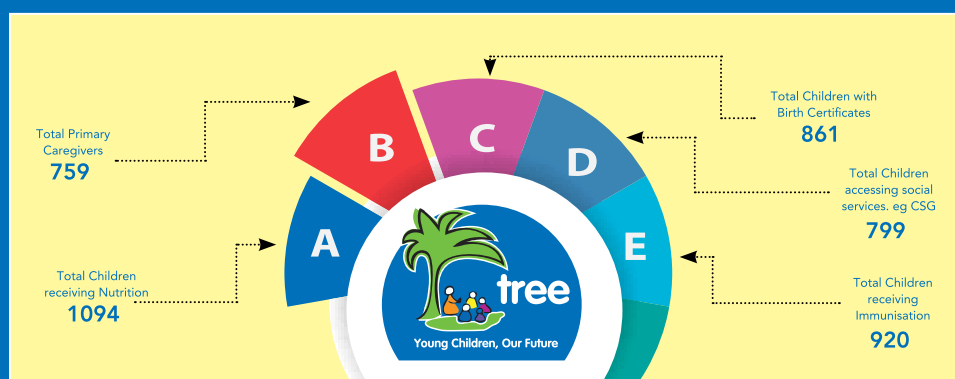
and interventions are designed such that we are able to take stock in terms of our reach, efficiency, and effectiveness.

TREE's Integrated ECD programming: The best programmes are those that combine different aspects of early development. Strong ECD programmes aimed at improving stimulation, psychosocial development and cognitive development achieve the best outcomes when linked with health, nutrition, family support, educational systems and services.

TREE promotes an essential package of services that aims to ensure the holistic development of children. This package of essential services, aligned with current policy, has been a vehicle for cost-effective and efficient delivery that has maximised opportunities for early childhood interventions. These interventions include centre and non-centre based programmes such as ECD centres, early learning and home-based programmes as well as community toy libraries.

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) a holistic approach that guarantees both child survival and development is the child's right. Unfortunately early child development is often addressed in a fragmented manner. With children less than three years old, health and nutritional needs to ensure survival are often prioritized over stimulation to ensure development. Whereas with children over three years old, the emphasis is on play and education and nutrition, health and protection needs are sometimes neglected. Nutrition and health should be integrated into any centre or school where early child development activities take place. This integrated approach is the best way to ensure good child growth and development.

As per the recommendations from the CRC; TREE's Programmes are specifically designed to meet all the developmental needs for Children; and ensure that all of them are provided with quality and holistic ECD services. All TREE Programmes and interventions must therefore be seen as all-encompassing activities securing the interests of Children in line with their rights and developmental needs. With this in mind; it is essential we take stock of our reach in terms of: (a) the number of Children with necessary documentation; (b) the number of Children receiving immunisations; (c) the number of Children receiving nutrition; and (d) the number of Children receiving social services such as Child Support Grants, or Foster Care Grants where required. Additionally; it is also critical we take stock of our reach in terms of those who care for the Children. Their role in the ECD discourse is invaluable; hence TREE's effort to ensure they have the necessary skills that will equip them to provide quality and holistic ECD services. Results to these measurements are drawn from TREE's EEE component which comprises of 3 units; namely the Home Visiting Programme, the Structured Playgroup Programme, and the Community Toy Library Programme.



The above chart illustrates to us that through the Home Visiting and Structured Playgroups Programmes we were able to reach a total of 759 Primary caregivers who care for approximately 1293 Children. Of this 1293 Children; 861 have the necessary documentation; 799 access essential services; 920 have Road to Health Cards; and 1094 are receiving the nutrition as per their developmental needs. These figures relay that we are making significant strides in terms of ensuring that all the Children are accessing health and social services as per their rights and needs. The 759 primary caregivers reached is a great achievement for two reasons: (1) the Children under their care are now receiving quality ECD experience; (2) these Caregivers are able to transfer the knowledge gained to parents and other caregivers we have not reached yet.

More must be done to ensure that all the Children benefiting (directly or indirectly) from our Programmes access all the services as per their rights and needs. This requires coordinated efforts in terms of integrated programming, and emphasizing the importance with parents for all Children to have necessary documentation, and for them to access health and social services. In empowering the Primary Caregiver, we in turn afford the Child under their care a better ECD experience that will allow him/her to grow to his/her full potential.

The first three years are the most important in a child's life. It is during this period that the brain is most plastic, grows fastest and is most responsive to the outside world. Most of the brain's neural pathways supporting communication, understanding, social development and emotional well-being grow rapidly in these first three years. One reason for poor brain growth is malnutrition. Children who have been severely malnourished as infants do less well at school; have less chance of doing productive work and forming healthy relationships. They are also more vulnerable to physical and mental illness.

TREE's integrated model is primarily aimed at giving the children the best start in life by building a solid foundation of physical, emotional, psychosocial, cognitive, and healthy development. The integrated model demonstrates an appreciation of the importance of considering the child's holistic needs within the context of the family and the community and places the child at the centre of a protective and enabling environment all of which contributes to the full development of that child. Through our interventions, we were able to strengthen the parenting capacity of the primary caregiver, address the educational, health and social needs of the child and the family, facilitate healthy and conducive environments for child rearing, and improving access to resources and services that improved the quality of daily living. The organisation has also facilitated inter-sectorial collaborations between various community stakeholders ensuring comprehensive provisioning to vulnerable children.

TREE has taken a number of steps towards creating an inter-sectorial approach that supports the advancement of the comprehensive rights of young children. In both Centocow and Flagstaff, the organisation has established partnerships with the Traditional leadership and the Departments of Social Development, Education, Agriculture, Social Security, Police Services, Home Affairs and community based organisations. This committee meets on a quarterly basis ensuring collaborative approaches in addressing the multitude of issues that affect families as well as alerting various departments to specific families that require urgent intervention or whom have experienced problems with that department. This approach reduces fragmentation of services and allows for the pooling of resources that more concretely addresses the needs of vulnerable children and their families.

This integrated model is demonstrated through a home-based ECD programme implemented in the community of Flagstaff. Prior to programme implementation, the circumstances that children in this community were exposed to are depicted in the pictures below

Brief background of the Ndabankulu family ;

- Mother abandoned her 4 children, aged between 4 and 10
- She continued to receive their Child Support Grant but never supported them
- All 4 children had never been enrolled in a formal school

**BEFORE
TREE'S
INTERVENTION >**



**AFTER
TREE'S
< INTERVENTION**

TREE's intervention focused on a strategy that aimed to create access to early learning and development through playgroup activities but also meet the daily care needs of children. Our holistic intervention achieved:

- Enhanced the capacity of community members to appropriately and effectively respond to the needs and challenges that young children and their families are faced with
- Provided children with access to early learning and stimulation in the absence of formal ECD Centre based programmes
- Provided nutritional support to children through nutritional supplements and food hampers
- Facilitated early identification and referral of childhood illnesses to the local clinic
- Referred caregivers to government departments for documentation and social security applications and facilitated efficient service delivery when challenges were encountered
- Referred cases of child abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Development to facilitate statutory processes and thereafter monitored the care of children in alternate placements
- Provided resources and training for household and communal food gardens to support the nutritional needs of children

Through these activities, the programme has achieved the following outcomes:

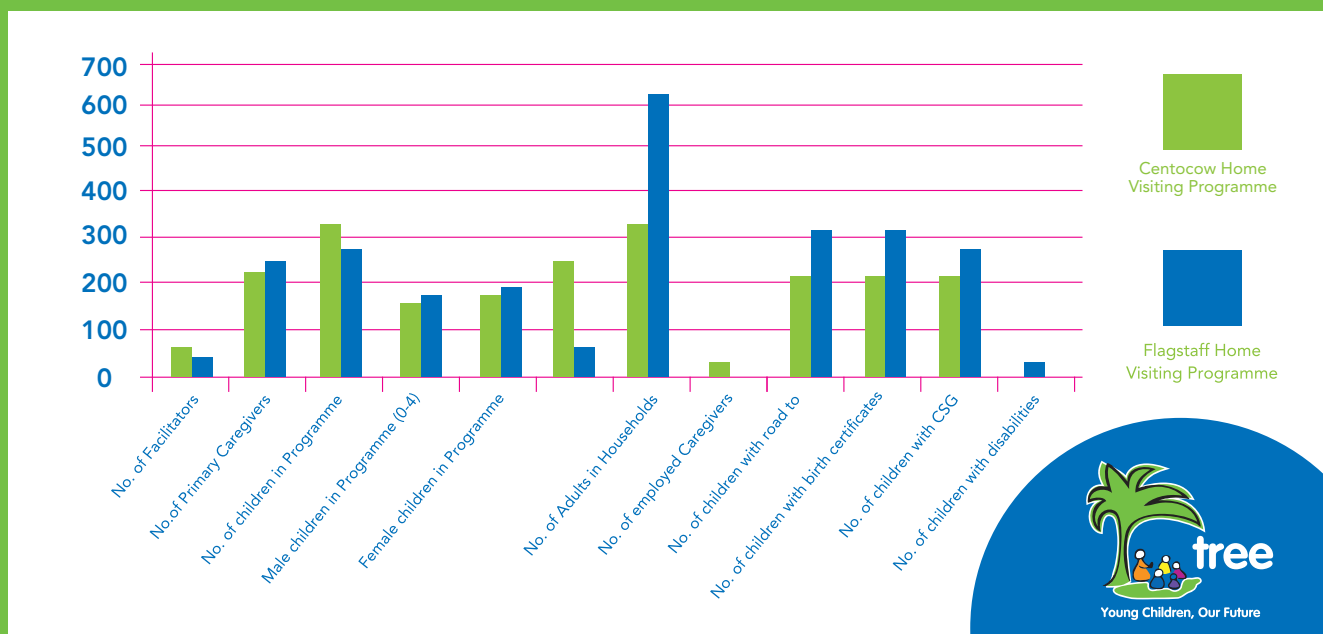
1. Increased knowledge and understanding of Children's rights through;
 - increased access to services,
 - improved knowledge and community awareness of ECD and
 - improved advocacy.
2. The holistic needs of children in the 0-4 age cohort are met through;
 - increased number of children reaching developmental milestones,
 - improved nutrition, health and hygiene in the homes and
 - improved daily care of children.
3. Improved access to resources and services through;
 - increased number of children being stimulated using learning resources and
 - increased number of children accessing services through referrals to clinics, Department of Home Affairs, SASSA, Department of Social Development increased involvement of local Stakeholders
4. Community development and empowerment through;
 - improved knowledge and skills on the facilitation of Early Childhood learning and development programmes,
 - sustainable ECD interventions and
 - increased number of programmes receiving government support and funding.

ECD ENABLING ENVIRONMENT (EEE)

As per TREE's integrated approach to Early Childhood Development, the EEE unit comprises of three (3) Programmes; namely the Home Visiting Programme, the Structured Playgroups Programme, and the Community Toy Library Programme. All these Programmes have comprehensive tools that now allow us to take stock in terms of reach for the year 2014. The Programmes were rolled out in five (5) areas; i.e. Centocow, Flagstaff, Ladysmith, Umzimkhulu, and Weenen.

Home Visiting Programme

The Home Visiting Programmes were rolled out in 2 areas; i.e. Centocow and Flagstaff.



The above Graph shows results in terms of our reach through the Home Visiting Programmes in Centocow and Flagstaff. Through this Programme and 27 Family Facilitators, we were able to reach a total of 653 Children who benefited directly; 337 being in Flagstaff and 316 being in Centocow. The Home Visiting Programme further benefited 297 Children who fall outside TREE's age cohort (0 – 4), but are under the care of the 449 Primary Caregivers and Households reached. Of the 653 Children who are direct beneficiaries; 528 have Birth Certificates; 527 have Road to Health Cards; and 469 receive the Child Support Grant. The figures also illustrate to us that the number of adults living in households is at 998 when only 28 of the Primary Caregivers are employed. While all these individuals have benefited indirectly from the Programme; it does suggest to some extent that most of the families are financially strained which may result in the wellbeing of Children being compromised.

In addressing this phenomenon; it is necessary that the Children whose parents are unemployed and have no documentation to access support services from government, are assisted by being referred to the relevant government service points. To complement referrals; it is essential that adults are encouraged to form Self Help Groups where they will start Savings, start food gardens, and engage in other activities that will generate income for the households. This will ensure that each household is able to provide children with the necessary nutrition that is essential for their overall development. The economic activeness of parents complements the goals of each of TREE's Programme as it ensures the environment of the Child is conducive for its overall development.

Overall; for the year 2015; it is essential that we engage in activities that will promote the knowledge and understanding of Children’s rights amongst parents, community members, and key stakeholders. This will be done through strengthening the capacity of Family Facilitators; having at least 40 Awareness Workshops, having at least 1000 home visiting sessions, and having at least 60 young women participating in our Buddy Programme. To ensure that the holistic needs of Children between the ages of 0-4 are met; parents must be trained on effective parenting; 50% of the families must set up domestic gardens; at least 1000 Children must receive nutritional supplements; inter-sectorial meetings for purposes of resource and services linkages must be held quarterly; and more must be done in terms of increasing awareness for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) practices in the homes and communities.

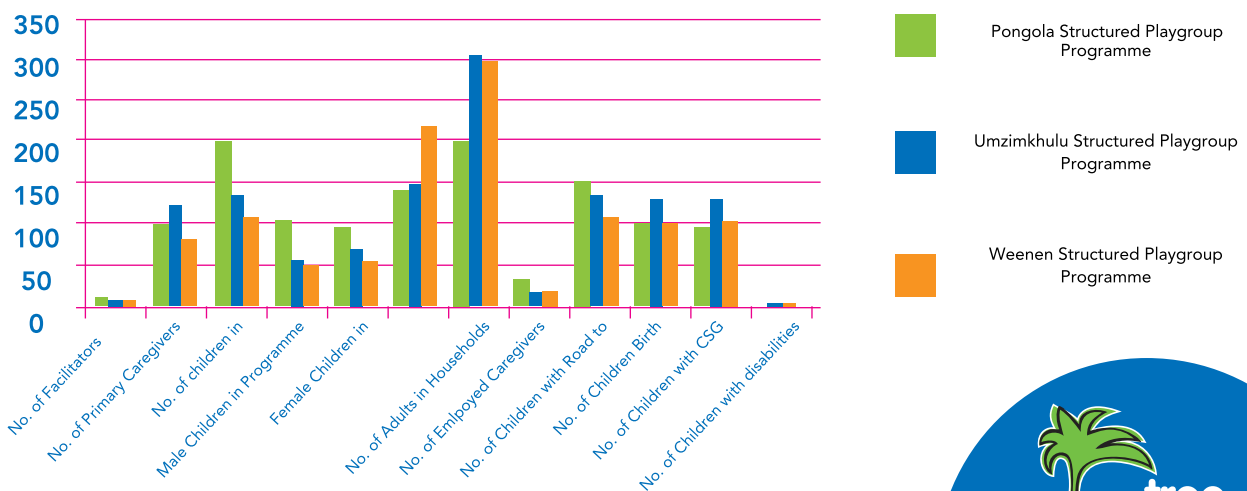
Furthermore; to improve access to resources and services; there will be monthly and quarterly meetings with stakeholders that will facilitate referrals for birth documents, state grants, social services, health services and specialised services. To complement these activities; quarterly and cluster workshops will be held so we ensure we involve and empower communities, increase our reach in terms of referrals; and ensure that all Children in our Programmes have the necessary documentation and are accessing social and health services as per their rights and needs.

Structured Playgroups Programmes (SPP)

The achievements for the SPP in Pongola, Weenen and uMzimkhulu are illustrated and detailed below. Essentially; the focus of the assessment is as that of the Home Visiting Programmes. That is; ascertaining the totals in terms of the number of Play Facilitators and Caregivers; the number of direct and indirect beneficiaries; access to essential services for Children; and the economic conditions of each household.

Table 1. Structured Playgroups: Pongola, Weenen & uMzimkhulu

	PONGOLA	WEENEN	UMZIMKHULU
Number of Play Facilitators	12	8	10
Number of Primary Caregivers	102	83	125
Number of Employed Primary Caregivers	36	18	15
Number of Adults living in the Household	203	297	304
Number of Children living in the Household in Programme (0 - 4 years)	200	107	134
Number of Children in Programme (0 -4 years): Boys	103	51	55
Number of Children in Programme (0 -4 years): Girls	97	56	70
Number of Children living in the Household not in Programme	143	221	148
Number of Children with Road to Health Cards/Clinic Cards	153	107	133
Number of Children with Birth Certificates	101	100	132
Number of Children receiving Support Grants	96	103	131
Number of Children with Disabilities	0	1	5



The graph above illustrates that 30 Play Facilitators were able to reach 953 Children; 441 being direct beneficiaries; and 512 falling outside our age cohort; i.e. 0-4 year olds. Of the 441 Children falling within our age cohort; 333 have Birth Certificates; 393 have Road to Health Cards; and 330 receive the Child Support Grant. While a majority of our direct beneficiaries have the necessary documentation and are accessing health and support services from government; a significant number of them are not accessing these services. This requires more interventions in terms of referrals so we ensure that all the Children are receiving services as per their rights and needs.

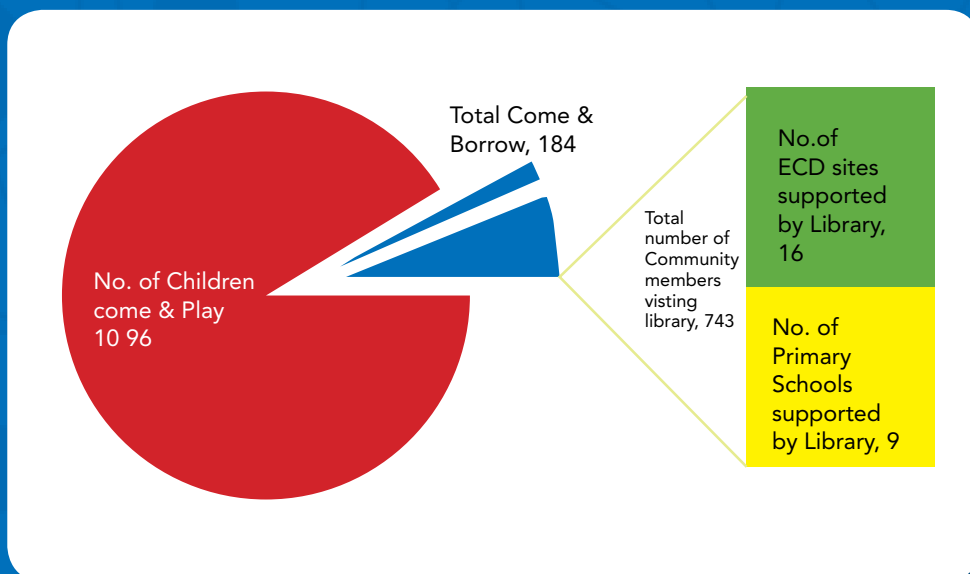
Assessing the economic conditions of each household indicates to that a significant number of the families are financially strained. Of the 310 households reached; only 69 primary caregivers are employed; meaning that over 750 adults within the households are unemployed. All this shows us is that most families compete over scarce resources; which in effect means the wellbeing of Children may at times be compromised. Although our Programmes offer nutritional packages to families in need; it is essential that sustainable interventions are introduced so we ensure that adults within household are engaged in self-sustaining economic activities.

As per TREE's integrated model to ECD; with reference to increased number of Children accessing ECD services; improved nutrition, health, and hygiene for Children; improved access to resources and services; and enhanced early learning and development; we will ensure that at least 20% of the Children are enrolled in centre-based programmes and formal school. Moreover; structured playgroup sessions will be conducted at least 4 times a week with each session lasting for at least 4 hours; 50% of the families in Programme will start domestic gardens; increase number of Children accessing social and health services; hold quarterly trainings and Skills Development on nutrition, CIMCI, and WASH; and increase reach in terms of referrals for children and families not accessing social and health services.

Toy Library Programmes (CTL)

As per TREE’s integrated model; the Toy Library Programme was rolled out in 4 areas; namely in Centocow; Flagstaff, uMzimkhulu, and Ladysmith. Our assessment here is really to take stock in terms of the number of Children reached through Come and Play; the number of those reached through Come and Borrow; the number of Play and Family Facilitators visiting the Library; the number of ECD sites, schools, and CBOs visiting the Library, and the number of disabled Children benefiting from the Library.

Area of Operation	Programme	Total of Come & Play Children		Total of Come & Borrow	Total community members visiting library	Total ECD sites supported by TL	Total ECD sites supported by TL
Centocow	CTL	2233 (T)		146	120	1	1
		1226(F)	1006 (M)				
Flagstaff	CTL	1608 (T)		19	340	2	1
		718 (F)	890 (M)				
Ladysmith	CTL	2926 (T)		5	126	4	4
		1713 (F)	1213 (M)				
Umzimkhulu	CTL	4203 (T)		14	151	9	2
		2414 (F)	1609 (M)				



As observed above; our Community Toy Library Programme reached a cumulative total of 10969 Children across the 4 areas of operation. A significant number of community members utilized the services offered by the libraries; be it to borrow resources for their Children, or to access other services rendered at the site. Figures relating to ECD sites and schools supported by the libraries are troubling. A variety of factors account for these low figures; one being, that the schools and ECD sites are not closely located to the library. This calls for more to be done in terms of promoting the library services with school teachers and ECD site Practitioners so they can borrow on behalf of the Children within their sites and schools.

In addition, and considering we are reaching more Children; more resources and equipment need to be provided to the 5 sites in 2015 so we ensure the libraries can meet the growing demands. The libraries should be seen as a community sustainable resource; and as such; more will be done in terms of setting up and demonstrating a variety of water harvesting methods across all 5 Toy Libraries. Moreover; more activities will be conducted around setting up and demonstrating food gardens so that community members are empowered to set up their own; and start defeating poverty in the 5 communities.

Area of Operation	Programme	Total of Come & Play Children			Total of Come & Borrow	Total community members visiting library	Total ECD sites supported by TL	Total ECD sites supported by TL
		(T)	(F)	(M)				
Indaka	CTL	2926 (T)	1713 (F)	1213 (M)	5	126	4	4
Umzimkulu	CTL	4203 (T)	(F)	(M)	14	151	9	2

Indaka Community Toy Library Programme

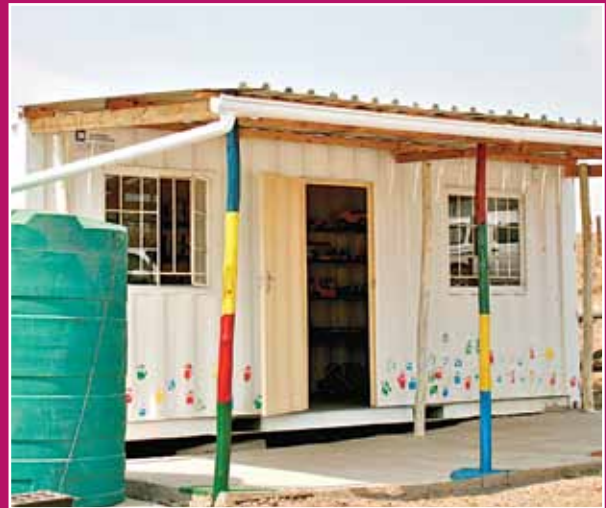
The Toy Library in Indaka has reached a total of 2926 children, and has over a 120 community members who visit to access the services offered. The site supports 4 ECD sites and 4 schools in the community; all of whom have Children in the 0-4 age cohort under their care. More needs to be done to ensure the Library reaches more schools and ECD sites; regardless of how far they are located from the site. This will increase numbers of those that visit the Library to borrow educational toys; and ensure we are reaching children remotely located from the Library. Indaka is a fairly notorious area for its wide spread settlements meaning that many families are without services. It is very common in this area to have children who wait to start school till they are 9 or 10 years old, because schools are too far away to travel.

uMzimkhulu Community Toy Library Programme

The Toy Library in uMzimkhulu has done significantly well in terms of the number of Children who visit to play. The Library reached a total of 4203 Children; supported 9 ECD sites and 2 primary schools; 14 came to borrow for the children they care for; and 151 community members visited the site to access its services. The results observed above are very impressive. They indicate the library is effective in terms of exposure in the community and reach to children. This means that even children who are unable to visit the library access its services in terms of ECD site Practitioners, parents, and community members borrowing items for the children they care for. Although the results are good; more must be done to ensure the library supports more schools.

In the past year TREE opened the 5th Toy Library and Community Development Centre in the Flagstaff Community in the Eastern Cape... And plans for the 6th Library are underway!

When you have the privilege of working with young children you have to constantly be innovative with ensuring their needs are met to the best standard! TREE's Toy library and Community Development Centres are something we are very proud of as the TREE team – these centres serve as a community resource, making educational toys available for play as well as offering information, guidance and support. A trained Toy Librarian that also facilitates teacher guided play sessions on a daily basis manages each centre.



The Solon Foundation generously funded this amazing TREE Toy Library for the Flagstaff Community in the Eastern Cape.

Azi umntwana wakho

Ukhozi FM is driving an ECD radio programme funded by Ilifa. They call their slot "Azi umntwana wakho."- This translates into "Know your child". The interactive show is presented by Nongcebo McKenzie and is a brilliant platform for isiZulu listeners to learn more about the importance of Early Childhood Development. TREE has our very own radio celebrity in our ECD Enabling Environment Manager – Nozipho. The topics Nozipho has covered include Language development; supporting preschoolers development and the importance of play. The main objectives of the radio show highlight just how important this is for the communities who listen in and are able to call in and ask questions.



Thank you to Ilifa and Ukhozi FM for joining with us and seeing just how valuable Early Childhood Development knowledge can be for parents and individuals who work with young children every day!

7

Toy Libraries
in 2 years

1206

Practitioners
Trained

Over
1000

ECD Sites
Supported



42102

Children
Reached

62

Community
Facilitators
Trained

30



1984 - 2014

YEARS

Celebrating



9360 Children

3276 Children

16 162 Children

12 558 Children



Tree Centres

Tree Training

in Early Childhood Development

MONITORING & EVALUATION, RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE PRACTICE

The Lego Foundation

In August of 2014, TREE won a proposal to work with The Lego Foundation which meant that we were an implementing partner to run The Six Bricks randomised Control Study with 75 practitioners across KZN. The main purpose of the randomized control trial is to assess the impact of a “Six Bricks” intervention on children’s executive functioning in the specific context of South Africa. Executive functions, such as working memory and inhibitory control, have been related to improvements in children’s performance; longer-term attainments; well-being, and associative processes related to the ability for creative thinking. The intervention using Six (Duplo) Bricks aims for children to become more engaged learners, specifically by promoting their executive functions (EFs) through meaningful, challenging and playful experiences.

This methodology has already began making an impact in our training methods. What is particularly revolutionary is the potential impact one can make on a child using just six Duplo bricks. We can’t wait to see the results as they are bound to have a wide ranging impact.

BACK TO BASICS
WITH
6 BRICKS



Going back to basics is just what might be required!

Universal Psychosocial Indicator for 5 year olds

TREE was chosen to participate in a Psychosocial Research project being conducted in 4 Provinces across South Africa. The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund in South Africa and the Liberty Foundation in the Netherlands are financially supporting the project.

UPSI-5 (Universal Psychosocial Indicator for Five-Year-Old Boys and Girls) is an easy-to-use screening tool, which was developed by International Child Development Initiatives, an international child-focused organization in the Netherlands, to assess the psycho-social wellbeing of large populations of young children.

In this study we are looking into UPSI's relevance in South Africa. The focus is finding out how having more information about young children's social and emotional wellbeing will encourage decision makers (education leaders, departments of education, principals and teachers) to pay more attention to the psychosocial needs of young children in their policies and programmes. TREE was selected as a Research partner in collecting data on 500 Grade R children in primary schools around KZN.

The results of this study will be discussed with representatives of key ministries, (international) child development organisations, policy makers, school teachers and parent representatives at a workshop which will take place at the end of 2015. Overall findings and recommendations will be documented on a Policy Paper.



INTER-SECTORIAL NETWORK

In order to ensure the development of the child to her/his fullest potential, education cannot be isolated from healthcare, social services, early childhood development, participation in cultural activities and play, housing or transport. Children in poor socio-economic conditions are the most vulnerable and are most in need of an integrated approach to their educational and development needs. In addition, to ensure quality education that meets the different needs of children, close and active collaboration between Government departments and different sectors is essential.

Despite the fact that inter-departmental collaboration has been openly encouraged in policy, in practice there is insufficient evidence of significant achievement of this goal. TREE has made great strides in putting structures in place to ensure inter-departmental collaboration regarding the implementation of early childhood development and child justice. TREE has established inter-sectorial committees in all five areas of implementation which consist of senior officials from the range of government departments that are relevant to the implementation of that legislation. This network was established for the purpose of ensuring the right to education of children.

In addition to government initiatives, civil society organisations such local municipalities, provide services and support to children and their families within their jurisdiction. Thus local municipalities are included in structures for inter-sectorial collaboration.

With these networks, TREE has managed to receive support such as sanitation for a toy library, toys, training and meeting venues, and free security for community based resources.

Some benefits received as a direct result of the Inter -sectorial structures in our programme areas:

ROLE PLAYER	WHAT HAS BEEN DONE / WHAT IS PLANNED
Department of Health	Sites used as mobile clinics to promote maternal health and children's health
Department of Basic Education	Committed to supporting the toy library programme through local schools
Department of Agriculture	Both uMzimkhulu libraries have been adopted by this department
Department of Public Works	Community Works Programme supports the libraries by rendering services such as grass cutting and garden preparation
Department of Home Affairs	Will use the libraries as a mobile office
Department of Safety and Security	Has been invited to visit and conduct child safety workshops with play facilitators and parents in uMzimkhulu
Department of Social Development	Has visited the libraries in uMzimkhulu, Flagstaff and Centocow. These visits have been promoting appropriate toy usage in ECD centres.
District and Local Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uMzimkhulu – district municipality donated toys • uMzimkhulu – transportation for children from an ECD centre that is 6.5km away from the toy library to attend a play session • Flagstaff – Sanitation facility has been donated, awaiting installation

TRAINING & EDUCATION

TRAINING PROGRAMME – ANALYSIS OF TRAINING OUTPUTS FOR 2014

Many South African children face considerable barriers to learning: poverty, poor facilities, overcrowded classes, a lack of facilities and resources, illness and family problems. And with so many of their parents struggling with illiteracy and poverty, the learning environment at home and in the community is less than ideal. If we don't improve community access to a decent education in South Africa, the next generation faces a very uncertain future. This is further exacerbated by unsafe infrastructure, unqualified teachers, unhealthy learning environments, poor nutrition, and insufficient emphasis on children's cognitive, physical, emotional and social development.

Many who start ECD centres – often in their own homes – frequently lack at the outset the education, skills and confidence to successfully run a centre. Many under-resourced centres function as little more than “holding pens” for children. Furthermore, in order to register with government and receive subsidies, centres must meet minimum requirements in areas including infrastructure, financial management, curriculum and teacher training – requirements they are often unable to satisfy without external assistance. Without government support, they struggle to fund daily operations or pay practitioners, let alone upgrade to meet government requirements.

The TREE training programme seeks to develop and empower fledgling, under-resourced, marginalised ECD sites develop into sustainable, quality early childhood education providers through long-term mentorship relationships. They help develop institutional capacity, staff capacity and practice to help these sites develop from struggling centres to government-registered quality education providers – ultimately to help these sites achieve self-sustainability.

It is evident that TREE's impact in terms of reach has been widespread and largely focused on the rural corridors of the province.

The aim of the TREE training programme is to improve practitioner development and capacity which is achieved through accredited ECD Qualification at NQF Level 4, skills training programmes on a foundational (Basic, Orientation and CPW) and enrichment programmes (WASH, SGHC, CIMCI, RHT, Positive Living) and providing support, monitoring and assessment visits to practitioners in their ECD sites.

The programme also aims to improve resource and institutional capacity through resource support - producing and packaging educational and culturally appropriate toys (in line with developmental areas), equipment and printed resource materials, skills training on Applied Paper Technology – producing educational equipment from waste and other materials and skills training on Committee skills (governing body), MSSECD (supervisors), Parenting (Parents, Caregivers, Practitioners)

Our aim is also intended to promote networking and advocacy with government departments at local, provincial and national levels, as well as other stakeholders, on all issues that affect young children in particular ECD Forums, Dept of Education and Dept Social Development.

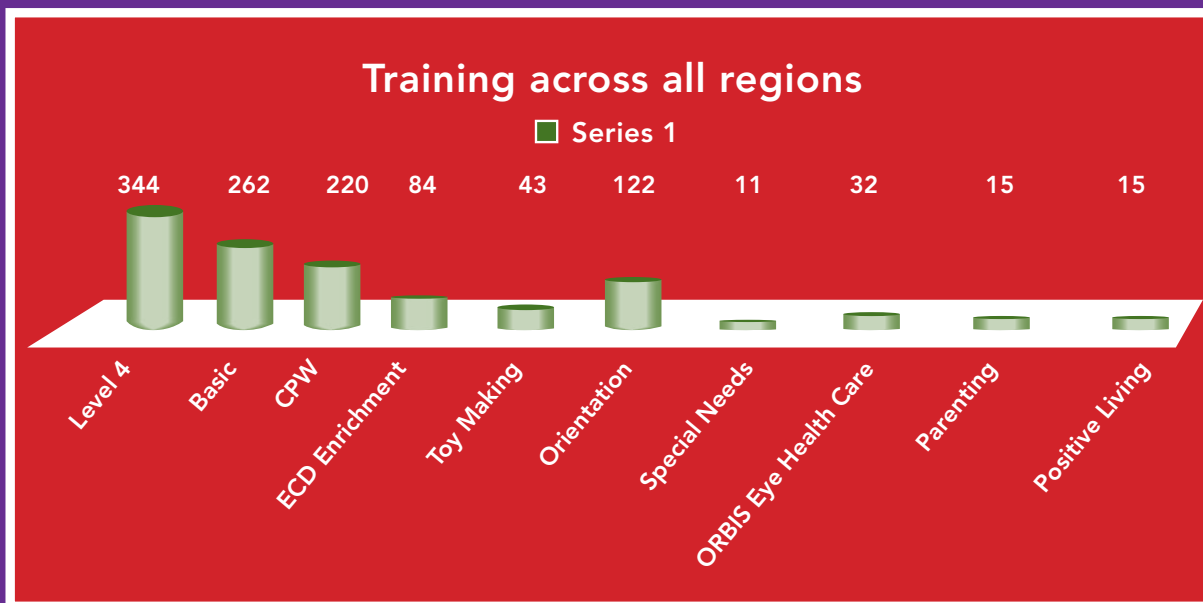
Through this basket of training programmes, TREE ultimately develops the capacity of practitioners, supervisors, governing body members, parents and ECD forum members so that the ECD sites are established as a sustainable resource within communities. This scaffolding process also ensures that a firm foundation for a child's educational trajectory are established.

TREE continues to be one of the leading training providers in the KZN and Eastern Cape provinces. We are particularly proud to be playing this capacity building role as we ensure that the majority of poor children reached by these passionate women are reached with a quality service that is nationally recognised at the ECD NQF Level 4. 2014, was an exceptionally busy year for the training department reaching over 1206 practitioners across all courses. Although this number is lower than last year, many of those who have completed the foundational short courses in ECD, have now registered into the Level 4 qualification. TREE is therefore facilitating an increased number of longer term full qualifications. There has also been a marked increase in the number of practitioners that have self-funded themselves through various courses. This indicates the level and demand that is growing within our communities of the importance of ECD but also the importance of having qualified personnel's within an ECD site.

In response to the need and demand for training, TREE has also sponsored deserving and exceptional fee-paying learners with bursaries for completing their level 4 qualifications. Four (4) practitioners were awarded with bursaries to complete a full ECD FETC Level 4 qualification. We're finding it increasingly difficult to find funding for qualifications training as more and more funders seem to want to fund direct community programmes. However in our experience, it is imperative that we continue to train more people in ECD qualifications; there is still so much need out there.

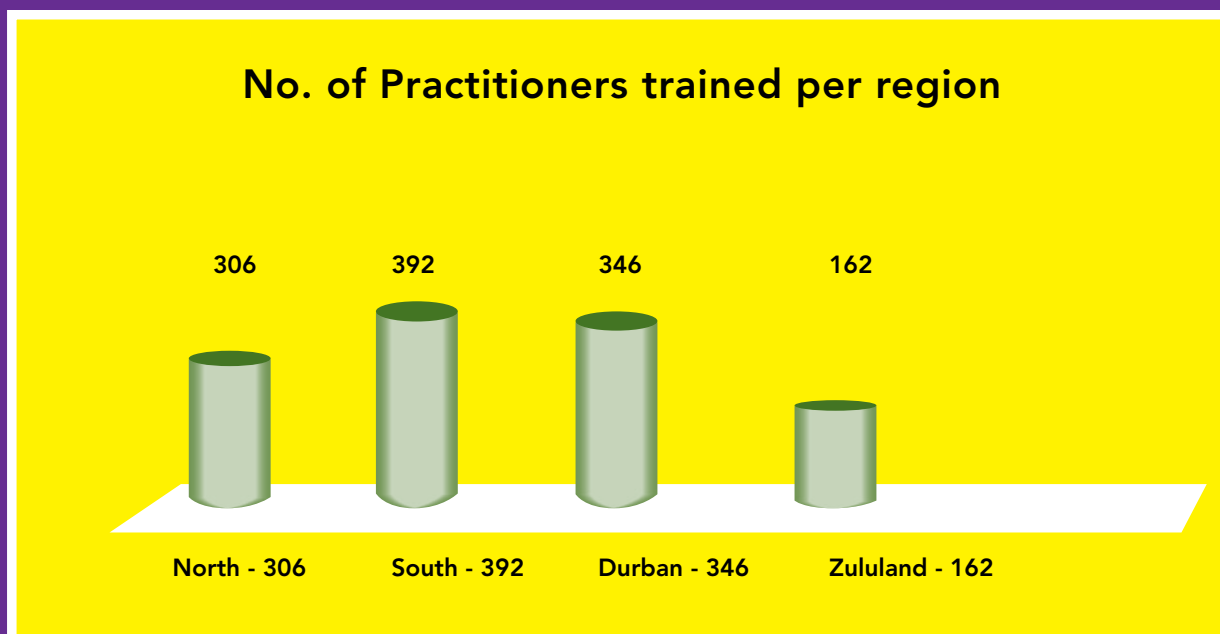


NUMBERS OF PRACTITIONERS TRAINED PER COURSE ACROSS ALL REGIONS



The table above demonstrates that the foundational, basic and classroom practice workshop course are more popular with practitioners. This also illustrates that the number of practitioners seeking the accredited level 4 training will also increase in the following financial year. TREE is therefore taking measures to increase training of this qualification.

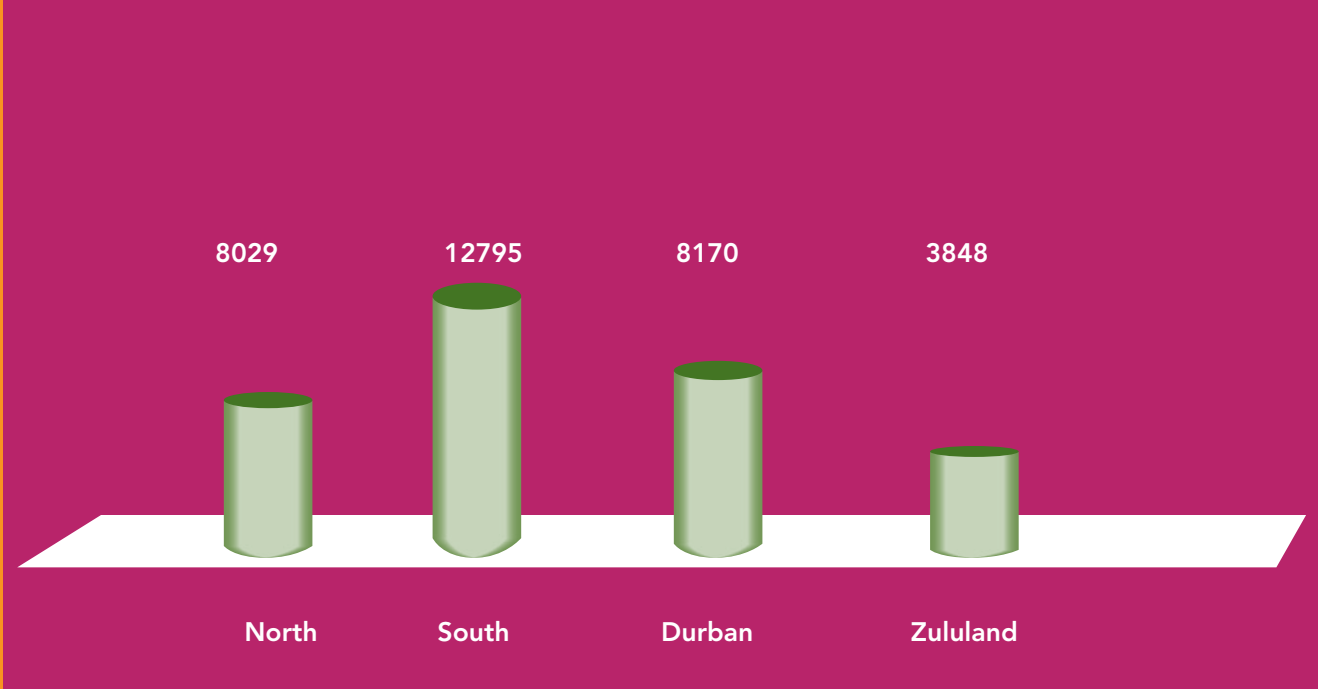
PRODUCTIVITY PER REGION



The graph indicates the number of practitioners being trained per region. The Durban team has trained 346 practitioners. The South team has trained the highest number of practitioners. Further plans to extend this training centre needs to be implemented. The North team has trained 306 practitioners and the Zululand team has trained 162 practitioners.

A TOTAL NUMBER OF 1206 PRACTITIONERS HAVE BEEN TRAINED IN THE REPORTED PERIOD

No. of Children reached per region



Total number of children reached 32 842

In 2014, TREE trained 1206 ECD Practitioners and 62 community facilitators in Early Childhood Development Based Accredited and Non Accredited Skills and Enrichment Courses and Qualifications. Through this array of training, we have reached 42102 children both in the ECD site support as well as through the home and community based programming in the most marginalised communities across KwaZulu Natal and into the Eastern Cape. This training and capacity building has had a profound impact on the children's' holistic development by ensuring that they access a suite of age-appropriate ECD Services through direct support and referrals.

In addition, the programme has been able to track all elements of TREEs Essential Package. Good early childhood development (ECD) interventions can mitigate many of the serious problems associated with the effects of poverty on children's growth and development. Studies in Jamaica show that stunted children who were exposed to cognitive stimulation performed much better than equally stunted children who did not have the same stimulating experiences (Walker et al, 2005). By age 17-18 years, stunted children without stimulation performed significantly worse on standardised tests, while those who were stunted and received stimulation performed almost as well as those who had normal growth. International research suggests that there are several features that make an ECD intervention effective. Effective interventions are likely to be those that:

- Provide direct learning experiences to children and families;
- Are targeted towards younger and more disadvantaged children;
- Continue for longer and are of higher quality and intensity;
- Are integrated with family support, health, nutrition and educational systems and services (Biersteker & Kvalsvig, 2007).

TREE Trainers come together for MINI TRAINING INDABA

TREE takes pride in ensuring our training staff are continuously being developed to enhance the quality of training we give to practitioners from all over our province. Our last TRAINING INDABA took place on the 19 and 20 June 2014.

TREE Director, Bertha Magoge, started off the Indaba with an enlightening presentation about UTHANDO DOLLS and what a great benefit it is for TREE to be receiving them. Trainers each spoke about the way they teach ECD site practitioners how to use the Uthando dolls in their day-to-day interaction with young children.

Management and staff members each had a session with the trainers refreshing them with the many tools we use as an organisation and how to ensure the individuals we work with are receiving the highest quality of training they deserve to impact on our future leaders in South Africa. A workshop on Classroom Practice Skills was also conducted. This equipped and refreshed the trainer's skills on how to ensure a classroom is run and set out effectively.



"No one has yet fully realized the wealth of sympathy, kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child. The effort of every true education should be to unlock that treasure."

Emma Goldman, author



LOBBYING, ADVOCACY & AWARENESS



Awareness

One of TREE's Essential Package components is 'The Parenting Programme'. This involves encouraging and assisting ECD sites to teach parents and child caregivers how to be involved in supporting ECD programmes and assist practitioners in promoting quality Early Childhood Development services. This valuable parenting component is thriving at Sam Preschool in the Flagstaff, Eastern Cape area.

Supervisor and practitioner of Sam Preschool, Bulewa Ngaza, has worked together with the parents and caregivers of the thirty (2-4 year old) children of the school. Together they have built much needed structures such as toilets and outdoor play equipment.

This innovative thinking and working together proves that, with parenting support as the essential component, ECD sites can improve child stimulation, development and quality ECD Programmes.



TREE'S TOY SHOP AND TOY MANUFACTURING WORKSHOP

The TREE Toy Shop has had an exciting year with an energy boost of sales and interest in our wonderful toys and resources. Great care and thought goes into every item we stock in the TREE Toy Shop – we want our Early Childhood Resources to be affordable as well as appropriate learning materials for young children in any type of ECD site – rural or urban. Our teaching aids are produced in-house and are treasures for anyone working with young children – with books that give you themes for the entire year to stories and activities to use in the classroom.

The most exciting part about the TREE Toy Shop is our workshop, where our two experienced and skilled Toy Makers produce a wide range of handmade, wooden toys that are painted or dip dyed in non-harmful, child friendly paint. We continue to produce some “old but favourite” items and have also begun adding new items to the line of Proudly South African, multi-functional toys that cater for the four developmental areas of Early Childhood Developmental learning: Cognitive, Social, Emotional and Physical. Our newly renovated website will soon have an online shop up and running so you can do your toy shopping online!



SPONSOR A PRACTITIONER

Across South Africa there are communities living in abject poverty affecting young children. Communities that often reach a point of paralysis where they cannot see a way out of their dire situation.

TREE (Training and Resources in Early Education) has a vision that ensures young children develop to their full potential in line with their rights and needs – a way out of the poverty cycle!

At the core of TREE's mission is capacity building, focusing on quality education and training programmes for those responsible for the care of young children.

A PASSION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

In every community that TREE works in, there are always individuals that have a BIG heart and passion for the young children they work with. The vulnerability of the areas we work in often leads to little or no means of development and qualifications to fuel the passion that comes with working with young children!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SPONSOR A PRACTITIONER?

By sponsoring a practitioner you are:

- Providing a FUTURE for not only a passion-filled individual but also for young children from impoverished areas!
- Your funding means an opportunity for skills development and a qualification in Early Childhood Development.
- One practitioner impacts on the development of around 30-50 young children – establishing a firm foundation of their educational trajectory.

HOW DO I SPONSOR A PRACTITIONER?

CONTACT US TO FIND OUT DETAILS OF THE SPONSORSHIP

You can also contribute towards the supply of educational toys for the children through toy kits filled with quality toys from our TREE Toy Shop.

YOUR SPONSORSHIP AND THE OUTCOMES TREE PURSUES

- Empowered communities by developing champions that lead ECD programmes.
- Investment into the next generation.
- Sustained livelihoods and a guaranteed future for children.



HUMAN RESOURCES

This year, as TREE turns 30, we would like to pay a special tribute to 3 members of staff who have journeyed with the organisation. These are staff that have been there right from the beginning and have seen the growth of TREE from its very humble beginning under a TREE to now when it has become a formidable ECD organisation with much good will in the community. Collectively, they have racked up a whopping 81 years of service to this organisation. We honour their dedication and perseverance, even through some of the difficult years. We wish them well and bid them a well-deserved retirement.

Nonhlanhla Primrose Maduna
(26 years of service)
Project Coordinator:
Education and Training Support



Muriel Nomandla Mbele
(29 years of service)
Project Coordinator:
Education, Training, Quality Assurance
Development and Support



Thenjiwe Mavundla
(26 years of service)
Area Coordinator



FUNDER VISITS

When TREE partners with funders, we see amazing growth. It is always inspiring when our passion for South Africa's future is met with equal passion – after all this vital intervention will lead to a higher return in our country's future – a benefit for every single citizen! What can be better than that?



A very big Thank You to The Helwel Trust for their support in ensuring long term sustainability within the Nquthu Community. Together we can ensure the best possible start for these children.



The structured Playgroup Programmes in the Umzimkulu area are growing from strength to strength thanks to the support of the Jim Joel Fund. This funding has helped a small home-based playgroup become a registered Early Childhood Development Centre – what an achievement!



THANK YOU to Kinderfonds Mamas for your amazing care and dedication to these communities!

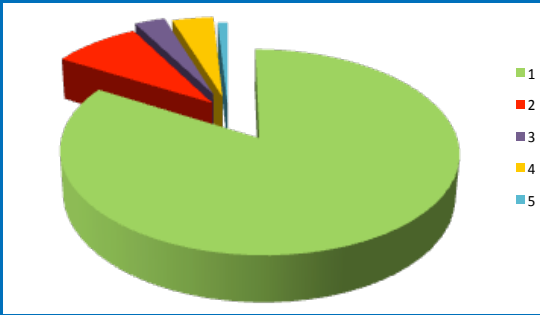


Joint Aid Management (JAM) continues support over 2,000 children daily with porridge...this gives them the best start to early education.



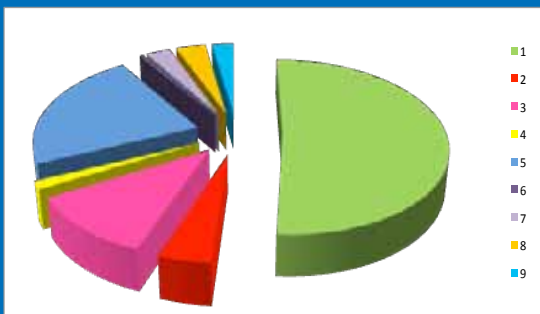
Sappi's vision is to improve the quality of life of the people residing in the communities within which Sappi operates and where the majority of their staff reside, by enabling them to provide for their own immediate needs and empowering them to better themselves and their communities in the future.

FINANCIALS



INCOME FOR 2014				
	2014		2013	
1. Donations	13 468 575	84%	12 962 218	85%
2. Fees	1 372 204	9%	1 480 370	10%
3. Interest earned on investments	477 513	3%	541 953	4%
4. Shop	644 455	4%	193 333	1%
5. Sundry Income	152 209	1%	127 349	1%
	16 114 956		15 305 223	

Figures above are reporting on 2014 Financial Year



EXPENDITURE FOR 2014				
	2014		2013	
1. Employee costs	8 079 792	51%	8 440 345	55%
2. Vehicle costs	691 532	4%	778 320	5%
3. Administration costs	1 788 458	11%	1 344 130	9%
4. Fundraising costs	225 139	1%	202 624	1%
5. Project Costs	3 545 064	22%	3 827 832	25%
6. Staff development	71 803	0%	61 403	0%
7. Capex	446 514	3%	303 076	2%
8. Training costs	542 251	3%	399 780	3%
9. Contribution to Charitable Trust	400 000	3%		0%
	15 790 553		15 357 510	

Figures above are reporting on 2014 Financial Year

Income

Our total income for 2014 increased by over 6% which is very encouraging. We are one of the few remaining service providers of training in the ECD sector. We have made every effort to increase our self-generated income as we cannot expect donations to be our only source of income in the uncertain economic situation.

The gross profit from our shop increased significantly from the previous year. We have adopted a business plan for 2015 which will continue to develop our own capacity in our manufacturing department.

Expenditure

Employee costs remain our largest expense - we, however, were able to reduce the costs from 2013 by re-structuring departments so that we did not have to fill some vacant positions.

Project costs which make up the second largest expense reduced slightly due to some projects ending in 2014 - these costs are made up of stipends for project staff, toy kits for sites, accommodation & meals for the practitioners on training and consultants who are needed in the implementation of some projects.

Our administration costs increased due to the urgent need to upgrade our computer network system and replace our entire electrical wiring as well as increase security at Head Office.

Our current fleet of vehicles is made up of 3 leased, 2 sponsored and 5 TREE owned. We have introduced trackers on all our vehicles to be able to monitor the use of our vehicles in the field. This has resulted in a decrease in expenses.

We were able to transfer part of our surplus funds into our Endowment Fund in 2014. It was very encouraging that we were able to cover our expenses in 2014 and take forward a small surplus to 2015 which is an improvement from 2013 where we were required to cover the deficit from our accumulated funds.

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

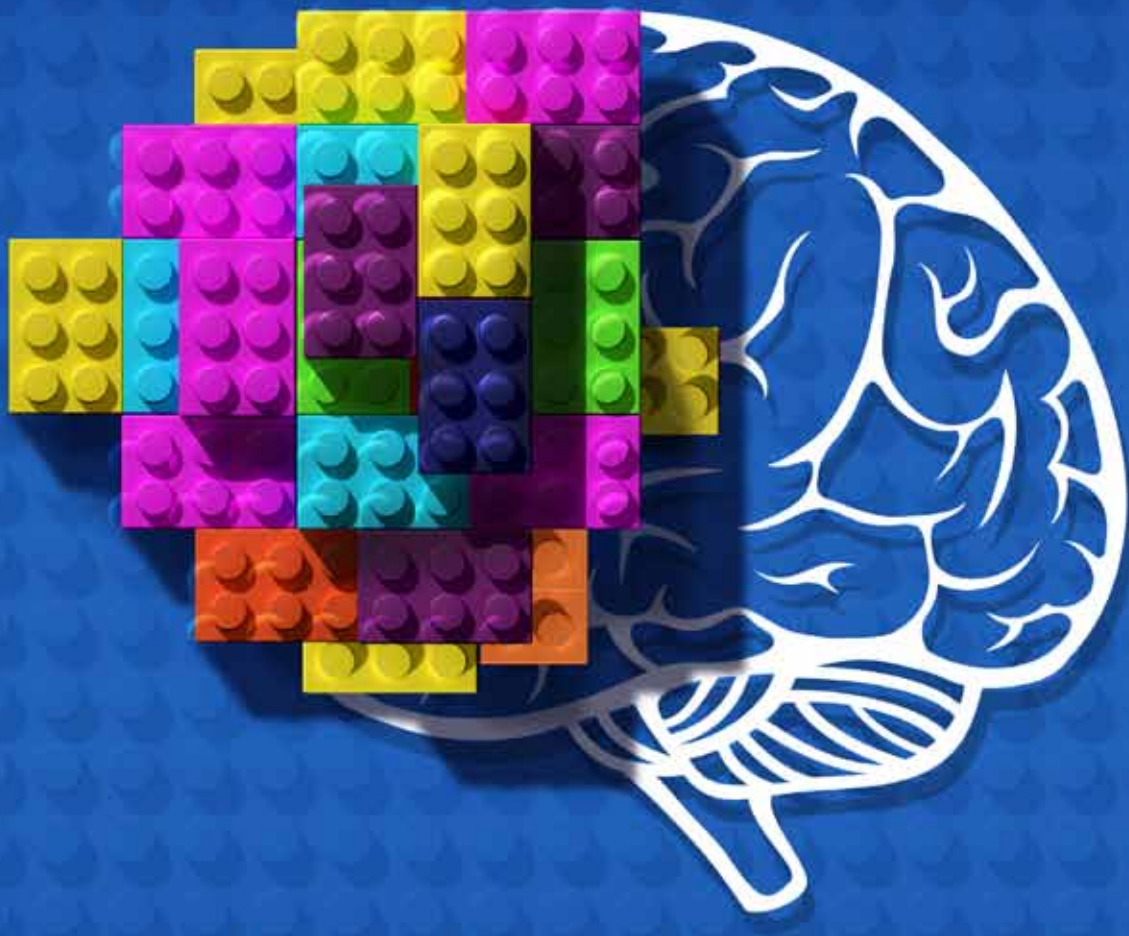
- ABI
- AC Exports
- Adapt It
- Anglo American Chairman's Fund
- Apex HI
- Dunlop
- Department of Social Development
- Department of Agriculture
- Durban Country Club - Ladies Section
- Edna Burford Trust
- Edward Murphy Will Trust
- Elma Philanthropies
- Eskom
- Excel Cars
- Greater Good South Africa
- Grindrod Family Centenary Trust
- Ilembe Chamber of Commerce
- DG Murray Trust (Ilifa Labantwana)
- J.N.V. Thabetha
- Jim Joel Fund
- Joint Aid Management (J.A.M.)
- Kinderfonds Mamas
- Loewenstein Investec
- MySchool (Woolworths)
- National Development Agency (NDA)
- National Lotteries Distribution Trust Fund
- NCP Alcohols
- Oppenheimer Memorial Trust
- Orbis Africa NPC
- Oxfam Australia
- SAPPI Southern Africa Pty Ltd
- Steel King Centre
- Sugar Industry Trust Fund for Education (SITFE)
- The Afrisun KZN Community Trust
- The Fulton Trust
- The Greenacre Remembrance Foundation
- The Helwel Trust
- The Solon Foundation
- The Victor Daitz Foundation
- Uthando
- We are Durban
- Wiphold Investment Trust

“ Children learn as they play. Most importantly, in play children learn how to learn.” ○ Fred Donaldson

“ We are grateful to all these partners for investing in our children so that they can reach their full potential”



Young Children, Our Future



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