

**MISSION
POSSIBLE**

farr

2023 - 2024

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CONTENT

TITLE	AUTHOR	PAGE
Creating Possibilities Gives Hope	Adrian Botha	1
No, I am not Tom Cruise!	Dr Leana Olivier	1
Pivotal Transformation	Meryll Smit	2
Paraat	Christel Botes	3
Making Things Happen	Meryll Smit	4
Senior Citizens' Support	Xola Masumpa	5
Making a Difference	Cornél Stevens	6
Omgee-Mense!	Charlene Grobbelaar	7
Pixie's Prosperous Path	Angela van Wyk-Marinus	8
Catalyst for Change	Abelene Goliath	9
Teamwork Makes the Mission Possible	Dr Michael Novellie	10
759 Books Collected	Liska White	11
A Father's Role	Gary Janeke	12
A New Chapter	Estelle Pillay	13
Finance	Angelique Rossouw	13
Synergy	Dr Jaco Louw	14
One Smile at a Time	Petro Kleingeld	15
Be Careful What you Wish For	Dr Leana Olivier	16
Adding to Research Literature	Mandi Broodryk	17
Getting to Know our Staff	Marietjie Mouton	18
Services and Beneficiaries Reached	Dr Jaco Louw	19
Glossary of Key Terms and Services	Dr Leana Olivier	22

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).

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.

Please Note: Pictures in this newsletter DO NOT depict children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD), but all children from the communities who participate in FARR's activities.

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Visit our website

CREATING POSSIBILITIES GIVES HOPE

ADRIAN BOTHA - CHAIRPERSON (FARR BOARD)

Another year has passed in the history of this wonderful organisation. A year with great progress made towards achieving our goal of significantly reducing birth defects caused by alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

Although Covid and load-shedding have somewhat dissipated, the negative impact they have had on the economy, has been huge and this has made it even harder to find the necessary funding for our projects. However, we persevere and with great fortitude we continue to succeed in fulfilling our mission. Roger Clemens said: "I think anything is possible if you have the mindset and the will and desire to do it and put the time in". This is precisely what Leana and the magnificent team at FARR have continued to do, surmounting the obstacles that so often obstruct their path.

Turning now to the theme of the AGM and this newsletter, "Mission Possible", our goal remains to empower people with knowledge and to use our support programmes to guide them towards healthier lifestyle choices. By following a holistic approach FARR incorporates all age groups, from babies to senior citizens, creating possibilities and hope across generations.

I am also very proud of FARR's involvement in bringing FASD to the forefront on the African continent. The first Africa FASD Conference was held in April 2023 in Antananarivo, Madagascar. As a highlight of the conference, the Africa FASD Network was founded, and Leana was elected as Chairperson. All members are academics who are actively involved in community work. Dependent on securing the necessary funding, the network envisions hosting a FASD Conference in Cape Town in 2025. This is indeed an exciting prospect for the future.

Having been directly associated with FARR since its inception, it has been amazing to witness the growth and success of the organization through the years, a tribute to the founding father, Prof Viljoen, Leana, Angelique and the incredible people across the organisation that have made such a difference. I would sincerely like to thank our funders for their ongoing support and my fellow Board Members for their dedication. I wish the FARR team every success in the years ahead.

NO, I AM NOT TOM CRUISE!

DR LEANA OLIVIER - CEO

We often get teased for the name of our organisation and then get asked if we are really reaching "farr" enough! Since we are still saving for our very own FARR-Force-One aircraft, my immediate response always is – "FARR has just taken off and certainly still has very far to go. Join us to make this possible!"

We are a small group of 47 dedicated people doing our utmost best to raise awareness regarding the dangers of prenatal alcohol use, harm caused by alcohol to the (ab)user, the ripple effect thereof on family, friends and the workplace. With very limited funding and resources we have completed 18 FASD prevalence studies to date in South Africa, reporting the highest prevalence rates in the world. Globally the FASD rate is less than 1%, whilst we have rates as high as 28 – 31% in South Africa (Louw 2024, May 2020, Popova 2017, Olivier 2017, WHO reports). In our 13 community centres in the Free State, Western, Northern and Eastern Cape Provinces we strive to increase community members' knowledge and skills to prevent more children being born with FASD. Through training programmes offered to community members and professional service providers we try to extend our reach far beyond our current project areas. FARR's support programmes offered to those already affected, their parents/caregivers and vulnerable groups such as adolescents, provide help to those in dire need.

Assessing the impact of our interventions is challenging. How do you measure behaviour change and alcohol harm reduction? How can we ever know how many children we have saved from the lifelong effects of FASD? We can only celebrate with each new mother when she gives birth to a FASD-free baby. We can smile when a father tells us about his journey in experiencing being an involved father for the first time. We can be proud of a young girl who participated in our youth programme, when she matriculates, without interrupting her school career with an unplanned pregnancy. Our list of joys just continues....

Yes, we still are very far from "mission accomplished" (courtesy to Ethan Hunt/Tom Cruise in Mission: Impossible), but looking back, we have indeed done what others would have shied away from. We tackled, what many still describe as impossible, and we have made it our mission to make it possible by "lighting the fuse" of hope and resilience in the communities that we serve.

PIVOTAL

TRANSFORMATION

MERYLL SMIT - PROJECT COORDINATOR

BRITSTOWN NORTHERN CAPE

The Britstown project has done it again! Despite only having eight months to reach our targets for the implementation of initiatives such as the Adolescent Support Programme, the Do You Have 3 Minutes? Awareness Programme and the Healthy Mother Healthy Baby© (HMHB©) Programme, our team was determined to prove that: The mission was possible!

With the HMHB© Programme as our main intervention, we focussed on building stronger relationships with pregnant mothers and women of childbearing age. Through this programme many success stories were achieved – some of which are captured in a documentary that was produced with our gracious sponsor, De Aar Solar Power (Globeleq).

It features a client's testimony of how she stopped using alcohol, and her determination to be present and involved in her children's lives. The mother acknowledges that she could not have achieved this without the support from FARR.

As referred to in the documentary by the CEO, Dr. Leana Olivier, we have identified a marked decrease in babies born with FASD, since the implementation of the HMHB© Programme in Britstown. Considering that this area presented with one of the highest FASD prevalence rates in the world, it surely reflects the positive pivotal transformation that FARR has accomplished with its service delivery in this small, sometimes forgotten community. And, it is exactly this knowledge, that we can turn around a dire situation and make healthier future's possible, which fuels our day-to-day commitment to the FARR mission.



FARR BRITSTOWN
COMMUNITY DOCUMENTARY





P A R A A T

CHRISTEL BOTES - PROJECT COORDINATOR

Met die vasberadenheid en adrenalien van 'n vegvlieënier en die uiterlike kalmte van Tom Cruise het FARR-Prince Albert opnuut die nuwejaar en projekplan benader. Die plan was op die tafel... duidelike doelwitte en teikens is uiteengesit. Spanlede word opgeskerp met gereelde interne personeelopleiding en akkurate rekordhouding is van kardinale belang. Presisie is noodsaaklik en geen fout ontglip die fyn oog tydens deurlopende monitering en evaluering nie.

Die teikenareas wat Prince Albert, Merweville en Leeu-Gamka insluit, verg fyn koördinering om kliëntbesoeke en ondersteuningsessies aan ouers, adolessente en senior burgers te laat vlot. Die Gesonde Moeder, Gesonde Baba© (GMGB©) Program aan swanger vroue, die "Knock-Knock©" Vroeë Kinderontwikkelingsprogram, sowel as die Leerderondersteuningsprogram aan leerders met Fetale Alkohol Spektrum Afwykings (FASA) of ander leerprobleme, word deurlopend aangebied.

Daar is strategiese samewerking met die Departement van Gesondheid se plaaslike primêre Gesondheidsorgklinieke in al drie dorpe sowel as die Departement van

Onderwys se Primêre Skool in Prince Albert. Nie net swanger vroue nie, maar ook die mans of toekomstige pappa's word betrek. Ons harte jubel oor elke kliënt wat die ondersteuning van haar man/vriend kry en verantwoordelikheid neem vir hul babatjie en gesinslewe. Soveel moontlik "soldate" word gewerf vir hierdie missie, en stelselmatig groei die impak van bewusmaking.

Wanneer ons terugvoering ontvang, soos van hierdie GMGB© kliënt, kom die besef dat ons wel hierdie "geveg" teen FASA wen, een gesonde baba op 'n slag!

"Ek het op die 11de Mei 2019 geboorte geskenk aan 'n pragtige babadogtertjie. Sy was my Moedersdag geskenk. Sy is 5 jaar oud, baie gesond en besig heel dag lank. Sy het my lewe verander, want ek wil net die beste vir haar hê. Baie dankie FARR vir die pad wat ons saam met julle kon stap."

Wat is die uitkoms waarvoor ons mik? Voorkoming en vermindering van FASA, en dat elke baba die beste geleentheid sal kry om tot sy/haar volle potensiaal te ontwikkel. Met hierdie lewensbelangrike missie voor oë, bly die Prince Albert-taakspan doelgerig en paraat!

MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

MERYLL SMIT - PROJECT COORDINATOR

The famous words of Michael Jordan: “Sometimes people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen”, resonate with the De Aar project.

Some examples of “making things happen” were the training initiatives which were presented in the community. For training to be successful, it takes diligence and persistence to recruit appropriate and sufficient individuals. This is exactly what our Community Workers achieved when 51 participants could benefit from the hosting of two FAStrap© life skills development courses. The expressed appreciation of participants during the certificate ceremony was especially rewarding. When reading comments on the evaluation forms such as: “I have learnt a lot about alcohol abuse and drugs. I can now apply this in my community”, you are assured that awareness, and a sense of agency has been achieved. Considering that each FAStrap© participant must provide proof of sharing some of the course content with 20 others in the community in order to receive a certificate, it

is safe to say that, with the 51 participants in attendance, FARR was able to directly and indirectly reach more than 1000 people.

Yet another example of an achievement, is the awareness created as part of the International FASD Day commemoration on 9 September 2023. With staunch support from the Northern Cape: Department of Education, we reached out to Gr. 9 learners across De Aar. The FASD awareness message was conveyed, with each learner being issued with a tangible reminder, in the form of a DYH3M© card. These laminated awareness tools can be used by learners to further spread awareness. Upon reviewing the registers from the schools and realizing that a tremendous total of 579 learners were reached, we were immensely appreciative of the effectual partnership that we have with the Department.

Once again, the incredible support from our community and stakeholders has made it possible for FARR-De Aar to “make things happen” and bring about meaningful change!

DE AAR NORTHERN CAPE





SENIOR CITIZENS' SUPPORT

As a caring organisation, we believe in a “whole of society” approach towards the elimination of FASD. One of the aspects of this approach is the realisation of the immensely important part that senior citizens and grandparents play as caregivers, opinion leaders and role models within our communities. For this reason we have developed the Senior Citizen Support Programme.

In Burgersdorp a Senior Citizen Support Group is hosted once a month with the only requirement being that members must be a grandparent and 50 years or older. During the sessions a FARR Facilitator leads a variety of topics such as emotional and physical wellbeing, relationships with family and grandchildren and finances etc. Discussions are interactive and allow members to tap into each other’s knowledge and wisdom.

Giving them an opportunity to reminisce on the “good old days” and their experiences, ignites affirmation and much joy! By the time they leave the session each person must feel motivated to remain active and encouraged to leave a rich legacy in their community.

It is wonderful to look back and recognise that we have made significant strides towards touching the lives of senior citizens in Burgersdorp, as is confirmed by one of our Support Programme members:

“I am a pensioner who participated in the programme for seniors. We were trained on how to live a healthy lifestyle and the importance of daily exercise. I can now walk much better, and my blood pressure is more stable. I want to thank FARR for this because I had lost hope, but now I am healthy and active. Thank you very much”. [Translated from Afrikaans].

XOLA MASUMPA - PROJECT COORDINATOR

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



CORNÉL STEVENS - PROJECT COORDINATOR

Living in the Karoo is not always easy, especially when it comes to accessing appropriate doctors and therapists - which is particularly relevant for people, especially children, living with disabilities. In response to this challenge, the Hanover Project is unique in FARR in that we facilitate a support and education programme for caregivers of persons living with disabilities. It entails establishing contact with appropriate medical specialists and assisting caregivers to gain insight into the child's condition. In addition, the programme offers learning and fun activities to enhance the bond between caregiver and child. One mother's testimony of how FARR has impacted her life, reads as follows:

"Toe ek hoor van die Special Needs Program by FARR wou ek graag deelneem om hulp vir my en my kind te kry. Ek kon oor my probleme praat tydens die sessies en dit het my laat vry voel. Ek is 'n ligter mens nadat ek aan die program deelgeneem het. FARR het my gehelp om spesialiste te sien wat vir my raad oor my kind se toestand kon gee. FARR het ook vir my hulpmiddels gegee om my kind te stimuleer en te help. Ek kan 'n verskil aan my kind en ons verhouding met mekaar sien."

Positive feedback like this spurs us on! Although we are passionate about implementing all our initiatives, this programme is particularly close to our hearts. Through our interaction we are able to forge a stronger bond between caregivers and their children and assist them to unlock healthier and happier futures, thereby making a difference!

OMGEE-MENSE!

RENOSTERBERG NORTHERN CAPE

CHARLENE GROBBELAAR - PROJECT COORDINATOR



Gedurende die afgelope jaar het ons “dankbaarheidsmeter” die hoogte ingeskiet met verskeie groot skenkings nl. een van ’n plaaslike besigheid en drie van verskillende gemeenskapslede in ons area. Die goedere ontvang, is aangewend vir ons Gesonde Moeder Gesonde Baba© (GMGB©) kliënte en maak nie net klein baba- en kinderlyfies en voete warm nie, maar raak ook die harte van soveel betrokkenes aan.

Die projek bestuur ook ’n tweede-handse winkel wat by die FARR-kantoor in Petrusville geleë is. Aangesien die gemeenskap so geïsoleerd is, het hulle nie maklik toegang tot verskillende winkels nie. Ons winkel bied ’n wye verskeidenheid items te koop aan, teen baie bekostigbare pryse. Dit sluit in: klere, beddegoed, huisware, opvoedkundige speelgoed en storieboeke, om slegs ’n paar te noem. Dit maak dit baie meer gerieflik vir die gemeenskap om aankope vir hul gesinne en huise te doen. Diegene wat die winkel besoek, spreek gereeld hul dankbaarheid teenoor FARR uit en noem dat andere nie die positiewe impak van ’n eenvoudige winkel in ’n plek soos Petrusville, sal besef nie.

Leana Seekoei skryf as volg oor haar ervaring by die winkel:

“Op ’n gewone Dinsdagoggend in Petrusville loop ek na die FARR-kantoor, want die hele Petrusville gons oor die Charity Shop wat oopgemaak het. Ek het glad nie met die doel gegaan om iets te koop nie, dit was meer uit nuuskierigheid uit. Ek kom toe daar en dadelik vang hierdie pragtige mooi rooi rok my oog, dit was uniek en baie besonders vir my. Iets wat jy definitief nie hier by ons te koop sal kry nie. Ek pas dit toe aan en dit pas my lyf perfek. Hierdie rooi rok van my het myself al soveel vreugde gebring, want ek kry altyd mooi komplimente wanneer ek hom aanhet. Die Charity Shop is definitief ’n groot aanwinst vir ons omdat ons nie klerewinkels in ons dorp het nie, ons moet De Aar toe gaan of Hopetown toe as ons klere of enige ander huisware benodig, so dit spaar ons baie geld. Dankie FARR jul maak so baie van ons gemeenskap mense se harte warm.”

Niks van die bogenoemde sou moontlik wees sonder die mense wie uitreik en vir ons so mildelik skenkings gee nie. Groot of klein, elke bietjie en elke item help. Ons wil graag vir almal wat ’n bydrae gemaak het, opreg bedank. Die wete dat daar soveel omgee-mense in ons gemeenskap is, skeep onmeetbare vreugde en hoop!

PIXIE'S PROSPEROUS PATH



Born as one of four children, Pixie had a happy childhood. Until her stepfather came into their lives....

They moved around extensively and finally settled in Louisvale, Upington, in the Northern Cape. The siblings had to change schools several times to accommodate their stepfather's constant change of employment.

Pixie was initially a happy girl, but her stepfather found delight in causing rifts between her and her mother. She felt depressed and isolated. Her mother accused her of being a troublemaker and called her terrible names, leaving her with low self-esteem. She could not wait to be old enough to find a job and live her own life.

Once she moved out, her "own life" became a life of parties and binge drinking over weekends. Soon she became the mother of two children, raising them on her own. Referring back to that time period in her life, Pixie describes herself as being a "heavy drinker".

With her third pregnancy, she was recruited to join the FARR HMHB© Programme. She was still using alcohol and fell in the high-risk category of our programme. It wasn't an easy task to resist alcohol, especially over weekends when all her friends were drinking. Fortunately she had a close friend to support her, and she kept the information sessions and guidance from FARR in mind.

She was determined to put the safety of her baby first and stopped drinking. When asked whether she was worried about the outcome of the 9-Month Baby Clinic assessment, she replied: *"Deur die ondersteuning van FARR en my vertroue in God, was ek nie bekommerd nie"*.

Pixie gave birth to a healthy baby boy! She has since prospered and remained sober. She acknowledges FARR as being a crucial element in positively changing her path in life. As FARR staff, receiving such acknowledgement from our clients, is rewarding beyond words!



ABELENE GOLIATH - PROJECT COORDINATOR

CATALYST FOR CHANGE

As Epicurus said: "Both old and young alike ought to seek wisdom". He was very clear in his belief that no age is too early or too late to gain wisdom for the health of the soul. This speaks to what our support programmes strive for: sharing information, developing insight and guiding towards better life choices.

Following the "whole of society" approach, young and old are included in specifically crafted support programmes. As an example, the Adolescent Support Programme was implemented in a local high school, amid the school's management struggling with a multitude of social challenges. Covering essential life skills such as the formation of healthy relationships, personal hygiene, prevention of substance abuse and teenage pregnancies, our intervention has "hit the mark" in bringing about noticeable change in learners, as attested by the Deputy Principal:

"The different topics that were presented thus far, were to the point and so relevant, as our

learners face different social issues on a daily basis. We have a high enrolment of learners coming from different backgrounds in the community where drug abuse, gangsterism, unemployment and poverty are, but some of the biggest issues. These issues spill over into the school. This programme really helped in reducing these problems.

Our learners started to show great improvement and it is evident that you have provided us with valuable knowledge. The presenters were well-prepared and had sufficient knowledge about the topics. The passion and enthusiasm that the presenters showed while presenting, led to the spontaneous engagement of learners."

Receiving feedback of such a noticeably positive shift in the learners was immensely rewarding as it affirms the constructive impact of our programme and efforts. Our team is proud to be a catalyst for change for these young people. We hope that their new-found wisdom will guide them to many wonderful possibilities!

TEAMWORK

MAKES THE

MISSION POSSIBLE

MEDICAL ASSESSMENTS



During 2023 I worked as a Clinician with FARR at various locations across our beautiful country. The diversity of landscapes, languages and cultures were impressive. Despite the diversity, FARR staff at each location share a special working culture - it is compassionate, enthusiastic and true to its values. Whenever I saw, the now familiar, FARR colours and navy-blue shirts, I knew there would be broad smiles and kind souls in them. At FARR I felt part of a team. A team that cared about communities and worked together to make a difference.

I am very proud to say I worked with FARR. I learnt several lessons that will stay with me. Most importantly, that teamwork is the key to turning an impossible mission into a possible one. In addition, I learnt that the best multi-taskers in the world are FARR Project Coordinators, the best toasted sandwich-makers are FARR staff and, no matter where you are, a FARR driver will be able to find you, pick you up and bring you to the Clinic. When Thabo Bester escaped prison the joke was to send the FARR drivers to find him. I also realised passionate rugby fans are all over South Africa - it was special that the Springboks won the Rugby World Cup during the time I worked with FARR. Another group of South Africans showing remarkable teamwork!

I want to congratulate the staff at FARR for the difference they made to communities and thank them for providing me with inspiration when I needed it most. My hope is that FARR will be able to continue the impactful work it has done. If my words should ever come across potential funders, I can simply say, without a doubt in my mind, that supporting FARR makes a positive difference to societies. FARR is a real gem of an organization, and I hope to be part of this winning team again in future.

DR MICHAEL NOVELLIE - CLINICIAN

759

BOOKS COLLECTED!

LISKA WHITE - SOCIAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

The FARR Children's Book Donation Drive was launched in May 2023.

The mission:

1. To collect 67 new or second-hand children's books for Mandela Day (18 July 2023); and
2. To distribute them to preschool children to use in our community-based Knock-Knock (KKP) Early Childhood Development (ECD) Programme.

This initiative is facilitated at seven of our project sites, all of which are situated in low-income, rural communities. These areas have very little support and stimulation available for children. Thus, all the more reason why collecting books for them to enjoy and engage interactively with a parent/caregiver is so incredibly important to us.

The programme holistically focuses on the wellbeing of the entire household, with special

emphasis on book reading or storytelling to preschool children. It is led by a FARR Facilitator and entails eight sessions during which the mother/caregiver is supported to read or tell a story to the children in the household. The goal of these sessions is to foster a love for books, learning, improve language development and build on parent-child interaction.

A huge thank you to each individual, business and organisation who supported us in our effort, generously donating books to our cause. Astonishingly 759 books were collected! It is thanks to your involvement that FARR can continue to support individuals in the communities we serve.

Mission accomplished! We could not be more grateful!

SOCIAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS





A FATHER'S ROLE

The "Legacy Dad" course, developed by Bright Star Lifestyle and presented by FARR, addresses a critical social issue in our country: We live in a society where many fathers are either absent or do not accept responsibility for raising their children. As they never experienced the presence of a father figure, they do not understand the importance of the role of a father and being present in their children's lives.

Since being appointed by FARR as an ad hoc Legacy Dad Course Facilitator in October 2023, I have had the privilege of presenting five courses across the country. Facilitating at places such as Hanover, Trompsburg and Upington, I have witnessed many fathers acknowledging broken relationships and absenteeism towards their children. Through the course fathers learn how to engage with their children through listening, reading books and playing games.

They are taught to be present, affirming and to provide emotional security to positively impact their children's lives. Practical, easy-to-follow examples are provided by means of short video clips and games. Great has been the reward to experience the commitment from fathers to work on and heal their relationships.

By equipping fathers with the skills and mindset to nurture their children, we are cultivating a brighter future for generations to come. I am grateful to our sponsors for their support in empowering fathers to become the legacy builders their children need.

I trust that as you read this article you take a moment to reflect on your Dad's legacy and how it has impacted you. Let us continue this journey to heal our land, one father at a time.

GARY JANEKE - TRAINING FACILITATOR

A NEW CHAPTER

Transitioning from Administrative Coordinator to Training Facilitator was an exciting, but daunting new chapter to start. I've always looked for opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others, and being a Training Facilitator at FARR is helping me to fulfil this passion.

In my previous position I worked independently and consequently had to adjust to working as part of a diverse team in the Training Academy. I soon learnt that we all have the same passion for working in communities and creating awareness of FASD. With our unique strengths we all have something different to contribute.

Sometimes, as a Facilitator you need to rise above adversities such as travelling long distances, encountering extreme weather conditions and staying in towns where constant power and water outages are a reality. However, working within the communities, raising awareness about FASD and teaching life skills is incredibly uplifting. Having an opportunity to share vital information and turn it into knowledge, observing the transformation in the demeanour of the participants and reading the comments on evaluation forms, is what makes training so rewarding! One such comment reads:

“Ek het dinge geleer waarvan ek min bewus was, nou dat ek die kennis daarvan het, kan ek dit toepas op my eie lewe en ander mense in my omgewing daarvan inlig. DANKIE aan FARR mense dat hulle hierdie belangrike inligting aan ons jongmense deel.”

I am immensely grateful to do work that I am passionate about!



TRAINING ACADEMY

This chart illustrates FARR's funding received in 2023/2024. None of the work completed by FARR would have been possible without dedicated funding. Hence, we wish to SINCERELY THANK all our valued sponsors and donors for your gracious contributions and support.



Scatec	44%
Aware.org	21%
Discovery Trust.....	10%
Solar Capital	7%
Globaleq	6%
DSD-WC.....	5%
Cheil SA.....	3%
Heineken	3%
Interest	1%

FINANCE

SYNERGY

DR JACO LOUW - PROJECT COORDINATOR

WEST COAST WESTERN CAPE



I joined FARR in 2013, just after finishing my master's degree in Psychology. Even though I had minimal community work experience, Dr Leana Olivier gave me the incredible opportunity to start as a Project Coordinator for two projects. It was a trial by fire, but I had endless encouragement and support from my team members, who helped me grow into the position.

My dream to keep studying stayed in the back of my mind. Being involved in research at FARR gave me endless ideas and would prove the key to my success. I wanted to see whether technology could help children with FASD. To realize this, FARR again, was willing to provide me with a wonderful opportunity. My idea became a FARR project, and my team in the West Coast, Hayley Hofmeester and Elloise Karolus supported me in running the project. I could register for my PhD in Psychology!

The CEO, the FARR Board Members and my colleagues played an immeasurable role in the whole process, which started germinating in 2016. Many hours of hard work culminated in being awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology at Stellenbosch University in December 2023.

While this is a personal achievement, it is also the story about FARR and the heart of the organisation. It is the reflection of a committed team, working towards the wellbeing of those affected by alcohol exposure during pregnancy. It is the testimony of a research organisation at the forefront of the latest work done with regards to FASD. Most importantly, it is the story of how personal missions at FARR can synergize with the work we do.

*“A smile is such a funny thing, it brightens up your face.
But when it’s gone you’ll never find its secret hiding place...”*

When the FASD prevalence rate was announced in March 2023, the Trompsburg-team went through a period of shock. How do you eradicate a prevalence of 18%? It seemed impossible! But then we realised that we only needed to start by bringing it down, one percentage at a time – mission: possible.

As soon as we received the green light to start, we hit the ground running. Changing people’s perception about alcohol harm and FASD doesn’t happen overnight. By using every opportunity to do awareness talks, at parents’ meetings, at clinics, community gatherings, church services, and even before concerts, the message that: “No amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy”, slowly began to be echoed.

By interacting with youth and senior citizens through arts and crafts, we have built trust. FARR has become a confidant to many. Even though we cannot help with the unemployment and poverty, we have become a place where pregnant women, grandmothers, working parents and teenagers, often pop-in to greet, share some joy and sometimes even stop to shed a tear, just to make the load a little more bearable.

So, in Trompsburg we measure our successes in smiles:

- The smile after a learner eventually managed to build a 9-piece puzzle.
- The smile of a mother holding a healthy 10-day old baby.
- The smile of a senior citizen celebrating a special birthday.
- The smile of a community member with tomatoes from our vegetable garden.
- The smile from a community member receiving a certificate after the FAStrap© course.
- The smile from a community worker when she has reached her targets.

*“...but far more wonderful it is to see what smiles can do.
You smile at one. He smiles at you. And so, one smile makes two.”*





BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR ...

DR LEANA OLIVIER - CEO: CHAIRPERSON OF AFRICA FASD NETWORK

I had never been to Madagascar.... Until April 2023.

A friend of FARR, Dr Thierry Maillard, Coordinator of the FASD Network of the Indian Ocean Islands, invited me to be the keynote speaker at the first FASD Conference in Africa in Antananarivo, Madagascar, held on 6 and 7 April 2023. I was honoured to accept the invitation and privileged to have an experience of a lifetime!

Being passionate about the prevention of FASD, I was always wondering what the extent of FASD was in the rest of Africa and wished I could visit countries in Africa to assess the situation. Attending the conference, I was blown away by the passion and dedication of the attendees. Many of them had to take leave and attend the conference at their own cost. Believe me, traveling in Madagascar is not for the faint hearted! A journey of 100km can take you up to two days with no guarantee that there will be a passable road to use.

For many years I have been asked about the possibility of establishing a FASD network in Africa. Although the value of collaboration and networking when facing a huge multi-faceted challenge such as alcohol abuse and FASD is undisputed, I have always shied away from this daunting task. Collaborative networks such as the EUFASD (Europe), CANFASD (Canada), Research Society for Alcoholism (USA), etc. have demonstrated for years the benefit of shared knowledge, resources, skills and lived experiences.

During the conference in Antananarivo the pressure for the establishment of such a collaboration resulted in the founding of the Africa.FASD Network on 7

April 2023. Dr Thierry Maillard was elected as the Vice-Chairperson and yours truly as Chairperson. Since then, we have formed a Steering Committee with representatives from Tanzania (Prof Blandina T. Mmbaga, Director Kilimanjaro Clinical Research Institute), Uganda (Prof Nazarius M. Tumwesigye, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Makerere University), Mali (Prof Tidiane Diallo, Department of Pharmacology, University of Bamako), Ghana (Dr Ashura Bakani, Paediatrician, Ashanti Region), East Africa (Prof Gibson Kibiki, Founding Executive Secretary of the East African Research Commission) and Ms Tupokigwe Jana (Secretary of the Africa.FASD Network). A successful meeting in Dar-es-Salaam in June 2023 and the attendance of a Wilton Park meeting in New York in September 2023, are some of the highlights to date.

At present, in our quarterly meetings, we are developing the necessary founding documents, sharing information about country events and situations, and increasing our understanding and knowledge about FASD and the needs in Africa. We have been invited to present at the EUFASD Conference in Madrid, Spain in September 2024, which will then also be the first official announcement of the 2nd FASD Conference in Africa, scheduled to take place in Cape Town in October 2025.

We have a long and interesting journey ahead of us. It is surely not going to be easy to make the breakthrough in some African countries, but with the expertise in the Steering Committee we have great hope to reach as far as possible.

ADDING TO RESEARCH LITERATURE

MANDI BROODRYK - RESEARCH COORDINATOR

The Research Unit has indeed accomplished a mission that seemed imPOSSIBLE, just in time for the end of our financial year. After conducting nine FASD prevalence studies between 2015 and 2023, we are excited to share that, following a rigorous peer-review process we have published the findings of eight of these prevalence studies in a highly esteemed scientific journal. In the article we report on three prevalence studies in the Eastern Cape, three in the Northern Cape, one in the Free State and one in the Western Cape. Details are also provided of the prevalence rates, medical assessments and services provided. Due to their isolation and lack of resources, these communities would otherwise not have access to such services. The title of the journal article is called: "A multi-year, multi-site study of the prevalence of fetal alcohol syndrome in South Africa in a multi-year, multi-site study".

As part of the prevalence studies we were able to provide the following services: 1086 primary healthcare screenings of children, 495 paediatric examinations and 475 neurodevelopmental assessments. Due to the latter, a total of 474 maternal interviews were undertaken with mothers/guardians of the children from whom we needed more information, in order to make an informed diagnoses.

To further extend our services, referrals were facilitated for: 424 children to a primary healthcare clinic, 651 children for nutritional assistance (malnutrition), 4 children to a psychologist, 15 children to social services and 382 children for oral health related problems. One can conclude that if it were not for the prevalence studies conducted, these challenges would not have been identified and appropriate assistance would not have been sought for these clients.

Upon the conclusion of these studies, it is FARR's wish that the prevalence rates will guide appropriate policy formulation, alcohol harm reduction interventions and the provision of relevant services by government departments such as Social Development, Education and Health as well as all related stakeholders.

Read the full article:

Louw, J. G., Broodryk, M., White, L., Acker, D., Viljoen, D. L., & Olivier, L. (2024). A multi-year, multi-site study of the prevalence of fetal alcohol syndrome in South Africa in a multi-year, multi-site study. Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research, 00, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.15306>

Note: To ensure that we do not stigmatise communities, we report these prevalence rates per municipality, instead of the specific towns.



GETTING TO KNOW OUR HR & SUPPORT SERVICE STAFF ...

Zola Mabali (General Worker & Cleaner), Marietjie Mouton (HR Coordinator) and Ryno Scheepers (Reception & Admin Clerk)

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING AT FARR?

- M** 7 Years
- Z** 18 Years
- R** 2 Years



WHAT UNIQUE TALENT/CHARACTERISTIC DO YOU BRING TO YOUR POSITION?

- M** The ability to stand aside and not get emotionally involved in situations.
- Z** I always take pride in my work and stay professional.
- R** I think my unique skills bring order to the smooth running of operations. I always strive hard to make sure that everything and everyone is satisfied with the outcome. I have a lot of patience and I am always the same and pleasant to work with. What you see is what you get.

WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

- M** To be able to make a difference in a colleague's life.
- Z** Seeing the satisfaction on a staff member's face after having a cup of coffee/tea that I prepared. Seeing how they enjoy it. I also see to it that the offices are always spotless and cleaned to the best of my ability.
- R** Although sometimes it is a big responsibility, I really enjoy knowing the fact that my job is important. I ensure that all vehicles run smoothly and that all goods reach projects timeously to help them to operate smoothly.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR FREE TIME?

- M** To spend time with my family and grandchildren, reading and to go camping with my husband & friends.
- Z** I love spending time with my family and going into town with them. Their company is the best for me!
- R** I love spending time with my family, listening to music and watching 80s movies.

Beneficiaries of the comprehensive FASD Research, Awareness, Prevention, Support and Training Programmes at FARR Projects in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Free State Provinces.



COMPILED BY: DR JACO LOUW



RESEARCH



PREVENTION



AWARENESS



TRAINING



SUPPORT

RESEARCH



FASD Prevalence Study
0 Participants anthropometrically screened



9-Month Baby Clinical Examinations
544 Babies examined

COMMUNITY EDUCATION & AWARENESS

FAStrap® Course

16 Courses - 374 Participants

Legacy Dad Course

11 Courses - 188 Participants

Think Twice Workshop®

32 Workshops - 709 Participants

ECD

16 Workshops - 345 Participants

Awareness

107 Sessions/Talks - 4408 Participants

Do you have 3 Minutes (DYH3M®) Programme

8624 Participants



PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

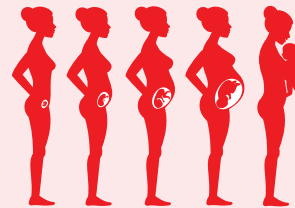
Training Courses and Seminars for Professionals

8 Courses/Seminars
355 Professionals



PREVENTION PROGRAMME

Healthy Mother Healthy Baby® (HMHB®) Programme



791 Pregnant women supported

SUPPORT & INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES



Knock-Knock® Early Childhood Development Programme

350 Mothers and Pre-school Children

Learner Support Programme

100 Primary School Learners

Adolescent Support Programme

121 Group Sessions with a total of 1792 Adolescents

Senior Citizen Support Programme

88 Group Sessions with a total of 1222 Seniors

Disability Support Programme

11 Sessions - 73 Participants





GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS AND SERVICES

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD): An umbrella term to describe a group of conditions affecting the unborn baby, resulting from prenatal alcohol exposure. There are four main conditions on the continuum of the spectrum, namely Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), Partial Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (pFAS), Alcohol Related Birth Defects (ARBD) and Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder (ARND). FASD is a permanent, irreversible condition. All individuals living with FASD have some degree of brain damage, resulting in learning and behavioural problems. Organ damage is common. FASD is 100% preventable by not using any alcohol at any time during pregnancy.

A. Assessments:

1. Clinical Examinations:

Assessments are done by Medical Specialists, often assisted by a Clinical Nurse Practitioner. It consists of a medical examination, screening for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) and/or any other medical/genetic disorder. It may include referrals for further specialist investigations, for example cardiological assessments. Other referrals may entail nutrition, general health conditions, oral health, psycho-social investigations etc. Clients can also be referred for a Neurodevelopmental Assessment by a FARR Psychometrist/Psychologist.

2. Neurodevelopmental:

Assessments done by registered Psychometrists under the supervision of a Psychologist, using a battery of measures to assess neurodevelopmental functioning. A Neurodevelopmental Assessment is an essential component of FASD diagnostics.

3. Healthy Mother Healthy Baby© Programme / HMHB© Programme:

A targeted, evidence-based FASD prevention programme aimed at supporting pregnant women to have healthier pregnancies and thus healthier babies. In collaboration with health care facilities at project sites, all pregnant women below 20-weeks gestation can participate, thus adding to the existing antenatal-care services provided by the Department of Health. Clients are offered a series of structured individual intervention sessions, group sessions, video-based training and home visits throughout their pregnancy. Mothers of newborn babies also receive home visits and are invited to bring their babies to a 9-Month Baby Clinic.

4. 9-Month Baby Clinics:

Babies born from clients who participated in the HMHB© Programme receive a medical examination when they are at least 9 months old. Where indicated, a Neurodevelopmental Assessment is administered by a Psychometrist. Referrals are facilitated for primary health care, oral care, nutrition and social services etc.

5. Private Clinic:

A FASD diagnostic service offered at the FARR Head Office in Bellville. The service consists of a medical and/or developmental assessment completed by a Medical Specialist and/or Psychometrist, as well as interviews with the mother/primary caregiver and patient. It furthermore entails ongoing telephonic and/or online support. This is a paid service and professional tariffs apply upon appointment. It adheres to medical insurance requirements. Parents are guided on constructive activities to do with their children and supported on how to manage challenges. In cases where additional care or support may be needed, referrals are facilitated to access required resources.

B. Community Support Programmes:

1. Knock-Knock Early Childhood Development Programme:

A community-based programme offered at the homes of clients, focusing on supporting mothers to stimulate the development of their pre-school children through play, reading and storytelling. By doing this the mother-child bond is strengthened, optimum development and school-readiness are facilitated. The wellbeing of other individuals in the household, such as adolescents and the elderly are also assessed during these home visits. This 8-week programme consists of 7 sessions at home and one group session at the FARR project centre. On completion the mother receives a certificate.

2. Learner Support Programme:

This support programme for primary school learners diagnosed with FASD or other learning disabilities, is offered by FARR at the school. Activities and interactive games are used to promote key areas of development which play a significant role in assisting children with reading, writing, mathematics etc. The programme is facilitated once a week for a period of 30 weeks (excluding school holidays), involving small groups of learners.

3. Adolescents Support Programme:

A total of 11 group sessions are offered per annum to adolescents within the age group of 12-18 years. The aim is to discuss basic life skills and enhance informed decision making in terms of forming and maintaining healthy relationships, personal hygiene, prevention of substance abuse and teenage pregnancies. Sessions are interactive through topic discussions, watching related movies and engaging in arts and crafts.

4. Senior Citizens Support Programme:

A total of 11 group sessions are offered to community members, older than 50 years. These individuals are often the opinion leaders in the community and/or primary caregivers of grandchildren. The objective is to develop insight into relationships and their role in the community as caregivers, to create awareness of substance abuse and focus on the improvement of their own physical and emotional wellbeing. The programme consists of discussions, art therapy and other creative activities.

5. Disability Support Programme:

(Also referred to as the "Special Needs Programme"). Offers education, guidance and support to parents of children living with disabilities. The aim is to educate parents on their child's condition and for them to gain insight into their development, abilities, limitations and behaviour. Parents are guided on constructive activities to do with their children and supported on how to manage challenges. In cases where additional care or support may be needed, referrals are facilitated to access required resources.

C. Training and Education:

1 COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND AWARENESS:

1.1. Do You Have 3-Minutes© (DHY3M) Programme:

A short 3-minute presentation including basic FASD information, accompanied by a high-quality laminated card which is handed to participants as reference, and to use as a tool to further spread awareness.

1.2. Health Talks:

Brief motivational and information sessions focusing on FASD prevention, healthier pregnancies, the benefits of breastfeeding and the role of the male partner etc., whilst making use of a pictorial flipchart.

1.3. FAStrap© Course:

A 3.5-day interactive course including 10 modules aimed at self-care, life skills development, informed decision-making and wellbeing. Learning is encouraged through art, group exercises, games and roleplays etc.

1.4. Legacy Dad Course:

A 2-day course to guide fathers to intentionally connect with, care for and play with their children. The focus is on helping fathers become role models, to lead by example and to leave a positive legacy for their children.

1.5. Think Twice© Workshop:

A 3 to 4-hour alcohol harm reduction workshop aimed at raising awareness of alcohol use and abuse, the physical and psycho-social effects of abuse, the dangers of alcohol consumption during pregnancy, the important role of the male partner and how to seek help etc.

1.6. International FASD Day:

The annual global FASD awareness campaign observed on 9 September. As a woman is pregnant for 9 months, the 9th day of the 9th month is devoted to creating awareness about alcohol free pregnancies to improve FASD prevention and to solicit greater support and services for those affected, and their caregivers.

2. PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT:

2.1. Early Childhood Development (ECD) Workshop:

A 3-hour workshop for ECD Practitioners focused on FASD epidemiology, behavioural and learning challenges of children who may be affected, and facilitating relevant and practical management strategies in the ECD setting.

2.2. Educators: Foundation Phase, Health Professionals, Social Workers:

A 2-day course unpacking FASD epidemiology, ethical and human rights implications, FASD prevention, management of those already affected, and prevention of secondary disabilities according to profession-specific interventions and roles.

2.3. Alcohol Harm Reduction (AHR) Seminar for Professionals:

A 1-day seminar hosted annually at project sites. Delegates include local multi-disciplinary professionals working for government, NGO's, CBO's etc. It provides a platform to share important FASD and FARR project information, clarifies various stakeholders' mandates and interventions, and creates networking opportunities.

TO ALL OUR DONORS:

Thank You

FOR MAKING OUR MISSION POSSIBLE



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

📘 FARR (Foundation for Alcohol Related Research)