



FARR is dedicated to building positive futures in South African communities

2020/2021



Together Towards Tomorrow



BOARD MEMBERS



Adrian Botha
New Chairperson



Prof Denis Viljoen
Board Member



Prof JP van Niekerk
Board Member



Dr Leana Olivier
CEO - FARR



Dr Louisa Bhengu
Board Member



Prof Marietjie De Villiers
Board Member

Our Vision

FARR is dedicated to building positive futures in South African communities by significantly reducing birth defects caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy. The focus of our major activities is on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).

Our Mission

FARR will achieve our vision and become the household name in our field by implementing, impactful direct community interventions, driving social awareness programmes, conducting world-class research and by offering a full range of diagnosis, management, support, training, educational and mentorship services whilst maintaining our high ethical standards and respecting human and child rights.

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Editorial Team

Charmine Sobey
Liska White
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Cover Photograph: Tarryn Le Roux

FARR follows strict COVID-19 protocols during all our activities. Masks were only removed for the purpose of taking the photographs.

Please Note: Pictures in this newsletter DO NOT depict children with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), but all children from the communities who participate in FARR's activities.

Seize the Day

by Adrian Botha (Chairman of FARR Board)



Angelique Rossouw (CFO), Adrian Botha (Chairperson) & Dr Leana Olivier (CEO)

When our esteemed Board Member Prof JP van Niekerk crafted that wonderful piece, brimming with positivity for the last newsletter, we had little idea of what lay in front of us. How could we have known or even envisaged the devastating impact of COVID-19?

2020/21 brought us illness, deaths, economic misery and a dramatic change in our everyday lives. To add to this, we lost our wonderful colleague and fellow Board Member Prof Tania

Douglas. This came as a shock to us all, and I wish to use this opportunity to express our most sincere condolences to her family.

To further compound the period of upheaval, the man who started it all, Prof Denis Viljoen chose to step down as Chairman of the Board, a position he has filled with aplomb since inception. We are fortunate however in being able to retain his experience and sound counsel as a Board Member and I wish at this point to sincerely thank him for what he has done for FARR and the incredibly positive impact his vision has had on countless lives in this country.

Amidst all these changes and turmoil, it is heart-warming to see how South Africans, and in particular our colleagues at FARR, rose to the unbelievable challenges and were not deterred in achieving their goals.

Albert Einstein made the point that: "life is like riding a bicycle, to keep your balance you must keep moving", and this is what we need to do in the years ahead as we seize every opportunity that might be provided to further our goals and objectives. I acknowledge that there will be many more and sometimes greater challenges ahead, both in our personal lives and at FARR. I believe that we can and will succeed in whatever we set out to accomplish. We must remember the wise words of the great Helen Keller, who overcame such adversity, when she wrote "when one door of happiness closes another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us".

“ Life is like riding a bicycle, to keep your balance you must keep moving. ”

Albert Einstein

Mentor-in-Chief

by Prof JP van Niekerk



It was in the early 1980's, whilst I was responsible for postgraduate education at the UCT Medical School, that I first became aware of Denis Viljoen. He was a doctoral student in the Department of Human Genetics. We became acquainted when he expressed his desire to further his studies on Fetal Alcohol

Syndrome. There were many bureaucratic and ethical hurdles to vanquish. The most challenging pertaining to the source of funding – the liquor industry. Together we managed to overcome these obstacles. Denis had a clear vision and the establishment, consequent growth and success of FARR is the result of his tenacity.

Denis attributes the achievement of his doctoral degree and academic progress to his supervisor and later colleague and friend, Prof Peter Beighton, who showed a belief in his capacity. This same lesson has been applied by Denis in his support of his colleagues at FARR. The publication of 79 research papers, the achievement of higher qualifications of FARR staff members and their positive influence on communities is testament to this.

Denis subsequently became head of the Department of Genetics at WITS University. Yet, when it became time for retirement, he didn't disappear to a life of golf and fun activities. His involvement and commitment to FARR continued. He consistently provided direction and leadership.

We can learn many lessons from the example set by Denis: Firstly, the average retirement age is no longer a sensible concept as life expectancy has increased dramatically. He was fortunate in that beyond retirement, he had a project which provided purpose for him and value for the community he so enthusiastically served. Secondly, his belief in supporting people has contributed to the enhancement of the lives of many. Thirdly, Denis has always approached his work with enthusiasm and displayed a sense of fun which is infectious. It is said that the closest we can get to immortality is to have positively influenced others. Denis has achieved this in spades!

From Humble Beginnings

by Professor Denis Viljoen

I was requested to write a short summary of important events in the life of FARR over the past 24 years. This is a difficult and problematic task and certain persons and events will not receive due recognition, BUT.....here goes.

FARR emanated from observations at the Red Cross Children's Hospital when I undertook genetic clinics whilst working for the then Head of Department, Professor Peter Beighton. Peter was always inspirational in my research career and encouraging in trying to resolve the "every-day dilemmas" found in medical genetic clinics. Of the children I evaluated, 1 in every 10 babies and their mothers had signs which could be attributed to alcohol abuse. A good friend of mine Chris Shaw, a man with major social conscience, discussed forming an NGO to address this commonly occurring major disorder. Other names familiar to FARR, Professor JP van Niekerk (Dean of Medicine, UCT), Adrian Botha (Head of Public Relations and Director of ARA), the late Tania Douglas (Professor in Medical Engineering within the Medical Faculty, UCT) and several other eminent people in the field of FASD i.e., Drs Ken Jones, Faye Calhoun and Ken Warren (all from the USA), were instrumental in various ways. The Professional Nurses became major players in the core of FARR with the familiar names of Leana Olivier, Anna-Susan Marais, Leslie Brookes, Debbie Acker and Julie Croxford.

Subsequently FARR was registered as an NGO in 1997 with three members: Chris Shaw, Julie Croxford and myself. A visit to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) in the USA and presentations of our first publication and work in genetics, persuaded NIAAA to send a group of FASD researchers to appraise the situation in Johannesburg and Cape Town. This laid the foundation for collaborative research whereby Professors Phil May, Ken Jones, Sandra and

Jo Jacobsen, Luther Robinson, Jon Aase and TK Li helped formulate research in Wellington.

The American collaborations were instrumental in FARR's staff expansion and assisted in the relocation of our offices from the Department of Human Genetics to the UCT Medical School and the Human Genetics Department at WITS. Funding from NIAAA and ARA resulted in the further increase of operations and a need for larger premises, leading to the purchase of the Rondebosch House. In 2006 Leana Olivier was appointed as CEO. During this period, many publications were added to the FARR resume with two staff members, Candice Chetty and Leigh-Anne Davies obtaining their PhD degrees from WITS University in 2012 and 2013, respectively.

Research continued and it became necessary to increase our staffing, accommodations, transport and data collection. In 2015 FARR moved to still larger premises in Bellville. A particular highlight followed in 2017 when the CEO, Dr. Leana Olivier obtained a PhD through Maastricht University and Dr. Mike Urban received a PhD from Ghent University. A number of Masters' Degrees were also obtained by staff members by means of collaborative studies with post graduate

students and other universities. Our research publications now total 79 articles.

FARR has six very supportive Board Members in Mr Adrian Botha (Chairperson), Prof JP van Niekerk, Prof Marietjie de Villiers, Dr Louisa Bhengu, Dr Leana Olivier and myself. At present we have 63 staff members working on 13 research/project sites in the Free State, Northern, Eastern and Western Cape Provinces and a Training Academy working nationally. Over the years we have also experienced tremendous kindness and collaboration from stakeholders and the communities that we have been involved with. One such instance entailed that from 2000 until December 2020 the "Pienk Huis" (or FARR-Joan Wertheim Centre) in De Aar formed the base from where services and research were delivered to the communities of De Aar. FARR is very grateful to the Wertheim family for this generous and kind contribution spanning over two decades. FARR has also been very fortunate to acquire the project offices in Bellville, Upington and Philipstown.

We are indebted to our delightful and committed staff members, our valued sponsors and the advice of our Board and Chief Financial Officer, Angelique Rossouw. All these achievements could not have been rendered

without the truly admirable dedication, vision and leadership of our CEO, Dr Leana Olivier.

I leave FARR as Chairperson, in its wonderful current position of which I am truly proud. Despite living through the ravages of the COVID-19 epidemic and the current tough economic climate, FARR strives steadfastly towards creating a better tomorrow for the communities in South Africa. I could not have envisaged so many wonderful achievements from FARR and its staff after our humble beginnings in 1997. I wish the new Chairperson, Adrian Botha, and my FARR colleagues the very best and know that they will continue to strive for excellence.



An Incredible Journey

by Diane Viljoen (Wife of Outgoing Chairperson - Prof Denis Viljoen)

What a privilege it has been to be able to support my husband Denis, on this incredible journey called FARR. When I perceive the FARR of today I cannot believe this wonderful humane, caring organization started with a conversation around our dinner table more than 24 years ago. I am so proud to be able to tell people that I was there when FARR was "born". Denis and Chris lit the flame, Leana keeps it burning brightly and all the staff make sure it never goes out.

I would like to say a special word of thanks to Leana for her incredible support of Denis and myself, especially as the years go by and we find certain activities are not as easy as they used to be. I would also like to say a big thank you to all the staff who have been extremely kind to me over so many years, with particular mention of Estelle, Lebo and Zola. Thank you also to the Board Members and to Adrian for taking over as Chairperson and, last but not least, Angelique who makes sure that the finances are in order.

May God bless you all as you soldier on for another 24 years.



Diane Viljoen and
Professor Denis Viljoen

Goodbye Dearest Tania by Dr Leana Olivier (CEO)



Prof Tania S Douglas (51) passed away on 20 March 2021 after a brave journey with cancer. She was a Professor in the Division of Biomedical Engineering at the Department of Human Biology at UCT, the SA Research Chair in Biomedical Engineering and Innovation, Director of the Biomedical Engineering Research Centre, and an esteemed academic who was bestowed with many international awards. BUT, to FARR she was just Tania, our beloved Board Member, and to me a dear friend and colleague since we met when she joined UCT in 2000.

What does one say about a beautiful, humble and caring person with an ever-present smile? Tania could marvel in even the tiniest achievement in our organization. She cheered us on and encouraged us to do more and better. With research being one of her passions, she was ever so eager to persuade us to explore hitherto unknown areas. Though blessed with a brilliant intellect, she remained humble and could easily interact with anyone - and she was FUN!

I had the privilege of attending two international conferences where she was the keynote speaker. It was indeed



Professor Tania S Douglas
1969-2021

a proud experience! I remember with fondness how we “debriefed” at the end of the day and after our presentations. Despite her youth, Tania was an inspiration and role-model, to me and many others.

I knew Tania was sick. We spoke, she shared...., but she never wanted to dwell on it. She braved her illness with immense dignity and grace, never complaining, always hoping....

Tania, your chair at the Board Meetings will remain empty, your e-mails to me are dearly missed. To say goodbye hurts so much, because there was so much more to be done, your story was not yet over. We echo the words of Bonnie Dodd: “Your memory is our keepsake with which we’ll never part. God has you in his keeping. We have you in our hearts.”

Your memory is our keepsake with which we'll never part. God has you in his keeping. We have you in our hearts.

Bonnie Dodd

From Behind the CEO's Mask

by Dr Leana Olivier (CEO)

Stating that 2020 was a horrendous year, is euphemistic, especially in the NGO sector. Our wisdom, patience and endurance were challenged to the extreme, forcing us to dig deep into our creative coffers and to appreciate what was previously taken for granted.

We gained knowledge, a new vocabulary and new skills! We now wear designer masks like Pro's and can fill a dictionary with jargon such as PPE's, social distancing, congregate settings, bio-bubble, comorbidities, etc. We learnt to deeply value our own health, every unaided breath that we take, freedom of movement and contact with those who are dear to us. In short, we have learnt to appreciate LIFE!

FARR emerged from this past year surely battle-beaten, but wiser and more skilled. We now not only know how to use Zoom and Teams, but we are zooming and teaming across the globe. Reaching far more stakeholders than before. We have learnt how to develop and offer on-line courses, counselling, and meetings. Missing the luxury of personal contact, we now truly treasure visits to our project sites, training events and few staff meetings.

Some of us suffered more than others by losing loved ones or sustaining complications after being COVID positive ourselves. In all of this we strived to be there for each other, strongly believing that two is stronger than one.

Reflecting on our unbelievable blessings and achievements during the past year,



we humbly thank our dedicated funders, who also suffered greatly due to the recession. We salute all our stakeholders who supported and cheered us on, and we embrace our brave clients for their tenacity to overcome so many hurdles.

Our theme for this newsletter and 2021 is “Together towards tomorrow”. Describing a person or organization as being “together” implies that one is confident, well organized and knows what he/she wants. We have learnt that this “togetherness” can fluctuate daily, even hourly. We have learnt to acknowledge our own vulnerabilities and to reach for support.



As bearers of hope in so many communities who have lost hope, we strongly believe in “tomorrow”, and we know that together we will achieve a better tomorrow.



Saamwees en Vrouwees

deur Rita Mentz (Projekkoördineerder)

Meeste mense het seker soos ek, 2020 met 'n groot sug van verligting vaarwel geroep en die nuwe jaar met optimistiese versigtigheid ingewag. Ons kan weer beplan en asem skep, selfs al is dit nogsteeds agter 'n masker.

Die jaar was 'n groot leerkurwe vir myself asook my regterhand, die projek se gemeenskapswerker, Eldene Kok. Beide van ons moes ons voete vind as nuwe lede van die FARR "familie" en terselfdertyd seker maak dat die FARR-naam welbekend word in die strate van Britstown. Ten spyte van al die uitdagings, het ons dit reggekry om al die voorgestelde teikens te behaal en sodoende is ons projek se fondasie stewig vasgelê.

Noudat ons projek volstroom aan die gang is, moet ons innoverend dink oor die pad vorentoe. Ons terugblik en ondervinding deur die vorige jaar kon ons inspireer met idees vir wat ons projek nóg meer kan beteken vir hierdie gemeenskap. So 'n geleentheid het homself voorgedoen tydens 'n gesprek met een van die Verpleegpersoneellede by die plaaslike kliniek

oor die jong meisies (9 – 17 jaar) van ons dorp. Hiertydens het dit duidelik geword dat hierdie ouderdomsgroep meisies heeltemal misgekyk word deur die samelewing nl. dat hul direkte omgewing byna geen stimulasie of lekker 'doendinge' aan hulle bied nie. Terug by die kantoor het ek en Eldene tot die besef gekom dat hierdie 'n geleentheid bied om 'n verskil te maak in ons gemeenskap.

Ons het sodoende 'n adolessente-groep begin met die oorhoofse doel om jong meisies te help sinmaak van die veelsydige eienskappe van vrouwees. Ten einde dit te bewerkstellig, streef ons eerstens daarna om 'n veilige en gemaklike omgewing te skep waar elkeen net hulself kan wees. Tydens die sessies deel ons ook inligting oor belangrike lewenskwesties en die neem van verantwoordelike besluite. Meisies kry geleentheid om vrae te vra en mekaar te ondersteun en sodoende word 'n kultuur van omgee vir mekaar geskep.

Die groep kom maandeliks vir twee ure bymekaar en die sessie word in twee dele opgebreek. Tydens die eerste helfte gesels ons oor 'n spesifieke onderwerp wat gewoonlik 'n kwelvraag is wat deur een van die groeplede uitgelik is. Daarna sal ons iets eet en drink en dan 'n aktiwiteit saam doen, soos bv. om mekaar se naels te verf.

Die eerste byeenkoms was op 20 Januarie 2021 en sedertdien is ons behoorlik op dreef. Ons hoop dat hierdie ervarings van "saamwees en vrouwees" 'n basis sal bied vir 'n volhoubare ondersteuningsnetwerk om hierdie jong meisies te bemagtig om saam-saam nuwe hoogtes te bereik.



Collaboration towards a brighter tomorrow *by Tinashe Tombe-Nyahuma (Project Coordinator)*

Helen Keller once said: “Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much”. The Burgersdorp project has been fortunate to experience the fruits of this “togetherness” first-hand. Since the project’s inception in March 2017 our collaboration indeed reflects that, without the tremendous support of the community and a number of key stakeholders we would not have been able to implement the various initiatives, show the progress that we have been able to achieve, or celebrate the successes accomplished. The Burgersdorp project would therefore like to highlight and applaud those who have taken our hand along this 4-year journey thus far.

Non-profit organisations were especially pivotal with the recruitment of participants to attend the various FARR community awareness initiatives e.g. the “Think Twice”

alcohol literacy workshops, the FAStrap® life-skills development courses and the “LoveChild” interactive theatre shows. Similarly, churches such as the Roman Catholic Church in Mzamomhle, eagerly offered their places of worship as venues for us to host our initiatives.

Another key partner is the Department of Health who plays a major role in the implementation and success of the Healthy Mother Healthy Baby® Programme (HMHB®). This intervention provides pregnant women with important information and support to make informed decisions regarding their health and the health of their unborn babies. The primary objective is to decrease prenatal maternal drinking and thereby reducing the number of alcohol exposed pregnancies.

The local FARR Community Workers i.e. Esethu Dlanjwa and Ntombizandile Matyobeni have access to the pregnant community members via the local antenatal clinics. The staff members at the four clinics in Burgersdorp namely Mzamomhle Clinic, Thembisa Clinic, Eureka Clinic and Town Clinic understand the importance of having the pregnant community members enrolled into the programme. The nurses inform the pregnant community members of the free service offered by FARR and explain the benefits that come with being part of the Programme. This partnership goes beyond the HMHB® Programme as the Department of Health continuously invites us to take part in health awareness campaigns. We can therefore say that together we strive to reduce prenatal alcohol

exposure and its devastating lifelong effects on the unborn baby, and collaborate to further prevent the consequential health burden on the public health system.

As we look towards the future, the continued efforts, devotion and collaboration between FARR and our stakeholders in raising awareness and helping us spread the FASD prevention message, will shape a better tomorrow for the community of Burgersdorp.

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.”
Helen Keller



New beginnings, together as a team!

by Meryll Smit (Project Coordinator)

The saying goes..... change is as good as a holiday. De Aar definitely faced some changes and challenges, but persevered and adapted together as a team.

International FASD day was one for the books even though we faced challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. The first change arose when we got together and realized that the usual 9km awareness walk would not be feasible due to COVID-19 restrictions. This required us to come up with an innovative and fresh idea. It dawned on us to set up 9 exhibition tables to raise awareness and share information on available support services in the community. The team used this opportunity to raise awareness using the “Do you have 3 minutes” cards and promoted initiatives that we present in De Aar, such as the Healthy Mother Healthy Baby® Programme. At the other tables, talks were hosted by a dietician, audiologist, occupational therapist and social worker about their respective professional support services to the community.

Another major change was that, sadly we had to bid farewell to our renowned “Pink House” after twenty years. This was an emotional time for all involved. Despite all the hard work and sweat while moving in the heat of the Karoo summer, our new premises allowed a wonderful opportunity for us to become creative in revamping our new office environment.

Furthermore, we are fortunate and excited to also be piloting a new support service to the community i.e. the Knock-Knock Programme. This is a community-based programme whereby we go out to the households and assist parents by encouraging them to read to and play with their children as this is crucial for optimal childhood development. Parents and children are also invited to the office for one interactive group session where amongst other activities, they together make a toy known as Robocop. These sessions have proved to be fun-filled and leaves staff feeling blessed to contribute to the development of families. Referrals are also facilitated to other services and professionals with whom we have established excellent working relationships, as per the International FASD day event described above.

I truly believe that teamwork makes the dream work! Facing all the challenges and the changes made us realize how reliant we are on each other. We were able to make a fresh start, learn many valuable lessons and can now together, present new opportunities for the future!



“
I truly believe that
teamwork makes
the dream work.
”



Healthier babies through collaborative efforts

by Monica Dyakumeni (Project Coordinator)

The Healthy Mother Healthy Baby© Programme (HMHB©) in Graaff-Reinet has been positively moving forward. This has been done together and in collaboration with other support services available in the community, to provide our pregnant clients with the essential information and resources for a healthy pregnancy and a better tomorrow.

The aim of the programme is to provide awareness, support and motivation to our pregnant clients and has been warmly welcomed by the community, and the Department of Health. During the programme great emphasis is placed on the dangers of consuming alcohol during pregnancy.

Our clients have been privileged to receive health talks from other support services, such as Physiotherapists, Dieticians and Occupational Therapists from the Department of Health. The first such health talk was held in November 2020, during which Occupational Therapists (Annandie Crous and Stacey Jacobs) and Dietician (Santie Snyman) spoke to our pregnant clients. The Dietician spoke about healthy eating habits whilst pregnant and the importance of breastfeeding. In addition, the Occupational Therapists spoke about reducing stress during pregnancy, the importance of bonding with and stimulating their babies after birth and even taught the ladies how to make

toys for their babies. The session was fun and interactive with each expectant mother making a toy for her baby.

The second collaborative group session took place on 12 February 2021, just in time to spoil our clients for Valentine's Day. Health talks were presented by Physiotherapists (Jeannie van Staden and Linda Kiriimi), Dieticians (Santie Snyman and Charlene de Jager) and Occupational Therapist (Danielle Thirion). During this session important information about pregnancy, labour and childhood development was shared. Each pregnant client made a heart-shaped pillow during the session, which symbolized "special gifts from the unborn babies to their mothers".

The Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform has also come on board by educating our pregnant clients about starting their own backyard vegetable gardens and the benefits of such a garden in terms of promoting healthy eating. Clients left feeling a sense of empowerment to go home and plant their own vegetable garden.

They say it takes a village to raise a child and by collectively working together with health support services we are giving these unborn babies the best start at life.



Shining through the circle of life

by Lara van der Walt (Project Coordinator)

FARR services in Hanover go full circle in supporting community members through all phases of life. Our initiatives start with investing in the healthy development of the unborn baby and pregnant mothers, providing support in terms of Early Childhood Development (ECD) and school-going children, guiding adolescents as well as grandmothers caring for children with FASD.

The HMHB© Programme supported 50 mothers during the past year. As a team, we held special sessions to provide extra support for these mothers. The clients enjoyed the Christmas event where they decorated baby vests with a personal message and drawings for their unborn babies. For Valentine's Day, a community member taught our clients to make beautiful flower decorations from plastic bottles. The results were better than we could have imagined! Every single mother left the office glowing with pride, knowing what she had created that day.

Our ECD class, the Little Blossoms, has been slowly growing. We have a few dedicated mothers who bring their toddlers weekly for a fun lesson. The Trappieskop Kids, a support programme to stimulate development in school-going children, is extremely popular. So much so, that we have now moved it to the primary school. There are always eager children knocking at the door asking for another class.

Our community worker, Portia Tyibela, has also recruited a group of adolescents, some of whom are pregnant, to join a support group. This serves as a safe place to express emotions and ask for guidance.

Since October 2020 we have started to focus on the important role of grandmothers and caregivers. Two support sessions have been hosted where the group planted seeds and decorated pots, played games and shared valuable advice around the caring for and raising of children with FASD. Feedback from the group confirmed that these sessions have been greatly rewarding.

As with the theme song from the movie, "The Lion King" the FARR team can identify with our role and commitment in the circle of life of the people of Hanover:



*It's the circle of life,
and it moves us all
Through despair and hope,
through faith and love
'Till we find our place,
on the path unwinding
In the circle,
the circle of life.*

Composed by Elton John,
lyrics by Tim Rice



Thank you

“ A life that
touches others,
goes on forever.

Unknown

”





PROJECT: Jacobsdal

FARR klop weer aan Jacobsdal se deure

deur Esmé Viljoen (Projekkoördineerder)

Die Jacobsdalprojek het so saam met die COVID-19 pandemie, agter geslote deure verkeer vanaf April 2020 tot en met Februarie 2021 nadat ons projek se eerste befondsingstydperk van drie jaar verstryk het. Hierdie 10 maande van agter maskers skuil en by die huis wees, is nou wel een maand langer as wat 'n vrou gewoonlik swanger is, maar dit was die langste en mees uitmergendste tien maande ooit! Dit het gepaardgegaan met 'n emosionele wipplank van afskeid neem van ons kliënte en kollegas en 'n koestering van hoop vir die toekoms.

In Februarie 2021 was ons in ekstase oor die goeie nuus dat die Jacobsdalprojek "aangeneem" is deur aware.org, wie ons vir die volgende jaar sal borg. Ons moes dadelik aan die werk spring en alhoewel ons nog redelik vertrouwd was met ons vorige take, het innoverende veranderings ingetree en moes ons aanpas met "virtuele vergaderings" as die nuwe mode vir ons opleiding!

“Your smile surrounds us still, your spirit continues to inspire us.”



Tumi Mantshiwa 1990 – 2021

As 'n twee-vrou-span gaan ek en Gemeenskapswerker Patricia Mack, alles in die stryd werp om die beste van hierdie jaar te maak. Tans is ons doelwit om 80 swanger vroue op die Gesonde Moeder, Gesonde Baba® Program te bereik. Kliënte op die program gaan elkeen 'n klippie verf en hierop hul naam en die datum skryf, waarna hulle dit in ons tuin sal neersit. Die klippies sal later die naam "FARR" uitbeeld en dien as bewys dat elke kliënt haar voorneem om vanaf die datum op die klippie, nie te drink tydens haar swangerskap nie. Elke kliënt gaan ook haar eie skaapwol-blokkieskombersie maak tydens besoeke aan die FARR-sentrum. Wanneer sy haar doekesak teen die einde van al haar sessies ontvang, sal sy ook haar spesiale kombersie kan saamneem.

Ons beplan verskeie opwindende opleidingsgeleenthede vir die gemeenskap soos bv. "Think Twice" werkswinkels om alkoholgeletterdheid te bevorder, 'n FAStrap® lewensvaardigheidskursus en professionele opleiding vir Gesondheidswerkers. Verder beoog ons om maandeliks 'n ondersteuningsgroep aan te bied vir die matriekmeisies van die Ikanyegeng Combined School in Ratanang.

Die nuwe projek is omtrent soos 'n "lucky packet", en saam met die res van die gemeenskap in Jacobsdal kan ons nie wag om dit te verorber nie!



PROJECT: Prince Albert

Vol passie vorentoe

deur Christel Botes (Projekkoördineerder)

'n Jaar gelede was daar 'n beklemming om ons harte, terwyl die berig vir die jaarblad geskryf moes word en het dit 'n doelbewuste keuse en ingesteldheid geveer om positief te wees. Wêreldwyd was alles onwerklik vreemd, onseker en lewensbedreigend.

Vandag het ons hoop en kyk ons die COVID-19 virus en ons pragtige land Suid-Afrika, se uitdagings vierkantig in die oë, want ons het gegroei. Die gevoel van magteloosheid is besig om te wyk. Geestelik en emosioneel is ons sterker. Ons het baie geleer, insluitend dat nie alles ewe belangrik is nie en dat luukshede en besittings veel minder waarde het as mense. Ons het familieledede herontdek en weer van kennisse vriende gemaak. Ons het die rykdom van stil word en wag herontdek, alhoewel ekself steeds ongeduldig met die 'wag' gedeelte is en juis daarom seker daagliks hierin geskool word.

'n Hoogtepunt van ons projek was beslis die verfyning van die "Die Vetplantjies / Little Succulents®" program en die vordering en groei wat by die leerders waargeneem word. Hierdie is 'n 32-week ondersteunings en -stimuleringsprogram vir laerskoolleerders wat ontwikkel is deur een van

FARR se psigometriste, Liska White. Die vrywillige program word in beide Leeu-Gamka en Prince Albert, met die toestemming van die ouer(s), vir leerders met FASA en ander leeruitdagings aangebied. Die doel van hierdie program is om die kinders d.m.v. spel te help om noodsaaklike vaardighede te ontwikkel. Die fokusareas van die program sluit onder ander in: groot motoriese vaardighede, fyn motoriese vaardighede, visuele persepsie, ouditiewe geheue ens. Ondersteuningssessies word ook, sover moontlik, maandeliks aan die ouers gebied.

Hoe langer ek deel is van die FARR-span, hoe sterker voel ek daarvoor dat die boodskap van "GEEN ALKOHOL IS VEILIG TYDENS SWANGERSKAP NIE", algemene kennis moet word. Is dit 'n maklike en aldag aangename taak? Verseker nie. Is dit noodsaaklik en moontlik? Baie beslis, JA! Met toegewyde gemeenskapswerkers soos Mushke Hendriks en Moira Prins tree ons passievol aan vir hierdie holistiese program. Ons projeknaam is nie verniet PATH, "PRINCE ALBERT towards health" nie!



New Legacy towards tomorrow

by Beulah Grobler (Project Coordinator)

Kirkwood is literally in a new season. Early morning one sees queues of busses picking up eager workers. Hope pulses through the valley by the picking of citrus fruit, sorting and rhythmic packing, quality control and labelling of cartons, ready for export and enjoyment throughout the globe.

A new beginning for FARR in Kirkwood required a suitable name for our project. A community competition was launched. A Grade 10 learner from the Moses Mabida Secondary School's entry of "New Legacy" was the winner! The name emphasizes a new beginning and focuses on the importance of making wise decisions for a positive future. FARR cannot achieve this alone. Building and maintaining strong relations with the community and local stakeholders is key!

As with the citrus fruit processing, FARR's stringent FASD prevalence study processes have now been completed. The outcome gave impetus to our purpose to continue to spread the prevention message: NO AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL IS SAFE DURING PREGNANCY.

Establishing a positive future, starts with creating hope. The Healthy Mother HealthyBaby® Programme strives to achieve this. Any woman, less than 20 weeks pregnant, is welcome to join our support and mentorship programme. Our focus is on

helping enrolled pregnant women to look after their health and in so doing give birth to healthy babies. We offer information, advice and guidance and provide special support to mothers who are using alcohol during pregnancy.

Despite the COVID-19 restrictions some of the highlights during the past year include: a meeting with our Stakeholders and Correctional Services, being a guest speaker at SanParks Woman's Day, presenting a FAStrap® life skills development course and hosting two Think Twice alcohol literacy workshops. Our next priority is to present training to the Foundation Phase Educators who will be empowered with knowledge and strategies in terms of managing children affected by FASD or other learning challenges.

In the words of our Community Workers, Babalwa Rooi and Rozaan Joubert:

"Our lifestyles and situations are forged by the choices we make. What we do today, is a stepping stone towards tomorrow".

Together we work towards building a solid foundation for a future filled with hope!



“

Our lifestyles and situations are forged by the choices we make. What we do today, is a stepping stone towards tomorrow.

”



Beacons of hope

by Charlene Grobbelaar (Project Coordinator)

In Renosterberg, part of our project plan is to host various events for Gogo's/grandmothers, men/partners and youth members of our communities, to promote social cohesion. We try to keep the events fun and interactive for all the participants. Here is a brief glimpse of what we have done.

Youth Event in Keurtjekloof: "Matters of the Heart"

Bukiwe Williams and Leonora Mouers (Community Workers) spoke to the youth about the theme of the day "Matters of the Heart". The participants engaged in a creative activity, constructing a heart with different colours. Each colour represents different qualities e.g. yellow (joy and friendship), blue (loyalty

and stability), green (ambition and growth), red (passion and love), orange (warmth, energy and vitality) and pink (romance, femininity and hope).

Men's Event in Petrusville: "We have to have Faith"

Bukiwe Williams presented a motivational talk about the significant role that men play in their families. The men then made a cross with matches on a canvas which represented the importance of having faith, especially during these challenging times of COVID. They enjoyed making the cross and were very proud of the end-product.

Men's Event in Philipstown: "Men, the foundation (pillar) of their homes/families"

This event, presented by Monize Smeer, was hosted in two sessions. During the first session, the men made a heart-shaped foundation out of cement. This illustrates how firmly and supportive a man should be in the home. At the second session the men painted the heart. They used different colours to symbolise how different men can be: If the foundation is weak, there is no support. However, if the foundation is solid and strong, it is easy to build up your home, making it secure, happy and safe.

Gogo's/grandmother event's in Philipstown:

Community Workers, Priscilla Jonas and Monize Smeer assisted our very talented



gogo's/grandmothers with a series of ongoing events to decorate our office and children's playroom. Each gogo received a picture which they had to stitch together to make a beautiful quilt. One gogo painted the wall with pretty animals and also renovated an old table with four chairs for the children. Everything came together so well and looks amazing!

All the articles that are made during the different events are displayed in our offices (Petrusville and Philipstown). The community members take great pride in bringing friends to visit the office to show them what they have produced. These items do not only represent a footprint of the lessons learnt, but also serve as a beacon of hope into the future!

“
Coming together
is a beginning.
Keeping together
is progress.
Working together
is success.”



PROJECT: Upington

Footprints in Upington

by Martlé Vosloo & Therin Stroucken

The FARR Upington Project began in 2015. Over the ensuing six years we strove earnestly to create awareness of the necessity for healthy pregnancies in the community.

During the 2020/2021 financial year various initiatives were successfully hosted. One such awareness campaign took place on 7 and 8 September 2021 to link with the International FASD Day, annually commemorated on 9 September. A total of 27 stakeholders, from 19 different local NGO's and government Departments participated. Three Think Twice workshops were hosted in March 2021 to discuss the use and abuse of alcohol, as well as raise awareness of the dangers of alcohol consumption while pregnant. These sessions were presented to a total of 47 community members in Raaswater, Rainbow and at the FARR office respectively. A particular highlight was the two nine-month baby clinics that were hosted. Altogether 248 babies, born to mothers who attended FARR's Healthy Mother Healthy Baby© Programme, were assessed by Medical Specialists.

“Your presence, love and kindness will forever be with us.”



Grace Humphreys 1960 - 2021

Apart from five babies who were referred for neurodevelopmental psychometric evaluation, all were found to be healthy. This result speaks volumes about the Upington project contributing to shaping a better tomorrow for these babies!

As per the funding agreement, the project was scheduled to be completed towards the end of March 2021. The exit strategy came full circle when the CEO, Dr Leana Olivier and Human Resource Officer, Marietjie Mouton visited the project. After various administrative requirements were completed, they had to bid farewell to our four beloved and devoted colleagues. This was certainly no easy task! The CEO profusely thanked each of them and wished them all the best in their future endeavours.

With great acknowledgement to our valued sponsors and stakeholders in the community, we depart knowing that, in working together, we have brought about constructive change. Many have been empowered with knowledge of FASD, have been enabled to spread the prevention message and know the importance of planning pregnancies whilst abstaining from alcohol. We leave our clients and stakeholders well-equipped to continue being our footprints in the streets of Upington.



PROJECT: West Coast

Stepping up and helping out

by Jaco Louw (Project Coordinator)

A key part of any successful community project is the relationships that are built with other stakeholders in the project area. No single group or organisation can address the many varied needs of our communities, and a joint effort will always be more successful than trying to tackle complicated issues like FASD on your own.

FARR has been active in the West Coast for more than seven years. During this time, we have forged lasting connections of mutual support. These symbiotic relationships greatly contributed to address the biological, psychological and social aspects of FASD. While it is wonderful to receive support, it is important to be willing to step in when there is a need elsewhere. An opportunity to reciprocate arose during the level 4 lockdown period. West Coast Community Workers, Elloise and Hayley were able to support the Western Cape Department of Social Development (DSD) in providing much needed relief to families experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 restrictions. In this manner 880 care packages were distributed in the Veldrif area and 233 needs assessments were conducted during the period from 4 – 29 May 2020.

Now that lockdown regulations have been relaxed, and with all COVID-19 protocols becoming second nature, we are continuing full steam ahead in delivering the FASD prevention and awareness message to the people of the West Coast.



UNIT: Monitoring and Evaluation



2020-2021 year in review

by Debbie Acker
(Monitoring and Evaluation Officer)



10 Project Sites
23 Community Workers
10 Project Coordinators

Supported by:

Head Office Units

- Admin
- HR
- Finance
- Training Academy
- Research
- Neurodevelopmental Assessment
- Monitoring and Evaluation



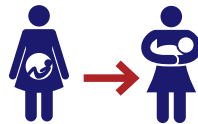
7
On-site audits



4
New projects launched - HMHB@ Programme



ALL
Project staff receiving training



Pregnant women supported

730

Pregnant women supported 2019/2020

885

Pregnant women supported 2020/2021

“

The support provided to our vulnerable clients was evident in the results of the M&E audits completed for the HMHB@ Programme, i.e. the attainment of all recruitment targets at all projects.

”



415

Completed the Programme



352

Still busy with Programme



736

Babies clinically assessed at 9-Month baby clinics

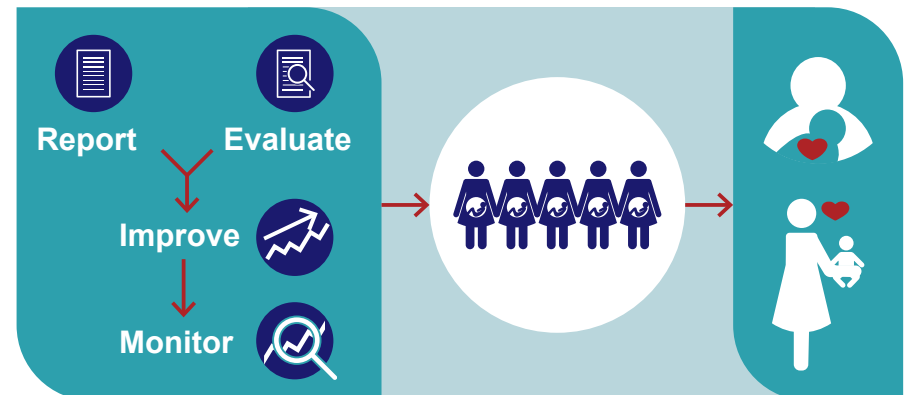
TOGETHER

TOWARDS

TOMORROW

to support more than **900** women in
2021-2022

Healthier pregnancies = Healthier babies



Prevalence Studies & Peer Reviews

by Mandi Broodryk (Research Coordinator)

Where to begin? The year 2020 was an interesting year full of surprises, to say the least. With the nationwide lockdown at the end of March 2020, none of us knew how this would impact our service delivery. We soon realized that our intended Stigma Study related to perceptions of drinking behaviour would not be able to be implemented due to the restrictions.

A key deliverable of the Research Unit was to complete three Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Prevalence Studies in Graaff-Reinet, Kirkwood and Britstown, respectively. Despite an initial delay we obtained Health Research Ethics approval from Stellenbosch University to complete the rest of the planned phases of the prevalence studies for 2020/2021. This resulted in the following essential services being delivered to the learners:

- 1 586 medical assessments
- 224 neurodevelopmental assessments
- 400 maternal interviews

Additionally, a total of 534 referrals were completed to further facilitate medical and psycho-social support to learners and their families. Considering how resource-poor these communities are, it is unlikely that they would otherwise have had access to these services.

After completion of all the assessments, the final diagnoses for the learners were determined at separate project case conferences. This entailed a FASD multi-disciplinary team who reviewed each case to determine the diagnoses. Each child's diagnosis was discussed with their parent/caregiver and guidance was provided on how to best support the child.

Another key output of the Research Unit was the two academic peer-reviewed publications co-authored by FARR staff:

- A chapter in a book titled: *Childhood Vulnerabilities in South Africa: Some Ethical Perspectives*.

The theme of the Chapter: *The Stigmatisation of Children living with FASD and their Biological Mothers*, summarises types of stigma and how it relates to mothers and their children diagnosed with FASD. FARR's work and anecdotal cases are discussed. It illustrates the implications and complexities that stigma surrounding FASD has on those affected with prenatal alcohol exposure. Furthermore, it highlights how stigma deters mothers from seeking support. As alcohol use during pregnancy is often a coping mechanism for many life stressors, emphasis is on the importance of a non-judgemental approach to prevention and management of FASD.

<http://hdl.handle.net/10019.1/109559>

- Summary of the baseline findings of a FARR employee's PhD research project (pre-print phase): *Executive functioning in prenatally alcohol exposed children in a South African population: Baseline findings from an RCT of a computer-based cognitive training program*.

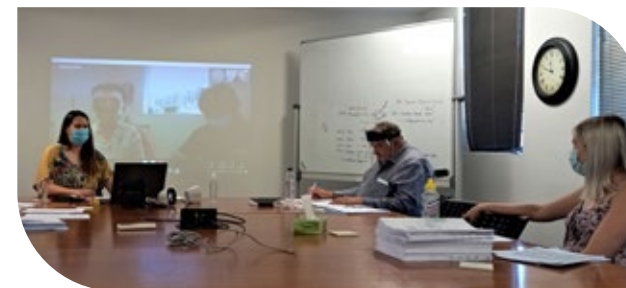
The topic addresses prenatal alcohol exposure and the effect of a tablet-based cognitive training programme (game) on children's development of executive functions (ability to plan ahead, make decisions, impulse control etc.). Children born of alcohol exposed and non-exposed pregnancies were compared to establish the effect of the training programme. The aim was to determine whether differences could be identified between children with prenatal alcohol exposure and those without. <https://preprints.jmir.org/preprint/20658/accepted>

Upon reviewing a year filled with trials and tribulations the Research Unit looks back proudly on what has been achieved. Against all odds, the statistics speak of excellent team work, cohesion and service delivery, allowing us to go forward with confidence.

“

Against all odds, the statistics speak of excellent team work, cohesion and service delivery, allowing us to go forward with confidence.

”



“Teaming” with Tenacity by Therin Stroucken (Training Officer)

It is unbelievable that a team of five diverse personalities, from different backgrounds have successfully managed to forge ahead and embrace many challenges. Over the past year these obstacles and hurdles have, at times, been enormous and yet we confronted them head-on with determination, have adapted where necessary and supported each other consistently.

At first, we sat through lockdown not knowing what the future held, but all eager to return to work and help wherever needed. The call from our CEO came and we marched into the office face masks intact, glasses steaming up, temperatures checked daily while continuously sanitising. We entered a different world, of zoom meetings and strictly no physical contact, with some excitement as well as a sense of trepidation.

Subsequently, we have safely travelled vast distances to reach rural communities to facilitate training and raise awareness of the dangers of drinking whilst pregnant. We have braved 42 plus degrees of oppressive, stifling heat for three to four days on end. We have had to adjust to areas where electricity and running water are only available intermittently.

We have learnt to wash in a litre of water, caught torrential thunderstorms in buckets, from water pouring down drains, to flush toilets. And just when you think you have experienced it all, a different situation literally “arises” ahead of you..... as you are confronted with thousands of locusts that join you on your journey through the Karoo. We quickly learnt that wearing skirts and dresses were not a good idea in these conditions, unless you have an affinity for creepy crawlies! Some even hopped a lift to Cape Town in/on FARR cars! Please note: No animals were deliberately harmed in this process.....!

Experiencing the above, gave us a minuscule glimpse into the daily struggles of our clients in the rural areas. In addition to these hardships, they have to face unemployment, the trauma of COVID, and worst of all, losses of loved ones. Despite this, they attended our training initiatives diligently. At the end of the sessions, each “thank you” and word of appreciation added fuel to our passion to continue training, raising awareness and extending our reach. Equipped with a clear rubric for the way forward, a sense of humour and a firm belief in God, the Training Academy team continues with tenacity.



FARR Training Initiatives

1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021

Initiatives

Beneficiaries

15	FAStrap© Courses	286
30	Think Twice Workshops	692
262	Awareness and Info Sessions, Exhibits and Events	3222
4	Professional Courses	210
261	Health Promotion Talks	2700
14	ECD Workshops	286
	Do You Have 3 Min	7420

586

**Total
Initiatives**

14 816

**Total
Beneficiaries**

Guidance towards tomorrow

by Liska White and Martlié Vosloo (Psychometrists)

The 2021 financial year welcomed the start of three new prevalence studies in Britstown, Kirkwood and Graaff-Reinet. As Psychometrists at FARR our work is multi-faceted. Our primary role entails assessing children referred, after undergoing medical assessments as part of our prevalence study process. Each child's cognitive abilities are examined with the help of various standardised activities. The outcome of the medical assessments led to the daunting task of having to undertake a large number of assessments within a short time frame. We can proudly report that, between us we successfully completed 36 assessments in Britstown, 66 in Kirkwood and 128 in Graaff-Reinet.

Although the assessments take time, patience and perseverance, it has to be supported in writing. This entails writing a comprehensive report, analysing the results and summarizing areas of deficits and strengths of each child. An important element of the report entails practical recommendations for parents and caregivers.

Each prevalence study culminates in a Case Conference where a multi-disciplinary team discusses the results of each child's medical and neurodevelopmental assessment and maternal interview, in order to reach a

diagnosis. Guided by our reports and recommendations and our extensive experience in the field, we regard our input as essential in supporting the panel to reach a diagnosis.

Finally, the most challenging part of the process is giving feedback to the parents/guardians of these children and discussing the results of the neurodevelopmental assessment. In most cases we share devastating news by informing them that their child has been diagnosed with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). For many this is difficult to hear, and some parents experience feelings of guilt, remorse, sadness, and hopelessness. It is important to reflect and to acknowledge these feelings. Crucial to these feedback sessions, is providing guidance about their child's future. Practical recommendations are discussed and consist of activities and games caregivers can implement to improve domains wherein the child experiences difficulty. Ultimately, we aim to have parents/guardians leave the feedback session with a better understanding of their child and an awareness of the risks associated with drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

As Psychometrists it is a great privilege to share in a part of these children's lives, to guide their caregivers and to contribute towards a better tomorrow.

“

Let us make our
future now, and let
us make our dreams
tomorrow's reality.

Malala Youzafzai

”



UNIT: Admin

United we stand

by Estelle Pillay (Admin Coordinator)



The mission of the Admin Unit is to provide consistent and effective administrative and support services to all staff. When the pandemic hit South Africa in March 2020, we began working from home. During this time, we relied heavily on technology. We had to get used to digital communication like Skype, Zoom and Teams. Despite this, we as an Admin Unit did our best to assist.

Although returning to the office brought some “normalcy” to our lives, it again posed unique challenges in terms of health screening, sanitizing and social distancing etc. The excellent leadership and guidance of our CEO however provided great consolation. It allowed for a smooth transition to a “new normal” and for the organisation to remain productive.

Another positive change that has come out of this turbulent time, is that the Admin team has grown closer. We have learnt to depend on each other and thereby support others. The term “stronger together” has become a reality.

Whether in the workplace or working from home, this pandemic will have an impact for years to come. The FARR team has shown such incredible resilience and perseverance! I know that, by working together, we become creative, we find applicable solutions, we adapt together and become more united.

The quote from Vince Lombardi comes to mind “*Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.*”

UNIT: HR

Disruptive change? by Marietjie Mouton (Training and HR)

Disruptive change is when neither the end goal nor the solution is known in advance. When COVID-19 knocked on our doors in early 2020 we were faced with many unknowns. Organizations and individuals needed to make serious decisions on how to move forward in extremely uncertain times. FARR and its staff members were certainly not exempt.

Martin Luther King Jr. said: “You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.” With the grace of our Heavenly Father and our visionary leader, Dr Leana Olivier, FARR took the first step and started paving the way towards creating new hope. She calmly put the necessary policies and procedures in place, provided guidance despite the unknown, and step-by-step we proceeded to gain momentum again.

Although some of us were not influenced physically, all of us were challenged emotionally in one way or another. While some of us needed to isolate, others were diagnosed and several colleagues sadly lost loved ones. Despite the long distances between projects and the fact that some recently appointed staff members did not yet have the opportunity to meet their colleagues

face-to-face, a mutual sense of support flowed through the organisation through prayer, messages of encouragement and motivation.

From an HR perspective I can only thank and applaud each staff member for maintaining the forward momentum. During this time, Joy Gums’ statement rings very true: “Operations keep the lights on, strategy provides a light at the end of the tunnel, but project management is the train engine that moves the organization forward.” To our CEO who continues to brightly shine the light through this tunnel, and to every unit and project staff member who keep us moving towards tomorrow, a colossal “High-5” from HR.

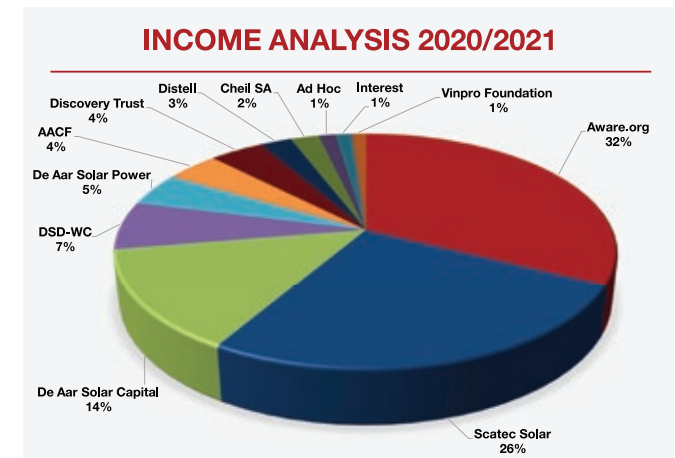
Did COVID bring disruptive change for FARR? Yes, it did. However, in these uncertain times we have experienced solidarity as never before. We have proven to be innovative, adaptive and will continue to keep our eyes on our vision and mission!



UNIT: Finance

compiled by Angelique Rossouw (CFO)

This chart illustrates FARR’s funding received in 2020/2021. FARR has worked tirelessly to reach stability by acquiring funding from various sources. This enables us to secure our future for at least 12 months. We wish to sincerely thank all our generous sponsors.



Prevent Stigma and Shame by focussing on love and hope!

Join us in commemorating International FASD day on the 9th of September. Help us spread awareness about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and the risks to the fetus (unborn baby) from alcohol exposure during pregnancy.

On this day we want to share the message that any prenatal exposure to alcohol can have serious negative consequences for the fetus. The only risk-free choice is to abstain from drinking alcohol during the entire 9 months of pregnancy. We also want to share our support for individuals living with FASD and highlight their unique strengths and abilities. In doing so, we also pay tribute to their parents, family members and caregivers.

Together we want to surround pregnant women with love and support and help them make healthy choices for themselves and their babies.

Join us in breaking the silence on the 9th of September.

#FASDUthandoNethemba #FASDLoveHope

Background

In the late nineties, a group of biological and adoptive/foster parents in Canada and New Zealand got together to decide how best to create awareness and share information regarding the support of children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) across the globe. They were concerned about the lack of information regarding FASD. An online parental support group was formed, and this eventually led to the establishment of an International FASD day. The first International FASD Day was held on 9 September 1999 (09/09/1999) and was also commemorated in South Africa.

Why 9 September?

The symbolism of 9 is very important, as a woman is normally pregnant for 9 months. The number 9 is therefore fully utilised (the 9th day of the 9th month at 09h00).

What happens on the 9 September?

Members of the public who are interested in raising awareness regarding FASD are requested to share the prevention message with small groups of friends/colleagues or other community members in doing the following:

- Meet on 9 September at 09h00.
- Hand out FASD knots, if available (order packets of 9 knots from FARR, with flags containing the FASD prevention message, as well as an Info Sheet).
- Share a short FASD prevention message (see the standard message below).
- 09h08: Observe one minute of silence to think about individuals affected by FASD and their family/caregivers, as well as one's responsibility towards the support of a pregnant friend or family member. Also reflect on how you can go about sharing this message with friends and family.
- 09h09: Break the silence by ringing a bell (or bells, e.g. church, school or hand bells) thereby calling people to take action in creating awareness about FASD, especially regarding the importance of alcohol-free pregnancies.
- Encourage participants to wear the FASD knot for the day and to share the message with at least 9 other people, such as colleagues/friends/family.

(If it is not possible to meet at 09h00, meet at any other time of the day and follow the procedure above.)

What is the FASD knot?

The knot consists of a white rope tied in a specific way, known as the reef knot or the Fisherman's knot. The knot is worn on your chest to raise awareness about FASD.

The knot symbolises the following:

- The rope: Symbolises the umbilical cord whereby the fetus (unborn baby) is supposed to receive nutritious food and not alcohol;
- The worn ends of the rope: Is a reminder of the damage that prenatal alcohol use can cause to the central nervous system (brain) and other organs of the fetus;
- The knot: This type of knot (Fisherman/Reef) is so strong that it will not break if traction is put on it, it will only pull tighter. This symbolizes the strong support that we are supposed to give pregnant women to abstain from alcohol use;
- The circle inside the knot: Symbolizes the womb (uterus) of the pregnant woman which should provide a safe environment for the fetus, free of alcohol.

What is the FASD prevention message?

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) as the most well-known form of these disorders, is the most common cause of permanent intellectual disability in the world. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) the prevalence of FASD in the world is projected to be 1,5%. South Africa has the highest reported FASD prevalence rates in the world, with rates as high as 28% in some communities. It is estimated that our country's overall rate is at least 6%.

FASD is caused when a fetus is exposed to alcohol. The alcohol reaches the fetus through the bloodstream of the mother and can cause damage to any of the fetal organs. The brain is the most



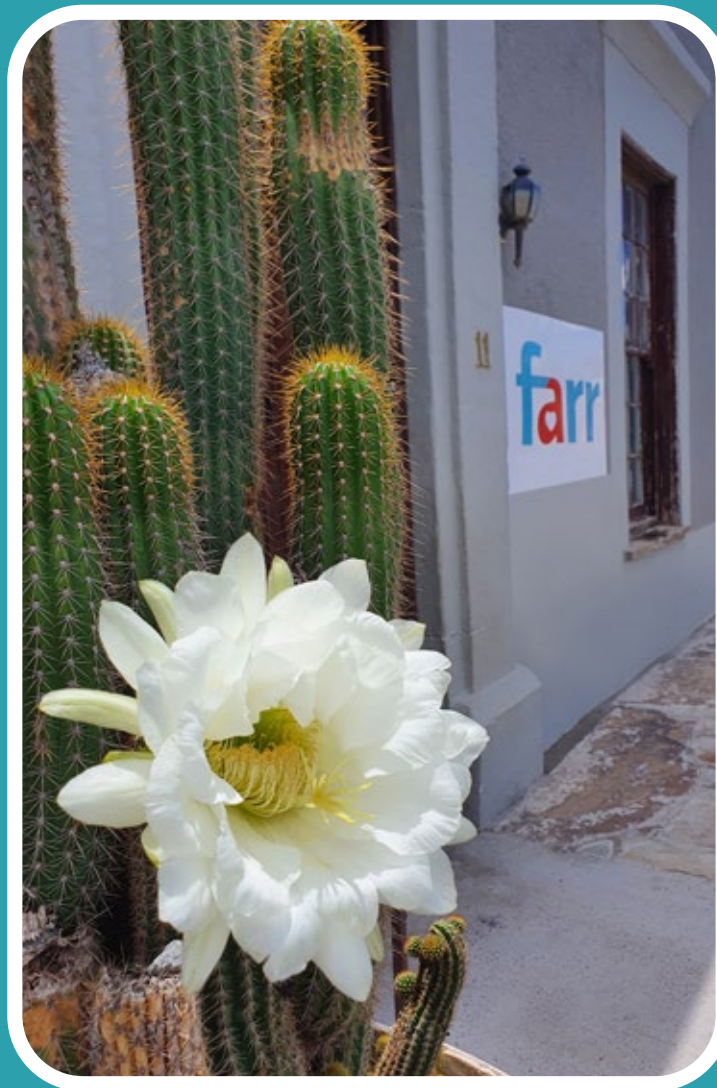
vulnerable organ. For this reason, all children with FASD have some form of permanent brain damage, presenting as developmental delays, learning and behavioural problems. This is a lifelong condition and cannot be cured by medication.

FASD is prevalent in all cultural, religious and socio-economic groups. There are still many myths around FASD. Some people still believe, incorrectly, that a woman must be an alcoholic to have a child with FASD. Research has shown that even light to medium alcohol exposure has the potential to cause harm. Therefore, the prevention message that must be spread is:

No amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy. FASD causes permanent damage but can be prevented by alcohol free pregnancies.

FASD knots and Information Sheets:

- Can be ordered from the FARR Head Office in Bellville, Cape Town.
- Orders can be placed with Estelle at: info@farsa.org.za or phone her at: (021) 686-2646.



contact us

☎ 021 686 2646

✉ info@farrsa.org.za

 [FoundationForAlcoholRelatedResearch](https://www.facebook.com/FoundationForAlcoholRelatedResearch)

 [farr.sa](https://www.instagram.com/farr.sa)

 www.farrsa.org.za