A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

The 2015 financial year (March 2014 – February 2015) was one of great growth for our organisation: a year that was simultaneously exciting, challenging and rewarding. It’s been amazing to see so many of the seeds we have planted sprouting green shoots.

The year was full of highlights, including winning the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation’s 2013-2014 Award. Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, a patron of the IJR, presented the award to us at one of our partner schools, Steenberg High, at a beautiful, moving ceremony.

In December the book that tells our story was published, with launches in Johannesburg and Cape Town, and at the same time we were awarded a contract to take Partners for Possibility (PfP) into 66 schools in Gauteng in collaboration with the Gauteng Department of Education and the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance.

Every day, we are inspired to get up and continue this work because of the calibre of people who’ve put up their hands and said ‘yes’ to active citizenship, to working towards a better future for our children and this country. Every day we see lives being changed as people cross boundaries and commit to leading change in their communities and organisations. And these are not just any leaders – our PfP partners truly are the cream of the crop in South Africa.

PfP is also slowly starting to garner recognition for its innovation and design. We have had interest in the programme from people in the US, Kenya and the UK. The programme was also presented at an academic conference in the Netherlands by University of Stellenbosch academic, Dr Dirk Brand, as an example of co-production – business and government working together to deal with challenging issues.

We have also published a revised and expanded theory of change, informed by the findings of our 2014 programme evaluation and our ongoing research into leadership in the education sector. This is a significant milestone for us. Most social entrepreneurs say it takes five years to fully develop the operating model and theory of change for a complex social challenge. Our experience is an example of this.

Of course, the year has not been without its challenges. We’ve had to stay the course despite scepticism in some quarters, and while the rapid expansion of our team is a positive sign, it is still a small team, tasked with a massive goal, and all of us have been challenged to lead beyond our current levels of competence.

But we haven’t been alone. I’d personally like to thank the principals and business leaders who have joined PfP, the Symphonia for South Africa (SSA) team (a very special group of active and committed citizens) our financial supporters, and the wider SSA community, especially our board and advisory board.

All in all, it’s been an exciting, rewarding journey, and we look forward to what the 2016 financial year holds for us.

Louise van Rhyn
ACHIEVEMENTS

One of our proudest moments this year was being awarded the coveted Reconciliation Award by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, in recognition of the powerful change that the programme has ignited in promoting education and, ultimately, reconciliation.

The IJR was founded in 2000 in the aftermath of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and has since focused on helping to build fair, democratic and inclusive societies in Africa through carefully selected engagements and interventions. Each year the Institute confers the Reconciliation Award to an individual or organisation that has contributed greatly to nation building and reconciliation in South Africa.

IJR recognised our contribution to ‘Living Reconciliation’ because we invite people from disparate backgrounds on an active learning journey that builds understanding, appreciation and respect in a profound act of reconciliation that strengthens the social fabric of our country.

We were so thrilled by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu’s words as he handed over the award: “God cries when he sees all the bad in the world,” he said, “but when he sees the work Symphonia is doing, he smiles.”

We also won a Global Best Award for the category ‘Innovative and Creative Partnerships’ this year. The awards are supported by the Conference Board of Canada and the International Partnership Network, and they celebrate outstanding and effective business, education and community organisation partnerships that have a significant impact on the communities in which they operate.

Finally, and for us the most rewarding achievement was the launch of 112 new partnerships in the 2015 financial year. That means 224 more people (principals and their business partners) who have embarked on the personal development journey of a lifetime, and 112 more schools who have begun their journey of transformation and empowerment.

STORIES OF POSSIBILITY:
Gordon Primary School, Alexandra, Johannesburg

Oresti Patricios is the CEO and founder of Ornico, a brand and media analysis company. Solomon Mawela is the principal of Gordon Primary School in the sprawling, poverty-stricken township of Alexandra, where 1 300 pupils have to learn in fairly dire conditions. Together this unlikely pair has made great strides at Solomon’s school.

The school has just 34 teachers, which means that class sizes are enormous – about 40 to 50 children in each class. And while the government supplies a meal a day for each child, for many, that would be their only meal. There was little to no parental involvement at the school, and the pass rate was at an unacceptable level – just 53%.

But since Oresti and Solomon formed their partnership, things have started to change. A sponsor provides an additional meal a day for the kids, and a text message system ensures parents receive important school notices. The pass rate is up at 100%. And all of that is a fraction of what has changed for the better at Gordon Primary.
The primary objective of the PfP programme is to equip principals to lead change and engage parents and other community members to become actively involved at their schools.

The programme has been carefully designed to result in four key “readiness for change” outcomes:

1. Principals who are energised to lead change
2. Teachers who are re-energised and enthusiastic
3. School Management Teams (SMTs) who are working as a cohesive team
4. Parents and community members who are actively engaged with their schools.

For the 2014 internal PfP Programme Evaluation, a variety of data was collected and analysed. This included an online survey of principals, in-depth case study data, and detailed testimonials by 41 principals and 38 business partners.

The findings show that more than 90% of principals experienced growth in their leadership competence and confidence after they’d completed the 12-month Leadership Development and Principal Support Process.

The PfP programme also led to increased commitment and enthusiasm by teachers, more effective oversight by SMTs, and growth in parental and community participation in school initiatives. Moreover, the majority of participating principals reported improvements in their school’s academic performance.

Our evaluation also revealed that the PfP programme is positively impacting schools in a variety of other important ways. These include significant improvements in school attendance and learner discipline, and reduced levels of school bullying and vandalism. PfP schools have received substantial support and contributions from business partners, parents and community members in the form of advice, training, and donations of equipment, furniture, vehicles, internet connectivity; gifts, activities and outings for students and teachers. They’ve also received upgrades to school infrastructure and facilities, practical help and financial support.

In order to effect a turnaround strategy with my school community, I needed something special. Little did I know that my partnership with Tony Voges would be just what I needed.

Tony guided our staff in building a values-based school community. The workshops that we conducted together guided staff to review how they interact with each other and what they expect from each other, and to use these values to underpin all school processes and procedures.

Although we have only just begun to create a school of excellence, I feel immensely indebted to Symphonia and my partner for sacrificing their weekends and weekdays and for affording us the privilege of their expertise during all the workshops they conducted. These gave me an opportunity to look at my own shortcomings and empowered me to be a better principal.

Transformation requires people who are committed to a common goal. And this is the kind of community that PfP has established. It empowered me to be a better principal."
These contributions are creating improved conditions for teaching and learning, and they represent a significant multiplier or secondary effect of the PfP programme.

The PfP programme has also had a profoundly positive impact on our business partners. Every business partner interviewed and all those who submitted testimonials reported experiencing growth in their own leadership skills as a result of their participation in the programme.

While we celebrate our results and the real difference that our programme is making in schools, we recognise that internal programme evaluations carry the risk of evaluator bias, no matter how robustly they are conducted. We have therefore applied for funds that will enable us to commission an independent review of both the primary and secondary impact of our programme.

We are absolutely confident that an external evaluation will confirm that the PfP programme is strengthening school leadership and impacting schools in a variety of other positive ways that ultimately create better environments for teaching and learning in and around schools.

STORIES OF POSSIBILITY
Virol Esau, Wittebome High School

“The courses I attended brought about many changes in my life: not only in teaching, but also in my everyday life. They have brought about a change in my management of my staff too, especially in staff meetings.

I have learnt to become a better listener, afford equal opportunity to all present and afford each person an opportunity to have their say. I now deal differently with learners and parents. I don’t just rush into situations and make decisions. I analyse and listen very carefully. The partnership has exposed me to many new ideas.

I have developed professionally in the short space of time more than I had developed over the past five years. I have learnt so much in this partnership. The passion Andrew [Hibling] displays for education has reignited a flame in me to keep me going with my everyday tasks, and to be enthusiastic about the day.”
FUNDRAISING AND SPONSORSHIP

Funding is a challenge for any social enterprise, and something we continue to grapple with, particularly when it comes to unrestricted funding. But we have been fortunate to be in partnership with an extraordinary crop of organisations who continue to support us through various funding and sponsorship initiatives.

Some organisations have been longstanding friends of PfP. Multotec and its CEO, Thomas Holtz, deserve a special mention, as they have been great supporters for a long time. Similarly, Nedbank – thanks to internal champion Nina Wellsted – has put the largest number of business leaders through PfP, and in the past year the bank has continued to support us not only through its business units, but through funding from Nedbank Private Wealth.

One of our biggest funders in the 2014/2015 financial year was Sanlam. Humulani made it possible for 10 principals in the Western Cape to join PfP, and the Simanye Group was instrumental in securing that funding.

They also connected us to CJP Chemicals, who funded three business leaders on the 66 Schools to Excellence Project.

The Gauteng Department of Education, through the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Development, funded 66 principals on the same project. We are grateful to everyone who signed up to partner with a principal on the GDE 66 schools project – we couldn’t have done it without your commitment to the programme.

Microsoft has sponsored three business leaders in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and Cape Town. Sanlam is a long-time supporter of the programme, and Sage VIP has also sponsored several business leaders to participate in the programme and hosted information sessions on PfP’s behalf. Hencon has sponsored two principals over each of the past two years.

Finally, MySchool gives us significant funding towards our Community of Learning Principals events, which run in Johannesburg and Cape Town, and the Emthunzini Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment Community Trust has been a consistent funder for a number of years.

The operating costs for PfP have been almost entirely self-funded from the project’s inception, a model that simply isn’t sustainable as we prepare to take the project to scale. Every month the PfP team and board members grapple with an ongoing cash flow challenge, an unnecessary, time-consuming and energy-draining burden that detracts from much more important issues, such as strategy, recruitment and growth.

For this reason, we will be focusing our efforts on securing unrestricted funding for the organisation so that we can continue to build on the foundations we have laid and ensure that SSA is on a solid financial footing.
LIST OF SPONSORS

It is impossible to thank everyone individually, but we are privileged to have the support of a network of incredible organisations who fund our work. Here, in alphabetical order, are those who have supported us in the 2014/2015 financial year.

- AccTech Systems
- Adcorp
- African Reinsurance Corporation
- Alacrity Technologies
- Amanz’ abantu Services
- Amazon Development Centre SA
- Ampa Plastics Group
- Bayer
- Belinda Gouws
- Benjamin Monaheng Kodisang
- Bestmed
- Business Com Trading
- Charité Mouton Trust
- Consol Glass
- Consumer Council of South Africa
- Coronation Asset Management
- CSIR
- Deloitte
- DHL
- Dimension Data Management Services
- Donald Finn
- Dukathole Community Trust
- Edelman South Africa (Pty) Ltd
- EDGE Learning Media
- Eduloan
- EE Hertzog
- Emthunzini BBBEE Community Trust
- Engen Petroleum
- Fair Discounters
- Finney Nicole
- Foxtec-Ikhwezi
- Gauteng Department of Education/ Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance
- Gil Davidson
- Hannover Reinsurance Group Africa
- HCI Foundation
- Hencon Vacuum Technologies
- Hermes Apollo Process Engineering
- Hitachi Data Systems
- Humulani Trust
- IGB Properties
- Illo Energy
- Ingredion South Africa
- Izwe Warehouse Management Solutions
- Joseph Robert Houdet
- Karin van Zyl
- Lewis Group
- Liberty Group Ltd
- Life Green Group
- Lisa van Dongen
- Maestro Performance
- Mentoring 4 Success
- Metropolitan
- Metropolitan Life
- Multotec
- Nedbank
- Netsurit
- Neville Nightingale
- Nicole Finney
- Nimble Group
- NMC
- Opti-Num Solutions
- Peermont Global
- Polyoak Packaging
- Professional Hunters’ Association of SA
- RAMP Foundation
- Real People
- Rothschild (South Africa)
- Sage VIP
- Sanlam
- Schoolnet South Africa (Intel South Africa Corporation)
- Sibanye Gold Limited
- Silica Software Solutions
- Simanye Trust
- Skyjacks Tailifts
- Small Projects Foundation
- Smollan Group SA
- Sphere Holdings
- Step Advisory
- Swiss Re Life And Health Africa
- The LR Management Group
- Thebe Ya Bophelo Healthcare Administrators
- Tina Mason
- To The Point Growth Specialists
- Vantage Capital
- Vektronix
- Virtual Market Place (MySchool)
- Wesbank
- Windlab Developments South Africa
- Women Private Equity Fund
- Woolworths Financial Services
- Worldsview Academy of Organisational Change
COMMUNITY BUILDING
& CoLP

Our Community Building workshops bring together a variety of people across diverse sectors to create communities that can work towards a common, more prosperous future for all South Africans. In 2014/2015 year, SSA hosted two community building sessions in Cape Town, and two in Johannesburg, with a combined total of 114 people attending.

Those who attend report gaining enormous value from the sessions, and go away with greater sense of hope and connectedness to those around them.

Our biggest challenge with community building is helping people to understand how important these workshops are in a country that remains divided on so many levels. They truly have the potential to be beneficial to every South African, from every walk of life.

We remain committed to growing Community Building into the powerful instrument it has the potential to be, to further our vision of strengthening the social fabric of our country.
Five years into the programme, Symphonia for South Africa is starting to find its feet and refine its model, which is fairly standard practice in the world of social enterprise. But we still have many challenges ahead.

The biggest challenge we face is continuing to push boundaries at PFPP and to expand the programme to its true potential, despite all the challenges associated with that goal. We’re not yet resourced for what is truly a massive task, and every member of our team feels continually stretched beyond their capacity and competence.

But when we see what is possible when leaders meet each other in the space of ‘not knowing’ and forging relationships across traditional boundaries, our hope and motivation are renewed, and we soldier on, driven by the dream of a Flourishing South Africa as espoused in Vision 2030. We know that we can make a significant contribution to this ideal through PFPP, and through the cross-sectoral model of co-creation and co-production that underpins our programme.

We can’t do it alone. We need our community to continue to support us by opening doors for us, by helping us to secure the funding we need, and by helping us to tell our story – at every opportunity.

We invite you to walk together with us to create a South Africa we can all be proud of.
WHAT WE DO

WHAT IS IT?
Partners for Possibility (PfP) is a social enterprise that enables business leaders to take that step and make a tangible, sustainable difference in South Africa’s under-resourced schools.

HOW DOES IT WORK?
The PfP programme is a carefully designed, world-class leadership training programme in which a business leader and school principal partner for a small number of accredited formal leadership training courses and then continue in a 12-month partnership of leadership and community building to start addressing the school’s challenges.

WHY IS IT NEEDED?
The South African government has identified nearly 20 000 under-resourced schools that require assistance. In short, the education system is in crisis and school principals are not equipped for the change process they need to lead. It’s a mammoth task, but it’s not insurmountable if the private sector offers its expertise and support. Without help, these schools cannot offer the requisite quality of education to their pupils, education that will allow those children to have a future as productive members of society and the future human resources of big business.

HAS IT WORKED?
And how! To date more than 300 school principals and business leaders have joined, and the results have been incredible. Because each partnership addresses issues particular to its school, the benefit is real and sustainable because of the leadership capacity the programme builds. It’s not a hand-out — this is real change that ranges from helping to restructure the school’s finances to empowering the teachers to take ownership of their classrooms and arrive at school motivated to teach and inspire. Pupils benefit directly, and education outcomes improve.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?
Business leaders and entrepreneurs from a variety of large corporates and small companies have joined already. Businesses that regularly send leaders to PfP include Nedbank, Woolworths, Multotec, Virgin Active and many others. The Gauteng Department of Education has also sponsored 66 schools to become part of the programme and many more are set to join before the end of the year.

WHAT DO WE NEED?
Three things: unrestricted funding, to keep our non-profit organisation going, sponsorship of people who want to be on the programme (principals mostly, but some business leaders too) and more business leaders who are prepared to commit to the programme.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?
Read more about the PfP story, its successes so far and its need for more business leaders to become involved by visiting www.pfp4sa.org or contact the CEO, Louise van Rhyn, on louise@symphonia.net.
OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Impact: Improved Educational Outcomes

- Fewer students dropping out before writing National Senior Certificate (NSC) exams
- More students reaching curriculum numeracy and literacy milestones
- Students performing better in Annual National Standardised Tests (ANs)
- Increasing proportion of students who pass NSC exams
- Students possess critical thinking, problem solving and digital literacy skills

Medium Term Outcomes

- School Management Team - Aligned and Cohesive
  - SMT effectively plans, co-ordinates and delegates
- Teachers - Energised and Motivated
  - Express enthusiasm for teaching and learning
  - Less absenteeism, more curriculum coverage
- More teachers undertaking regular professional development activities
- Parents & Community - Engaged
  - More parents attend school meetings
  - Community supporting school initiatives

Short Term Outcomes: School Principal - Confident and Competent

- Collaborates widely with school stakeholders
- Actively engages staff in decision making
- Recognises and celebrates achievements
- Proactively communicates school vision
- Actively promotes teachers' development
- Proactively engages with school stakeholders

Outputs

- Techniques to enhance one's own and other's thinking
- Ability to develop generative relationships
- Skills for dealing with challenging people and situations
- Skills and tools for mobilising stakeholders
- Skills for dealing with ambiguity and complexity
- Understanding by business leaders of the challenges faced by under-resourced schools and communities

PfP Programme Activities

- Time to Think Workshop
- Flawless Consulting Workshop
- Community Building Workshop
- Communities of Practice
- Leadership Coaching
  - Learning from PfP Partner
  - Portfolio of Evidence
  - Self Reflections
  - Partnership Plans

Our Theory of Change

UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS

1. The unit of change is the school. After his extensive study of schooling in America, the internationally acknowledged expert in educational improvement, John Goodlad, recognised that the critical unit of change for improving education is the school. The PfP process will change education one school at a time, with every school learning to manage its own unique challenges.

2. The principal is the change leader at the school. A growing volume of literature recognises school leadership as the critical factor in turning around an education system in crisis.

3. The principal needs to be equipped for this task. There is increasing recognition that the highly specialised role of a school principal requires specific knowledge, skills and expertise. However, in South Africa, the majority of school principals are not being sufficiently equipped for their role.

4. Business leaders can support school principals to lead change in their schools and communities. There are thousands of business leaders in South Africa who have been well-equipped to assume leadership positions and manage organisational change. They can support school principals and help them acquire the knowledge, skills and expertise they need.

5. The principal needs an actively engaged team around him or her to make change happen. School staff in South Africa, especially teachers, often feel overburdened, tired and de-energised. Many have become disengaged.

6. School staff need parents and other members of the community to become involved – they can't lead change alone. Studies show that one of the key differences between schools that succeed and those that fail is the extent to which parents and other community members are involved in the school.

7. Schools can become magnets for gifts and contributions from the community. Many South African citizens are keen to make a contribution, but don't know how to do so.

8. We can't expect a quick fix. We need to invest in a school for at least three to five years.

References:

5. Risimati, H. (2001) The Principal's role in the management of parental involvement in secondary schools in rural areas in Northern Province, University of South Africa
## FINANCIALS

### BALANCE SHEET

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### PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT

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