



CONNECT
N E T W O R K

together for women and children at risk

2012 ANNUAL REPORT



NPO 040-987

PBO 930031187

Company Registration Number: 2006/012058/08
SECTION 18A COMPANY



info@connect-sa.net

Tel +27 21 852 9900

www.connectnetwork.org.za

Chairperson's Report

I consider it a real privilege and honour to have served as Chair of the Connect Board this past year. I have enjoyed the support, advice and friendship of outstanding members of the Board, which has made the task lighter. I have found the Board to be a group that is competent, engaged and plays its role in policy development and leadership. Be encouraged to know that these dedicated individuals volunteer their time working hard behind the scene on your behalf.

I would like to highlight a few accomplishments of Connect Network in 2011:

The review and development of the **strategic plan** for the next 3 years was done in consultation with the staff, Board, members and Viva. The outcome is a collective strategy of all members working towards the same vision of seeing a city wide solution towards "Thriving Families, Transformed Communities".

Quality Improvement System - We saw the first 6 organisations, including Connect NPC, receive QIS accreditation. Our belief is that QIS will contribute significantly to the sustainability and resilience of the member organisations. Thank you to the QIS programme manager, QIS advisory group, trainers, mentors and donors for your contribution in making this a success.

Looking ahead Connect Network plans to work towards actively addressing the following: **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)**: As a network and individual organisations we need to improve on our level of M&E in all aspects of our work; **Sustainability**: We need to implement projects and programmes that are grass roots and sustainable within their community, using local capacity and resources; **Advocacy**: As a network we want to include advocacy in our strategy for all our main goals. I find the most exciting of which is Church Mobilisation; **Leadership**: We need to focus on growing local leaders. Connect, like most NGO's, continues the balancing act of trusting God to provide the necessary resources to continue our work and actively working to locate the needed resources to fulfil our mission and vision.

On behalf of the Board I would like to express our sincere thanks to all donors and supporters for your contribution toward Connect Network's continued vision and mission; to our staff who display extraordinary excellence and incredible levels of service and dedication in their work; and you our members who are the hands and feet working towards building thriving families and transformed communities. Nothing would have been achieved this year without your tenacity and sense of purpose. Be encouraged that although we are faced with many challenges, there are also opportunities to make a difference to the lives of women and children. I hope you will continue to support and work with the Network to help us achieve this.

Erica Pippert



Director's Report

Each member of Connect Network has incredible potential to grow and improve programmes and services with those we serve but are working under immense financial and capacity pressure. In order for us to be truly successful together, we must also be strong individually. When we work with women and children at risk, we are trying to offer them a better life. The sad truth is that, despite our best intentions, at times the care we give falls short of this as the needs are just so immense. If our commitment to women and children is one side of the coin, then strengthening our organisations is the other side. It takes both passion and a well run organisation to offer a genuine hope for the future.

2011 saw Connect Network grow in numbers and stature. Through our research and consultation with the members we discovered the increased footprint of the Network. This highlighted that, despite the tension space and pressures our members are working under, together we are making a significant impact in social development in our city which needs to be taken seriously. Thus the Co-ordination team have been intentional about making in-roads at the department of Social Development, private sector and engaging with churches to join hands with our mission with women and children at risk.

The Co-ordination team has had to adapt to understand new developments in economic trends and legislation and feel the pressure and impact this has on our members. We are constantly exploring what sustainability means and how we as a Network can stand through these challenges together. The Network is positioning itself well for advocacy on behalf of women and children at risk. The theme that prevailed throughout the Network activities in 2011 was focused on the well-being of children through collaboration, church mobilisation, education, caring for and equipping caregivers, strengthening organisations and research.

On behalf of the Board and Co-ordination team we cheer you, the members of Connect Network, and encourage you to keep focused on your vision, goals and calling. Be serious about good practice, as together we form a movement that stands for the well-being of our society by working with the most vulnerable ones.

Dee Moskoff



Strengthening Organisations ...

One of the primary ways we can increase our impact is to build resilient and accountable organisations. After piloting Viva's Quality Improvement System (QIS) in 2006-2007, 128 participants from 43 Connect Network members have participated in one or more QIS module trainings from 2009 to 2011. What we love about this programme is that it includes biblical principles and international non-profit organisation standards of best practice and we can therefore apply our faith in even the most administrative of areas as project planning.

In 2011, QIS gained momentum and 52 participants from 21 organisations attended three modules presented this year: **People Care, Child Protection, and Child Wellbeing.** Together these organisations represent 25 000 women and children. We also reached a milestone as the first group of seven organisations completed the full six-module programme and went through a challenging verification assessment process in order to be accredited.

Verified members :

Quality Level	Beautiful Gate South Africa Living Hope Metro Kids Africa
Foundations Level	L'Abrie de Dieu Safehouse Sarfat Community Projects Connect NPC
Commitment to Quality	Immanuel's Haven

"We have updated our staff job descriptions and produced an organogram to clarify roles and reporting lines. By knowing what is expected of them and seeing where everyone fits into the organisation, staff can work more effectively with the children they serve." Arise Ministries - People Care module

"We have written a new Child Protection Policy and appointed Child Protection Officers, who have begun networking in the community in which they work, introducing themselves to social workers and the police." The Sozo Foundation – Child Protection module

"Our staff decided to re-commit themselves to the simple but often neglected routine of washing the children's hands before lunch at the kids clubs, after attending the Child Wellbeing module. Since there is no running water, they often run out of time and skip this all important task. After considering purchasing waterless soap, it was agreed that it was firstly too expensive, and secondly, would not be effective in teaching the children a lesson on hygiene that they could implement at home, namely to wash hands with soap and water before eating." Living Hope – Child Wellbeing module

While QIS aims to improve the performance of organisations, the Organisational Development (OD) workshop presented participants with some basic theory on Organisational Development – providing the context for the necessity to build structures, processes and policies within our organisations, relevant to its developmental stage. Knowledge of OD theory very often relieves stress as participants realise their organisation is not alone in the struggles and crises they may be experiencing and that there are ways and means to promote change and growth in order to maximize the organisation's potential for impact. 25 participants from 16 organisations attended the workshop, four of whom joined QIS in 2012.



Caring For Carers ...

Working in our sector has the benefit of the "feel good factor" and a sense of calling but how do we ensure that people don't burn out? Making sure people working in our organisations are cared for so that they in turn can give their best to those they serve means that organisations are protecting their staff and volunteers.

At the Network office we are frequently asked what the "going rate" is for staff positions in our sector. A task team worked together with remuneration specialists Cebano (Pty) Ltd to develop a rewards philosophy and market related salary scale for Connect Network members. The remuneration tool that was developed is based on research conducted among our membership as well as a national non-profit organisation salary survey and salary scales from a church denomination and the Department of Education.

Connect Network now has its own Remuneration Management Philosophy and Guidelines with a salary scale tool available for members. 18 organisations have been equipped to use it.



Equipping Carers ...

"ETS allows us to focus on the fact that people we serve are individuals, and not just problems to be solved" Reba



You don't have to be a professional counsellor to require counselling skills! We all have times when we need to play a supportive role for somebody in a crisis, how much more so when volunteering or working for NGOs working with women and children in crisis situations. Connect Network's **Equipped to Serve** crisis lay-counselling training not only provides for the development of listening and communication skills, but it includes biblical teaching that goes to the root of our attitudes, motivations and source of wisdom as counsellors in order to ensure the women and children get the best care possible.

In 2011, attendees were from all over Cape Town, South Africa and even beyond our borders	New Volunteers	New Trainers	New Master Trainers
	22	18	8

Connect Network now has three master trainers and seven new trainers at Choices, Seasons, Options, Living Hope and Menuchah.



Empowering Mothers ...

Empower - to give (someone) the authority or power to do something

Teen pregnancy is at an all time high in the Western Cape, with some areas showing evidence of on average, four out of five teenage girls having had at least one pregnancy before reaching the age of twenty.

Crisis Pregnancy Centres are meeting to connect with each other, encourage each other and to share resources, which provide necessary information for their clients. As a result of their meetings, various brochures and documents dealing with issues like abortion, post-abortion stress and choices for pregnant women, were made available amongst the focus group members. Five pregnancy centres received the follow-up distribution of pamphlets and booklets. Potentially 1915 women and 450 children ultimately would benefit from improved service.

Violence against women remains a critical issue in our communities; our shelters are inundated with requests for safe accommodation and have to turn women away.

Connect Network members formed the women's shelter movement with other women's organisations to stand in solidarity together and to advocate for legislation to work in favour of women in shelters. In 2011, Connect Network provided a safe space for these organisation leaders to come together in support of each other so that they can be spurred on to continue the good work they are doing.

"The work we do with abused women is tough, working with vulnerable and victimised women means we have to give of our own internal resources. Even when there seems to be more important things to do, I always feel encouraged and spurred on during our focus group meetings." Joy - Director at St Annes Homes

Protecting Children ...

Protecting children is everyone's business! Connect Network adopts the whole month of May as Child Protection Month, encouraging child protection promotion activities under the banner of the Green Ribbon Campaign. During this month we place special emphasis on raising awareness around child protection issues, and promoting safe families and communities for all children.

May 2011 saw Connect Network members taking on the child protection campaign by "going green" with their branding, tying green ribbons to their buildings or wearing them, facilitating community awareness campaigns and staff training. The Green Ribbon Campaign hit the media with several local newspapers, radio stations and the Cape Times.

The month ended with more than 30 churches across Cape Town and a few nationally, hosting a Service of Hope and Blessing. The services focused on praying for children at risk, praying for the perpetrators of abuse, and praying for those who care for and serve children.

Throughout Child Protection Month it was clear that Connect Network members are enthusiastic about participating in the Green Ribbon Campaign.

The most vulnerable of all

To be abandoned and left to die is the worst possible thing that could happen to any person, let alone innocent babies who are unable to survive without being nurtured. According to the Department of Social Development, 1 471 children were abandoned in the Western Cape in 2011.

The Network responded to the crisis of abandoned babies, by coming together for a combined response event in March 2011. The intention was to address the situation from a systemic angle by identifying the issues that cause abandonment and to map who is doing what to prevent and assist abandoned children. Even as a Network we realised that we could not solve the whole issue of abandonment but that we could strengthen our current response. The abandoned children focus group was formed, and has committed to define a common goal and work together to achieve it from 2012. At the AGM in August 2011 we started our joint response by advocating for, and highlighting adoption.

Churches Taking Children Seriously...

Churches remain one of the most significant places for children to go to for entertainment, support and love. Churches have the opportunity to impact on children's lives in many positive ways, and are in the position in their communities to help in preventing harm being done to children. Connect Network believes that the church is key in addressing and eradicating many problems that local communities are facing, and consequently they should be encouraged in the work they are doing and to see how this fits into the bigger picture of children at risk.

Connect Network conducted research among 18 church leaders on their response to the new Children's Act and their implementation of child protection protocol. All churches in the research indicated that they need to improve and implement structures to protect children more, and Connect Network committed to make a resource available to them.

The Child Friendly Church initiative is a tool we use to assist churches to help them identify ways they can engage with all children, particularly those at risk. In 2011 Connect Network facilitated a Child Friendly Church programme with seven churches in the Lansdowne area.

During this time the churches analysed the issues that are facing children in their community and how they can work together as one body to address these problems and better protect children. For some of the churches this meant trying new methods of discipline or feeding children, for others it meant working on child protection policies or joining forces with other churches' outreach projects.

"When a little seven year girl was raped in the Flamingo Crescent informal settlement, the Lansdowne ecumenical group took action and responsibility to work together with police and the local ward councillor to take child protection seriously" Linda Walters – Community Networker

32 Churches were involved in both the research and the child friendly church initiative



Giving Hope To Children ...

Developed by a collaboration of network members in 2006, SuperCamps is a model of camping aligned with the National Education Department's outcomes-based education system. Children and leaders are recruited from Connect Network member organisations as part of a continuum-of-care process where issues raised on camp are addressed through the sending organisation when the child returns home.

In 2011, **45** children from six member organisations spent five days away from their desperate home situations. They participated in sport activities, life-skills development, talent shows and had meals together around tables. Two representatives from the CRANE Network in Kampala joined the leadership team and as a result hosted the first SuperCamp in Uganda this January.

"I found out one little boy's brother died while he was on camp, he came through my organisation and I was glad to have been on camp. When we told him the news I was there for him then and will be for as long as he needs me after camp." Goggo - Sarfat Community Development.

It is no secret that the South African schooling system is in crisis and the children hardest hit are those who are affected by poverty. In 2011 Connect Network established its first partnership with corporate South Africa, to address this issue at community level. Top accounting firm Ernst & Young partnered with 15 tutoring groups in the Network to form and equip Homework Clubs.

These Homework Clubs provide vital tutoring, as well as a place to do homework. 15 Homework Clubs together serving a around **500** children between the ages of 7-18 have received numeracy, literacy and study methods training as well as lapdesks for each child.

19-year-old Jody Claasen from Manenberg is benefiting from one of these Homework Clubs. It's no wonder that this is his third attempt at Grade 11. Living in crowded conditions with his extended family, fighting TB and having missed some basics during his primary schooling, Jody has had to fight a feeling of hopelessness that threatened to sink him. But since going to a Homework Club in Mowbray he has passed maths for the first time in years. *"The tutoring has made a big difference to my results and I have just passed Grade 11 and am now ready to move into my Matric year."* He says proudly.

Youth Keeping Children Safe...

SuperClubs Community Development model was established by Connect Network members in the Kayamandi Township in 2006 and is a network model of churches and communities coming together to take ownership over the safety of their children, especially during high risk seasons.

During the December holidays 2011, two communities adapted the SuperClub model: Kayamandi in Stellenbosch and Broadlands Park in Strand. Together they kept more than **500** children safe and occupied. In addition to the fun, games and waterslides, important messages were given; about faith, their rights as children, the issues of sexual exploitation and abuse. One of the volunteers said how overwhelmed she was to see the great potential that the children have in our communities.

At SuperClubs young community leaders are grown, mentored and trained in leadership so that they can be active citizens and role models to children.

"Being part of SuperClubs has helped me to be more focused and gives a sense of fulfilment because I can be of assistance to someone else. In the afternoons, we did service projects, cleaning, painting houses, helping to build houses and handy work. I realised I am a leader in my community and capable to be responsible, I want to see change happen in my community to make it a better place for next generation." Thandi, 16 years, Kayamandi.



The Connect Network Family...

The Co-ordination team are intent on maintaining quality relationships with and among the members and have invested good time in doing so. Besides making site visits throughout the year we also hosted five "road shows", meeting members in coffee shops across different areas in Cape Town. This was backed up with the help of volunteers who conducted research on Network statistics and ended in a consultation with 15 members at our strategic planning Indaba at the end of the year. It was an excellent opportunity for the team to engage with members and the information received has been instrumental in informing the Networks planning and goals. It has also resulted in important discussions around membership engagement, strategic direction, and advocacy.

For a full list of members, see poster insert.

Partners

Alternative Prosperity -
B-BBEE Consultancy Support

Christelijke Hogeschool EDE -
Supervision of Dutch Social Work Students

Equipped to Serve -
Crisis Counselling Training

Open Schools World Wide -
Homework Club Tutor Support

Thando Trust -
SuperClub Programme Development and Co-ordinator

Viva -
Network Consultancy and QIS

Donors

Connect Network thanks all our funders, donors and sponsors, and wishes to express our appreciation for their generosity in support of our joint work with women and children at risk. Your personal and corporate commitment allowed us to reach our goals for 2011.

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Purple Line Plastics
Spinnaker
Rebecca Groves Photography
The Warehouse



The Co-ordination Team



Ruth Droomer • Dee Moskoff (back row)

Maryanne Sangster • Linda Walters • Norma Theron • Michelle Meinesz
Sophie Olivier • Priscilla Farmer • Lorién Parker (front row)

The Board



Peter Williams
Fundraising Director



Erica Pippert
Chairperson



Heidi Segal
Member Rep.



Colin van Wyk
Member Rep.



Jenny Patchett
Accountant



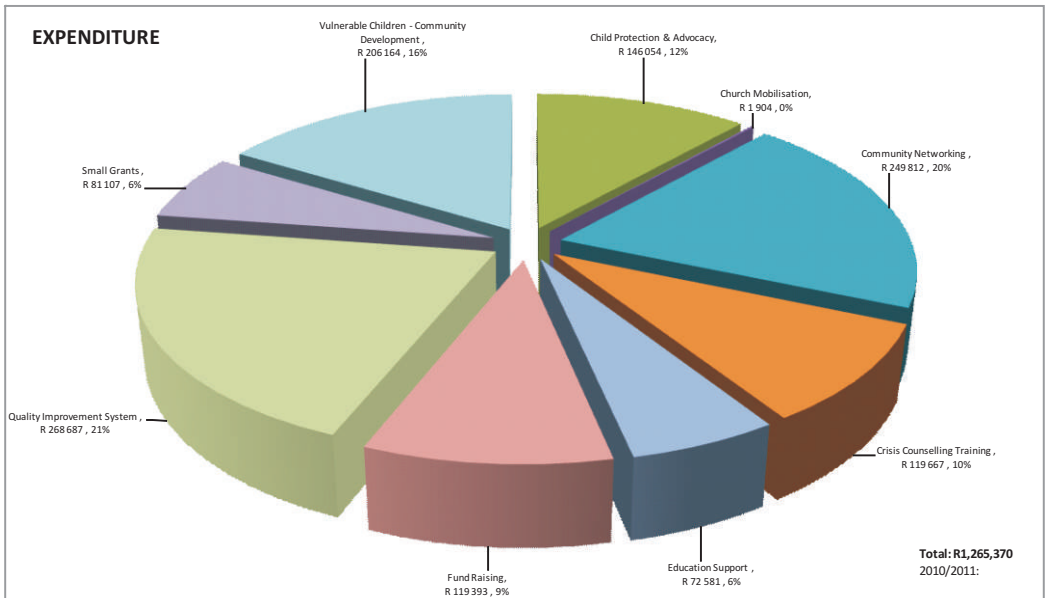
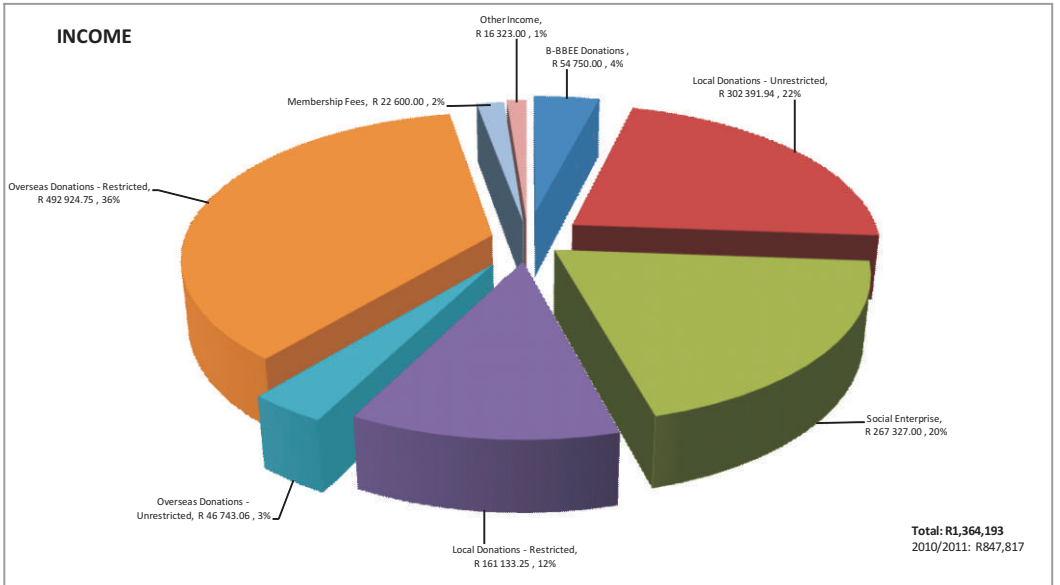
Jurie Serfontein
HR Director



Dee Moskoff
Network Operations

Connect Network Finances ...

Financial Year March 2011 - February 2012



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