

# Opening Doors



# South African Mobility for the Blind Trust

Annual Review **2020**





Samson has found the key to a new world

## Opening Doors

Life walked out the door and shut it for good. That is how it felt on the day you went blind. You could push open that door now, of course, and step outside. But then what?

The communal tap is over there somewhere. But you are too scared to try and find it by yourself. You might fall and get hurt. And then, who would help you? And what if you got lost and couldn't find your way back?

So you step back inside, close the door and start looking for

the bread and jam. But you can't find the jam. So you eat the bread. Just like that. Dry. Yes, you need help. But you don't want to be a burden to others.

And then one day there's a knock at your door. It's Zanele, the community caregiver. She has someone with her. And yes, it is someone from SAMBT. We'll call her Jabu for now. Zanele tells you Jabu can teach you how to get back on your feet again and walking out there with a white cane. And there

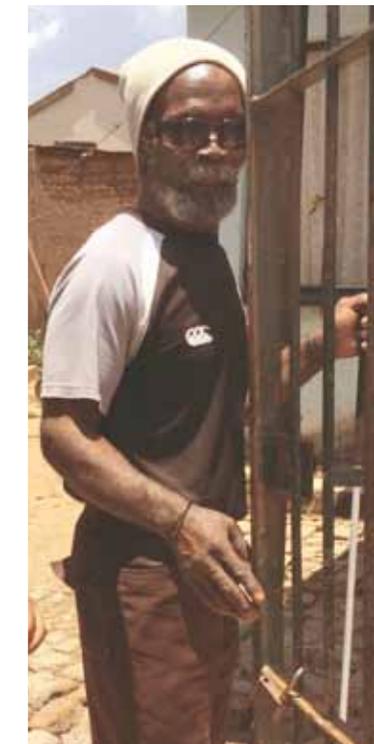
are also other things you can learn to do for yourself again, Jabu tells you. You don't believe them at first.

But just look at yourself now. It's only two months since that knock at your door and you are off to your local spaza shop – just you and your white cane. You have your money with you. You got it from the ATM by yourself. And they won't cheat you with the change at the spaza anymore. Because now you can tell which coin is which and the same with the banknotes. And all this is thanks to Jabu.

You are back at home now

and your phone rings. You answer. You have learnt how to do that too. It is your sister from Johannesburg. She wants to know how you are getting on. You tell her you are doing just fine. And now, it's time to get down to cooking the food you bought at the spaza. And then, there is a knock. You open the door. And there they are, your friends. They have come to enjoy a meal with you – just like they used to.

And yes, that door to the world outside that was shut is open again. You found the key. That key was the training Jabu brought you.





Our practitioner Thabelo Muofhe shows a child how to use her talking watch

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In this report you will get an overview of what SAMBT has done this last year and you will meet some of the people we trained. But keep in mind how trapped behind closed doors many of those people felt because of their blindness and what our training has meant to them.

Ian Hutton: Managing Trustee



Our practitioner Kidibone Setlhabi with Jonas after withdrawing cash at the ATM

## The Training Programmes



We planned to run a total of 18 training programmes during this past financial year. We completed these programmes as scheduled, except for one. I will explain this shortly. The average length of each of our programmes was 12 weeks. These spanned six provinces: Gauteng, Limpopo, North West Province, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Cape .

Five of the programmes were at schools for the blind. The rest were community-based.

These ranged from rural places around Mkhondo in Mpumalanga and Newcastle in KZN, to Kuruman in the Northern Cape, and those in urban townships such as Soweto and Soshanguve – as well as everything in between.

We reached a total of 242 blind people and trained them in white cane and orientation techniques as well as in a number of other independence skills. These were people of all ages. 77 of them were children.

## Planning and Monitoring



Moira Higgerty, monitoring and evaluation

All our Practitioners' client assessments, individual and overall programme plans, daily logs, and final reports are now captured digitally. This information is instantly available to management. This is a great improvement on the old hand written method.

It was SAMBT's initiative to employ people to design this digital platform. The College of Orientation and Mobility is now also using this system. Added to this and as usual, Moira Higgerty, our expert consultant, carried out field trips to evaluate our training and provide field support.

She also kept in phone contact with our Practitioners. We had to cancel some of our planned field trips, however, because of the emergence of Covid-19 towards the end of this reporting period.

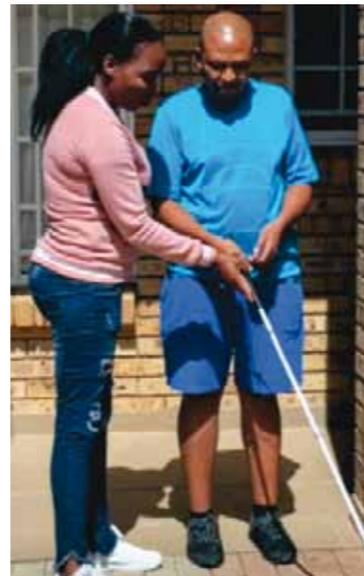
## COVID-19

The first cases of COVID-19 in South Africa were diagnosed in early March 2020. By then it was clear that the world was about to face a major epidemic.

Straight away we told our Practitioners to take care and started organising them with facemasks and sanitisers. After about a week though, we told them to start preparing to leave for home. They were all working outside their home provinces at that point. All of them got home safely. And within days of that, lockdown was announced.

We managed to finish all our training programmes, with the exception of the programme in the Northern Cape. We plan on going back there as soon as we can. All the people we trained over this past year can get themselves to the shop or to the clinic or just go out for exercise, like anyone else, or get to work even. They do not have to hang onto someone's arm to do that. That means that they stand much less chance of contracting the virus.

Also, they are not trapped behind closed doors.



Prince's first lesson

## Who Do We Train?

### Freedom Day

Prince is doing his Masters degree in law at the University of North West. Despite some organised help to get him to lectures, never mind to the gym, this was not working well at all. And so, here he is now on his first lesson with Kidi, his shiny new white cane in hand. I am there too, on a fieldtrip. Prince and Kidi set off. I sit on a bench and wait for them to come back. It is not my place to interfere with that sensitive first lesson. And now, here Prince is, back at his door, a little breathless with excitement.

“You know what?” he says, “It’s like 1994 all over again!”



Ian and Prince sharing his joy

## The Little Ones



Joyce Thebeyagae, our practitioner, with Zanele

It was only a few weeks ago when this little girl found herself in a big scary place called school – a school far from home – a school for the blind. But little Zanele\* is not afraid now because she is with Aunty Joyce and Aunty Joyce is teaching her how to go all around the school and, one day, she will know how to do it all by herself. Because Aunty Joyce says so. Today, after her mobility lesson, she is going to jump on the trampoline because Aunty Joyce says she can.

You can't fall off when you are jumping, she is thinking, because there are nets standing up on the sides. I know where the place is

\* not her real name

to get in by the net. But I must first take off my shoes. I can do that all by myself also. And now it's bouncy bounce! Bouncy bounce! Bounce! Bounce! Bounce! Bounce! And counting One! Two! Three! Four!

And there she is, little Zanele, learning balance and how to trust herself. Discovering how to feel a sense of space and, at the same time, finding out how to count. This little one doesn't think about all that though. She is having too much fun.

But loving Aunty Joyce knows. She knows that little Zanele will need all this if she is to find her own way around the school by herself and, one day, beyond that into a bigger world.

And so now, we are finished with jumping. Little Zanele is putting on her shoes again, all by herself and like Aunty Joyce showed her. If I put them on the wrong way, she thinks, they will call me banana feet.



## Never Too Old

We are travelling with Frans from Itireleng Workshop for the Blind, where he has worked for forty years, and we are heading for a mall in Soshanguve. And the remarkable thing about Frans, who has been blind since he was five, is his precise sense of where he is.

“This is Section 4 here,” he says and goes on to explain which sections of the township are adjacent to it. We pull up at traffic lights. “If you turn left here, it takes you to the magistrate’s court,” he tells us.

Someone then quips that the reason why he knows his way to the magistrate’s court so well is because he goes there so often, which has Frans instantly rocking with laughter. But there are other remarkable things about this man.

“I am a teacher without a degree,” he says. “I give youngsters Sepedi and English lessons at the weekend.”

But there is more. Now that he and his wife, who is also blind, have raised their children to adulthood, Frans,

at the age of 58, is doing a law degree through the University of South Africa.

This is a man who, up until now, has never had a white cane lesson in his life.

“If you are blind you have to know how to do it, otherwise you stand waiting to cross the road for a week,” he says, as we pull into the parking lot at the mall.

The reason why Thabang, who is training Frans, has brought him here is to give

him his second lesson on how to operate an ATM. This time, he wants to try it all by himself. And so, there he stands, pressing all the right buttons it seems because, look! There in his hand it sits. A princely Ten Rand note as proof.

“Now I can manage my life,” says Frans, a flicker of pleasure on his face.

“From today on, this card, is mine and mine alone.”



Frans with our practitioner Thabang Kotsi

## Training Statistics



○ Shows the number of people whom we trained in each area

We now come to the statistics of the people we have trained. We trained 242 blind people over the last financial year. But there are a few things that I would like to emphasise here:

- Firstly, these are all people who would otherwise not have been able to get Independence Training;
- Secondly, if you think about the number of family members whom we have helped as well – taking an estimate of four per blind person – close to 1 250 people in total have benefitted in one year alone;
- Finally, if you were to look back to when we began our work in 1998, you will see that we have trained over 4 000 blind people. If you add their family members to that, we are talking about a total of 20 000 whose lives we have helped to change.

## Advocacy

The need for Independence Training is enormous. We need many, many more trainers (O&M Practitioners) than there are right now and they need jobs to go to when they qualify. The NGOs alone cannot create all those jobs. The government must take responsibility for setting up those posts – in particular the Departments of Health and Basic Education. Although both these departments have formally recognised the importance of Orientation and Mobility Training, they can't create O&M Posts until Practitioners are registered with the Health Professionals Council of South Africa (HPCSA).

It has been seven years since we started this process, advocating for the registration of O&M Practitioners with the HPCSA. There is some progress, but still more needs doing.



Our practitioner Beauty Manoto and Moopedi

## Thank You to our Donors



A money stick helps measure sizes of different bank notes

To our donors: you are the backbone of our work. Without you we would not have achieved what we have. I must thank you all on behalf of SAMBT and on behalf of the blind people whose lives you uplifted. And we must know this too: for little Zanele and Frans and Prince and all the others you have helped, it is also about knowing that there is someone out there who cares.

During the year under review, we had a total of 20 donations

from trusts, corporates, the National Lotteries Commission and the Gauteng Department of Health. 6 of these were new donors.

We also received some gifts from private donors, both locally and from the United States.

Here, I must make mention of the John and Esther Ellerman Memorial Trust. They are our longest standing supporter. They have been with us since our inception in 1998.

## Our 2019-20 Donors

AECI  
 Anglo American Chairman's Fund  
 Anonymous Trust  
 Assmang Khumani Iron Ore Mine  
 Betsy & Neil Coville  
 Concor  
 Craig Roberts  
 Gauteng Department of Health  
 Gillian Gosnell  
 Harry Brunskill Educational and Charitable Trust  
 HCI Foundation  
 IQRAA Trust  
 JAM Events – never had an event last year.  
 Joan St Ledger Lindbergh Charitable Trust  
 John and Esther Ellerman Memorial Trust  
 Kathleen Hastie Charitable Trust  
 King Baudouin Foundation United States  
 Malcolm and Gladys Cameron Foundation  
 Manny and Zeza d'Oliveira  
 Michael and Denise Moys  
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MS Parker Trust  
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 Picturenet  
 Simmonds Hampton Trust  
 Solomon Ruben and Ann Winer Educational Trust  
 Stanley and Alison Sher  
 the fair labour practice  
 Victor Daitz Foundation



## Governance

Our Board of Trustees has seven members. Three are blind and one is partially-sighted. Between them our Trustees bring experience and qualifications relevant to our field of work and to their roles as Trustees. Their qualifications include, among other things, law, finance, social science and special education.

Some of their experience includes work in the NGO and blindness sectors. During the period covered in this report, our then Chair,

Zak Yacoob, stepped down from his position as Chair and as a member of the board. Zak is a retired judge of the Constitutional Court of South Africa. He decided to scale down his involvement in public life to free up more time for his other interests. Here, we must thank Zak for the precious time he gave to SAMBT and for his energy, intelligence and good humour.

We wish him well and thank him also for keeping in touch with us informally.



Our new Chair is Silomo Kumalo. Silomo is a youngblood with significant experience already. He is legally qualified and has worked as a researcher for judges of the Constitutional Court. He has also worked for Section 27 – an activist law NGO. He is now a researcher at the Supreme Court of Appeal and is doing his masters degree as well. He describes himself as a human rights activist – in particular in the area of blindness and of disability in general. Welcome, Silomo.

## The Year Ahead

Our original training schedule was for 18 programmes covering six provinces and aimed at training about fifty people. Then Covid-19 struck. As a result, our Practitioners were placed on special leave for April and most of May.

We are now training again with a revised schedule. We still hope to run 17 or 18 programmes but most of these will be shortened and fewer people will be trained. We will have to keep revising this schedule, depending on how the situation unfolds.

The first set of programmes are all in our Practitioners' home areas. There is a strict protocol in place for our Practitioners to follow. In the meantime, the rest of the staff have been

working from home. All of us have taken salary cuts in the light of the fact that the pandemic will certainly make fundraising more difficult for the foreseeable future.

We will still continue to look hard at our options in our advocacy work. The registration of Practitioners with the HPCSA is particularly crucial.



# Audited Financial Statements

SOUTH AFRICAN MOBILITY FOR THE BLIND TRUST

TRUST NUMBER IT 10593/97

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 31 MARCH 2020

	Note	2020 R	2019 R
<b>ASSETS</b>		<b>4 532 659</b>	<b>2 790 152</b>
<b>Non current assets</b>		<b>360 563</b>	<b>273 180</b>
Equipment	3	360 563	273 180
<b>Current assets</b>		<b>4 172 096</b>	<b>2 516 972</b>
Accounts receivable	4	-	1 800
Cash and cash equivalents	5	3 985 452	2 270 812
Inventories	6	186 644	244 360
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>4 532 659</b>	<b>2 790 152</b>
<b>RESERVES AND LIABILITIES</b>		<b>4 532 659</b>	<b>2 790 152</b>
<b>Reserves</b>		<b>3 128 085</b>	<b>2 657 790</b>
Trust capital		100	100
Accumulated surplus		1 211 099	1 184 511
Sustainability reserve	7	1 556 324	1 200 000
Equipment fund		360 563	273 180
<b>Current liabilities</b>		<b>1 404 574</b>	<b>132 362</b>
Accounts payable	8	38 320	26 902
Deferred income	9	1 355 827	78 957
Provision for leave pay	10	10 427	26 503
<b>Total reserves and liabilities</b>		<b>4 532 659</b>	<b>2 790 152</b>

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# Audited Financial Statements

SOUTH AFRICAN MOBILITY FOR THE BLIND TRUST

TRUST NUMBER IT 10593/97

## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

	Note	2020 R	2019 R
<b>INCOME</b>		<b>4 214 980</b>	<b>4 182 474</b>
Grants, subsidies and donations	11	4 067 826	4 030 140
Interest received	12	147 155	152 333
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>3 799 686</b>	<b>4 109 958</b>
Advocacy		348 589	379 207
Monitoring, supervision and evaluation		382 080	423 559
Office and administration		720 774	796 537
Training		1 590 510	1 667 070
Communication costs		51 235	55 565
Salaries and other contributions		802 661	1 019 796
Training equipment and accessories		228 589	150 677
Travel and accommodation		508 025	441 033
Staff in service training and conferences		104 957	52 993
Sustainability		376 511	515 831
Training programme - Preparation and Co-ordination		276 265	274 760
<b>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>415 295</b>	<b>72 516</b>

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# Audited Financial Statements

SOUTH AFRICAN MOBILITY FOR THE BLIND TRUST

TRUST NUMBER IT 10593/97

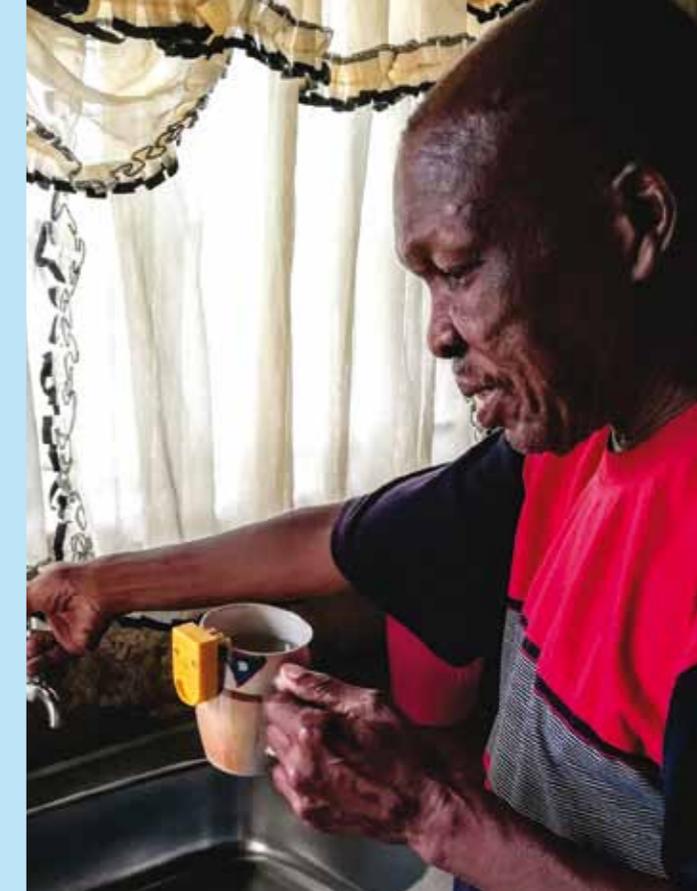
## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

	Note	2020 R	2019 R
Cash received from funders		5 344 696	2 774 231
Cash expended on programmes, suppliers and employees		(3 640 848)	(3 987 340)
<b>Cash generated from/(utilised in) operations</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1 703 848</b>	<b>(1 213 109)</b>
Interest received	12	147 155	152 333
<b>Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities</b>		<b>1 851 003</b>	<b>(1 060 776)</b>
<b>Cash flows (utilised in) investing activities</b>		<b>(136 363)</b>	<b>(4 400)</b>
Acquisition of equipment		(191 363)	(4 400)
Proceeds from insurance claim on stolen laptop		55 000	-
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>1 714 640</b>	<b>(1 065 176)</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year</b>		<b>2 270 812</b>	<b>3 335 988</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3 985 452</b>	<b>2 270 812</b>

Over the last financial year we reached a total of **242** blind people and trained them in white cane and orientation techniques as well as in a number of other independence skills.

**1 250** blind people and their families have benefitted from this training.

Since 1998 we have trained over **4 000** blind people and have helped change a total of **20 000** lives!



# South African Mobility for the Blind Trust

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**Physical address:** 24 3rd Avenue, Melville, 2092

**Trust registration no.:** IT10593/97

**NPO Registration no.:** 007-220 NPO

**PBO:** 18/11/13/1400

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[www.sambt.org.za](http://www.sambt.org.za)

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Banking details, South Africa:

Nedbank, Eastgate Branch

Account number: 1924260212

Branch Code: 192405

America:

<https://kbfus.networkforgood.com/projects/13797-s-kbfus-funds-south-african-mobility-for-the-blind-trust-za>



Moopedi can now find his way home