



**FIELD BAND FOUNDATION**

Youth development through music and dance



# CEO'S OPS REVIEW, STRATEGY UPGRADE ANNOUNCEMENT

*"Form up, sharpen up, march to success"*

*Friends of the Foundation, colleagues and FBF members:*

Founded in 1996 to teach youngsters about life skills by using the appeal of music and dance of mass bands in disadvantaged areas, South Africa's non-profit Field Band Foundation has managed operational growth in all its 18 years, training almost 50 000 youngsters in value-based creative work based on discipline, excellence, care, integrity, respect for diversity, and self-belief.

This has grown to include more than 40 bands with an average 120 members each in all provinces. And it has also meant on-going organisational operating adjustments that meet and efficiently exploit new circumstances.

## *Readying ourselves*

The board has agreed to the necessary dedication of 2015 to thorough review and reset of how the organisation delivers its multiple obligations to all stakeholders; but mainly to the young people who rely on us to help set them up for productive adulthood.

In an environment of great complexity and of local variation, some Foundation activities will clearly need a re-weighting of their organisational relevance. We need to strengthen the Foundation's relationship with both the private and public sectors to ensure that our programmes are fully-funded and sustainable.

Recent years have seen closer collaboration with national government's Department of Arts & Culture and local authorities in band areas. These have become ever more important elements of the Foundation's supporter network.

In addition, close foreign partnerships through allied musical organisations in Norway, Belgium and the US have allowed an on-going and evolving exchange of expertise and other collaborations.

But recent years have also seen too many sacrifices and compromises as we adjusted our resources to the ever increasing need. The effectiveness of our youth development model is dependent on the proper implementation of the full portfolio of developmental offerings.

## *Realities and impact*

The hard realities of poverty, social dislocation, developmental shortfalls and familial breakdown define our country's long awakening from a dismal past.

Thus it is that the Foundation's programmes include many non-musical life skills interventions; from specialised IT training, to literacy rollouts, comprehensive responses to HIV-Aids prevalence, family -in-distress interventions, gender and LGBT awareness, to social welfare support, community health facilities, event management skills, fleet management, and much more besides.





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### *Time to regroup, become sharper*

It is increasingly appropriate, therefore, to restructure where needed and so to maximise efficiencies and deepen the already profoundly positive effects of the Foundation's work. This comprehensive exercise will run out of the Foundation's Rivonia head office and across all operations, starting early 2015.

Indeed, this 360 degree restructure will recalibrate various programmes of greatest impact, while stress-testing others to ensure that we are doing the right thing in the right way. For example, the Foundation's specialist but necessarily limited reach in high-end musical training and administrative skills at our KZN Academy is being re-assessed.

### *Whatever we must, we will do*

Having overseen organisational flexibility in thought along with innovation in action, the Foundation's independent board of directors has never failed to deliver unqualified annual audited financial statements, a rarity in NGOs generally, and even more so where complexity and depth of work approaches that of the Field Band Foundation .

Along with the Foundation's deeply rooted governance structures and habits of best practice, the open-ended review-of-practice aims to solidify long-term, realistic, sustainability. It will include updating and adjusting the Foundation's presence in a milieu of fluid socio-economic change.

This is going to be a tough and vital period during which we raise our game on every level. To achieve what we must, the Foundation relies on your discipline, courage, selflessness, and focussed dedication to our common cause.

It is work of endless consequence. The leadership team is confident in your support. It starts now.

*Nicolette (Nicky) du Plessis, 5 January 2015  
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