



## PROTECTING THE INNOCENT: FAS AND UNBORN CHILDREN

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Prevention and education around Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is another key priority and high-profile programme in SAB's revised alcohol strategy.

Our goal, is to protect vulnerable unborn children at risk when pregnant mothers abuse alcohol.

National epidemiological data for FAS is not yet available, but we know that areas in the Western and Northern Cape (including De

Aar, Upington, and Wellington) show FAS statistics at unacceptably high levels.

SAB is taking action through strategic partnerships with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Western and Northern Cape, by funding impactful intervention programmes to radically increase the reach by 500% and hence in the longer term, to bring down high FAS rates in these areas.

SAB in partnership with the Eastern Cape Liquor Board (ECLB) and the Foundation for Alcohol Related Research (FARR) have also implemented a 3-year FAS Prevalence study and an Awareness and Prevention Programme in Bethelsdorp, Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, the first of its kind in the Eastern Cape. As part of the programme the partners launched The Healthy Mother Healthy Baby programme in the Bethelsdorp community on 9 September 2015.

This awareness and prevention programme will address many of the health and psycho-social challenges that were identified as part of a FAS prevalence study that was conducted in the community. It includes a focus on nutrition, depression, exercise and substance abuse.

The aim is to support mothers and their families to have healthier pregnancies and healthier babies. The Healthy Mother, Healthy Baby programme will be offered to all the pregnant women, not only those who are consumers of alcohol, at selected ante-natal clinics in the area.

To strengthen the positive impact of the programme, FARR and SAB also established an Early Childhood Development Centre (ECD) in Bethelsdorp to provide formal child care enabling mothers to return to work confident that their children are well looked after.