

Umfelandawonye (Collaboration)

Uthungulu Community Foundation (UCF) Monthly News
Letter – June 2008

Overview

We believe you have heard this statement before: An organisation is like a human body. It grows all the time. This growth might take various forms, sizes and shapes. UCF is no exception. As an organisation, UCF must grow, and has, indeed, been growing over the past years.

The road that brought UCF to where it is right now has certainly not been an easy one to travel. There were bumpy parts and turbulent winds along the way. We all had to be strong enough to cope with challenges we faced. This process required, among other things, hard work, sacrifice and commitment.

The successes the Foundation has so far achieved would surely not have been realised without the goodwill of some Zululand individuals, and private and public sector organisations.

Financial and other types of support we continue to receive from local residents and organisations account for the Foundation's existence, since its official launch on 03 July 1999. This support enables the Foundation to continue with its programme.

We started issuing annual grants to deserving non-governmental and community-based organisations in the year 2001. Since then we have continued to issue grants to these organisations.

The ultimate aim of UCF is to remain in the Zululand region an organisation with a strong focus on promoting values based on respect for human dignity, integrated socio-economic development practises, tolerance of other people's views, accountability, sustainability, collaboration, fairness, and human rights and diversity.

In pursuance of its mission and objectives UCF works with and through non-governmental and community-based organisations in the process of developing target communities. This strategy promotes and develops the kind of mutually beneficial partnerships and collaborative efforts between and among development agencies.

UCF's mission is to harness resources to, among other things, maintain a permanent endowment fund that enhances the socio-economic development of the Zululand region.

The Foundation has the following objectives: (a) improve the quality of life of communities; (b) establish, promote and maintain a sound community-based capital growth fund that supports community-based organisations; (c) mobilise community resources and public support for the Foundation's programmes; (d) instil confidence in served communities, through reviving traditional philanthropic practises.

Members of Board of Trustees

UCF has a Constitution and operates under a diverse 10 member Board of Trustees. The Board has, among other things, the following responsibilities:

- Achieve the organisation's objectives
- Define and achieve financial targets
- Ensure that legal and financial requirements are met
- Establish policy guidelines
- Ensure that strategic planning and direction have taken place
- Attend Board and Committee meetings
- Fund-raise for UCF and ensure that adequate operating resources are in place
- Enhance the organisation's image

How does UCF obtain development funds?

UCF obtains development funds through fund-raising efforts with individuals, and private and public sector organisations. In short, everyone should be a donor to UCF. The organisation accepts small and big donations that together are used to sustain the organisation and help promote and develop self-help community projects. Donors choose to make donations to one or more of the following fund portfolios:

- Operations
- Grants
- Projects
- Long-term investments
- Special project funds
- Education and/or health related projects

Community Foundation Principles

- Build and maintain a reputation of integrity, competence and professionalism
- Make their mission, goals and programmes public so that they could be accessible to any one who might benefit from them
- Use the resources they manage solely for charitable and public benefit purposes
- Ensure maximum transparency of their actions and decisions, thus improving public awareness of and confidence in the non-profit sector
- Base their work and grant-making decisions on objectivity and fairness
- Adhere to the principles of tolerance and non-discrimination of applicants
- Introduce and encourage policies to avoid all forms of conflict of interest
- Treat all applicants with respect and protect the confidentiality of intellectual ideas and personal information they may have become privy to in processing applications for funding
- Use their financial and human resources in the most effective manner and to the benefit of society
- Ensure constant improvement of their organisations, staff and activities through evaluation and self-evaluation

May 2008 xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals in South Africa

Uthungulu Community Foundation condemns in the strongest possible terms criminal attacks on foreign nationals. These attacks can only come from faceless and irresponsible people one would be shy to call South Africans. Whatever reasons might be advanced by perpetrators and supporters of these attacks the Foundation remains firm in its condemnation of attacks on foreign nationals.

Although the Zululand region, the home of the Foundation, was not directly affected by the sporadic and senseless attacks on foreign nationals, the Foundation has in the meantime mobilised strategic social partners in the Zululand region to immediately ensure that foreigners in the Zululand region do not become victims of these attacks. Where possible, the Foundation would like to counsel and advise people that have problems with foreign nationals.

With regard to establishing causes of these attacks, the Foundation's view is that if there are problems out there, and one believes there are, such problems can only be resolved through dialogue and negotiation, and not through acts of violent conflict, aggression and attacks. To this end, Uthungulu Community Foundation remains prepared to facilitate and engage in talks with directly or indirectly involved parties in a search for a lasting solution to the problem at hand.

Some of UCF's supported projects

Richards Bay Family Care

In the 2006/7 financial year the focus was on the need for services. This proved that there is an increase in the need for generic services and more, specifically, social relief, and child abuse and neglect matters. This coincided with relationship on custody issues and uncontrollable behaviour of children. Our investigations also proved that there was a need for parenting programmes. In this assessment it became clear that family values of respect for human dignity, and protecting and providing love to children were getting threatened.

In the 2007/8 financial year assessment of the situation it was revealed that the need for services had moved over from the statutory programme to also include the Asian and White population groups. The impact of HIV / AIDS had a tremendous effect on the increase in the foster care caseloads as more and more children had become orphaned.

Affected children remain quite often in need of care, and should be legally placed in alternative care. From our assessment of the situation it became clear that the need for increased alternative placement of White children included the breakdown in family systems and these included economic factors.

Neglected children are often placed with their grand mothers. This increase is seen over and above an agreement with the National Department of Social Services & Population Development that children be with their families or biological fathers and mothers.

In our assessment of the situation there was also a 19 % increase in the total number of cases reported to Richards Bay Family Care in the 2007/8 financial year. Foster Care makes out 87% of the total of the Statutory Programme. It also needs to be noted that there was a 19% increase in the statutory programme alone over the last financial year. The Statutory Programme makes out 37 % of service delivery and the Generic Programme comes to 63%.

It must also be pointed out that although the Generic Programmes make a larger percentage, these services are short term whereas statutory work is long term, and far more time consuming.

In the 2007/8 assessment of the situation it took Social Workers an average of 7.5 hours to complete a Section 16(2) report, broken up as follows: 1 hour per interview, 5 interviews per report, and 2.5 hours per report. When it comes to a Screening report the figures are 6.5 hours per report and an average of 13 interviews per report. These figures exclude travelling time.

The average intake interview is 50 minutes and social relief takes up 20 minutes. Interviews in respect of custody and access, domestic violence, relationship issues and uncontrollable behaviour took up 75 minutes on average. The focus of these interventions mostly entails containing, strategizing, empowering and referring to the offices of Family Advocates or Reaching Out. Child Abuse and Neglect cases are often recorded as part of a Children's Court Enquiry as in most cases it is often too late to take corrective measures.

A further contributing factor to difficulty in rendering services to communities is that there are not enough Social Workers in the country to meet the demand. Existing social workers are already overburdened and carry unrealistically high case loads that impact negatively on the standard of services rendered.

lethombo Youth Multi-Purpose Co-operative

This is a hydroponics garden project – an initiative

of young people that decided to fight unemployment through action rather than through talking. The group now has a negotiated market with some local chain supermarkets.

In a recent Agricultural Cooperative Summit the group was awarded a trophy for outstanding work and for exemplary behaviour among young people. ACF is proud to have in the past assisted the group set up their operations.

Esimtoto Agricultural Cooperative

This is also a group of young people that started their operations from humble beginnings. They plant ground nuts and process these to make peanut butter. They have managed to establish a market for their produce.

From 27 – 29 May 2008 they were part of groups that attended an Agricultural Cooperative Summit in Richards Bay, South Africa. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture had organised the Summit.

This group won a trophy at the Summit for being a good example to other young people. They now have a farm donated to them by the National Department of Agriculture.

Zululand Hospice Association

Zululand Hospice Association provides support for patients with life threatening diseases. This support is available from diagnosis onwards in order to improve the quality of life of the patient and his/her family.

Zululand Hospice Association has two offices: one at Empangeni and the other one in Richards Bay. Hospice offers the following services:

- Care for physical, spiritual and emotional needs of the patient and family from diagnosis onwards
- Assistance with basic nursing
- Assistance with pain and symptom management
- Loan of equipment
- Support and understanding to the bereaved

UCF is proud to have Zululand Hospice Association as one of their grantees. Above all, Zululand Hospice Association offers services free of charge. This is possible because some highly valued individuals and organisations continue to fund-raise and make annual grants to Zululand Hospice Association. The multi-disciplinary team Zululand Hospice Association has consists of palliative care nursing, social workers, and trained carers and volunteers.

