



NACOSA News



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NETWORKING AIDS COMMUNITY OF SOUTH AFRICA
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Foodbank first for Cape Town

Hunger and chronic malnutrition is the scourge of our country, undermining our children's future and adults' capacity to work. Over and above hunger relief, HIV positive people need access to good, balanced nutrition in order to boost their immune systems and continue taking ARVs. Many are attempting to fill the need, but their efforts are scattered and impacts varied. At last a co-ordinated effort has taken off with the first foodbank being launched in Cape Town.

Background

Since 1960 the world has produced enough food to feed every single person - yet there are 48 countries that still can't feed their people, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa. South Africa is capable of providing enough food for its people, but almost half of all South Africans live below the poverty line and are not food secure. Poverty is worst in the rural areas and affects women and children most. So far the country has avoided mass starvation. With escalating food prices, crop failures and under-production on agricultural land, the escalating impact of AIDS and increased urbanisation, this could change. Government and the grocery products industry are under pressure. NGOs are obviously also all considering how they can co-operate to address this very serious issue; indeed NACOSA's first round of quarterly meetings this year is similarly focused.

Now FoodBank South Africa offers a reliable source of food for NGOs, who can then in turn spend more time and energy on their core business. Grant McPherson of FoodBank Cape Town states categorically: "We are definitely in a position to supplement NGOs with whatever they might be short of to



This issue of NACOSA News focuses on nutrition and in particular food security. There are many inspiring stories from our members who each in their own way are achieving miracles in their communities (see Pages 8 & 11). Turn to Page 12 where NACOSA network associate member AIDS Legal Network explains the relationship between nutrition and the law. On Page 14 nutritional expert, Alan Brand (himself HIV positive), shares his experience plus tips on immune wellness plus some really good recipes. NACOSA News is by and for our members.

Thanks to our generous sponsors distribution has grown to 5000 copies throughout the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape. We welcome your input and are glad to profile your efforts.

Left: A beautiful basket of organic vegetables, bursting with goodness, grown in Khayelitsha by micro-farmers Abalimi Bezekhaya (see story on Page 11).

balance the meals they are putting out into the community."

Positive development

A foodbank is a community owned and managed non-profit entity that works to relieve hunger with mainly donated excess food. Its focus, structure and service delivery is developed based on needs identified by the community it serves. Thus it becomes a community asset, targeting the neediest. Three other community foodbanks are to be established - in Johannesburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth. Each will have a geographical focus area of 100km radius, which will in time extend to 300km by

using satellites or secondary distribution centres. Cape Town's new foodbank is situated at the fresh produce market in Philippi. It offers a single point for the agricultural and grocery products industries to drop excess food, and is effecting safe re-distribution to the urban and rural poor. Already satellites in the Boland and Drakenstein areas are being explored. In addition, FoodBank SA is piloting a deep rural village foodbank model in Northern Kwa-Zulu Natal.

Benefits foreseen

- Reduction of hunger and malnutrition.
- Reduction in the amount of food wastage.

- An effective voice for hunger issues within a community.

NACOSA endorses this initiative, which includes the following roleplayers:

Catholic Welfare & Development, Ikamva Labantu, Hope Africa, Robin Good Initiative, Lions Food Project, Feedback Food Redistribution, The Warehouse and Operation Hunger as well as representatives from the food industry.

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