ACAT VISION

To practically demonstrate God’s love for the transformation of disadvantaged rural people through appropriate and sustainable development programmes.

ACAT MISSION STATEMENT

To empower, enable and equip disadvantaged rural people to improve and sustain their own quality of life spiritually, physically, materially, socially and environmentally.

ACAT CORE VALUES

📖God-Centered Organization: “We value developmental initiatives that are on a mission with God”

📖Transparency: “We openly do our business and share information with all our partners”

📖Integrity: “We are guided by Godly work ethics and demonstrate a high level of professionalism in everything we do”

📖Honesty and Respect: “We strive to be truthful and honor all people in a Godly manner, regardless of status,”

📖Accountability: “We competently deliver on the business of ACAT as if it were our own”

📖Excellency and Continuous Improvement: “We strive for outstanding performance and continuously look for better ways of doing things”
1.0. Chairman’s Review

1. Introduction

The global economic meltdown that has been spiralling over the past few years did not leave the Kingdom of Swaziland unaffected. The Country experienced a severe financial crisis during the financial year 2011/2012 which caused a lot of strain on the fiscal sphere of the country. The NGOs seem to have felt the brunt the most as some ended up closing down due to diminishing financial resources, leading to their inability to continue with their work. This rendered an unfortunate situation considering the input of NGOs in the socio-economic development of the country. As a result of this state of affairs, the Board in exercising its oversight role concluded that this was a clear call for ACAT Swaziland to intensify the exercise of a very high level of prudence in its spending in order to survive.

Reflecting on the year under review, I have no better words to describe this year than as a year of “consolidation and effectiveness”. This is because we are still working towards recovery from the effects of the global financial crisis that has left us with no option but to consolidate our efforts and programmes while doing all to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the allocation and application of those limited resources made available to the organization.

In 2002, when ACAT celebrated its 20 years of existence, Dr Samuel Hynd the founder and the then Chairman of ACAT Swaziland, summarized ACAT’s life of 20 years as follows; “We look back with some degree of pride, as we consider how God has seen us through another decade of positive development, in spite of the variations of history time weather, HIV/AIDS and other factors which affect the life and work of our rural people. We make no apologies as to how we have come through these years of effort and change in meeting the desires and hopes of these areas where we have sought to bring new life, and in Biblical language, “Life more abundantly”.

It is my humble honour and privilege to echo the words of Dr Hynd as we look back in awe how we have survived for 31 years now without our own internal sources of income to support the God given vision for
the poor people of Swaziland. Instead we have been entirely sustained by support from our faithful friends and partners around the globe who continued to have confidence in ACAT despite the global financial crisis from which they were not spared.

2. **Fulfilling our Mandate**

We have continued, as a Board together with our Management team and the entire ACAT staff to seek ways of improving ACAT’s work. For we have to deliver the promise of “**Food, Faith and Work for Africa**”, if we are to remain true and faithful to all our clientele, supporters and to God who is our source of hope and inspiration in pursuance of ACAT’s vision.

Even during the year under review, ACAT continued to assist rural people to improve their access to food through our Sustainable Agriculture and Infrastructure Development Programme. While the Entrepreneurial and Skills Development Programme continued to facilitate the generation of income for their families. As indicated in the past, these two programmes have been delivered in an integrated approach as opposed to a specialised approach. This has been done to ensure a holistic approach in order to assist and develop the whole person as well as optimising the available resources.

It is encouraging to note that even during the year under review, reports indicated that our Savings and Credit model, proved to the best and most effective and efficient approach in helping the target people take control of their lives, without creating dependence on ACAT for their future development.

3. **Collaboration, Partnerships and Networking**

We wish to acknowledge that we cannot make it alone and as such we need others to help us achieve our vision and make a bigger impact. It is for this reason that we need the support, expertise and experiences of others. During the year under review ACAT Swaziland continued to collaborate and network with other organizations within the sector.

We continue to cherish and harness the unbroken partnership and working relationships we are enjoying with our line Ministry, the Ministry of Agriculture as well as that of the Ministry of Commerce where the Department of Cooperatives is housed. Our relationship with these Ministries dates back in the early stages of our participation in the Kaphunga Community. As ACAT, we continue to consider our role as that of facilitation of development of the people of Swaziland in supporting and complementing Government’s
efforts to promote food security and socio-economic development of this country.

We are also proud to have been part of those NGOs that not only contributed in the formation and establishment of the Coordinating Assembly of Non-Governmental Organisations (CANGO) in this country, but also actively participate in activities organised by the Assembly for the benefit of its membership. As a result CANGO has been one of our collaborating partners even during the year under review.

ACAT Swaziland was greatly honoured during the reporting period to have been able to participate in the United Nation’s World Summit on Sustainable Development that was held in Rio De Janerio, Brazil, known as RIO + 20. Our participation in this important conference was made possible by the UNDP in acknowledging ACAT’s contribution in the country’s socio-economic development, for which we were greatly humbled. We also work closely with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in the implementation of the Swaziland Agriculture Development Programme (SADP) where our role has been to facilitate the promotion of Good Agricultural Practices in selected Rural Development Areas (RDAs) to improve agricultural productivity amongst our small-hold-farmers. We appreciate such a partnership as it goes a long way in adding value to our work.

Lastly, we are so grateful to those organisations and foundations that also partnered with us through funding our work, without their support and confidence in us, we would not have extended our hand of support to all those who benefited through our programmes during the year under review.

4. Moving Forward in Faith

2013 is the year for general elections in Swaziland where candidates for the next Parliament will be voted into office and new leadership likely to emerge. This voting process is important and crucial for our ACAT members and the nation at large, as Members of Parliament (MP) who are legislatures are also key stakeholders in the development of all the rural and urban communities. It would therefore be crucial that the election process gives birth to sound men and women of integrity who have a heart for the people in need.

As long as there is poverty, food insecurity and unemployment in the rural areas ACAT’s mission remains unfulfilled, we will move forward trusting God to provide our needs to keep up the work we have started.
5. Conclusion

In conclusion, we optimistically look forward to a good new financial year as we continue to pursue our mandate as ACAT. The country’s recovery from its liquidity crisis should improve the donor perception and confidence in the country.

I wish to thank all our partners and friends who have made our work possible. Further, I wish to thank our Board of Trustees for their unwavering commitment and self-sacrifice in executing their oversight and fiduciary responsibilities as the organization’s Trustees. This was further demonstrated in their efforts in making time to attend all ACAT Board meetings during the year and their effective deliberations of issues presented before them. As a result all scheduled meetings did take place as planned and no meeting had to be cancelled on account of lack of quorum. Further, I wish to thank our Management and all ACAT staff for their commitment and dedication in making sure that ACAT indeed keeps its promise.

May the grace of God be upon all of us as we continue to serve Him through ACAT as we pursue the ACAT VISION, MISSION and upholding our core values. With God on our side we are determined to press on to fulfill the purpose of our existence in Swaziland.

Mr M S Nkabinde
(Chairman)
2.0. Director’s report

2.1. Introduction
The section of the report presents progress made by the Trust during the financial year 2012/13 i.e. March 2012 to February 2013. The period under review started on a rather low note, given the challenges around our financial and human resource capacities faced by the Trust, a situation that has been carefully monitored which resulted the implementation of a cost containment strategy to ensure that the organization was kept buoyant. Optimal allocation and application of limited resources available to the organization was found to be of paramount importance. We are grateful to God the Almighty for the progress made by our development programmes as well as our Administration section, despite all the challenges encountered during the course of the year. That we have survived thus far is a demonstration of God’s mercies and providence for his work.

2.2. Administration and Finance
As part of the coordination of the Trust activities, this section provided various forms of support to field and office staff to ensure we all work to achieve our specific targets during the year under review. Several meetings, internally and externally, were held for purposes of networking, resources mobilisation and allocation to keep the Trust going and meeting its objectives. In addition, several donor correspondences have been facilitated for strengthening existing partnership as well as creating opportunities for forging new partnership.

Another important activity for the Administration section that demanded a lot of Management’s attention has been close monitoring and management of our finances. This has been done to ensure that the Board’s directive for our spending patterns to always be within available financial resources. The ACAT Board of Trustees is deeply appreciated for their untiring guidance also in this area of our work to ensure sound financial administration of the organisation.

Visitations by Donors took place were accordingly facilitated, where they came to physically assess the work done by ACAT that they are funding. These included Sahee Foundation, European Union (EU), Food Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Hand In Hand SA, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and KNH. All these visits by our funding partners were meant to visit our various areas of our cooperation for
purposes of monitoring as well as exchange of views on problems and progress made in the implementation of the their specific funded aspects of our work.

During the period under review, we also initiated the evaluation exercise of our ESDP. This evaluation was carried out by LCC Capital, a local consultant, and this process was fully sponsored by our partner KNH, and as an organization we are most grateful for this support. The outcomes of this Evaluation are being used to guide the implementation of the ESDP from March 2013 and beyond.

The “ACAT Day” event was successfully held on the 10th October, 2012, where, through the support of local companies we were able to recognize and award best SACCOs and individual farmers for their outstanding performance in selected areas of our work. This event, which was attended by about 400 farmers, was graced by the presence of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Mr Clement Dlamini. In his speech, the Minister motivated our farmers who had attended the event to keep up the good work they are involved in as they work to improve their own standard of living. The Minister also congratulated ACAT for the 30 years of serving the people of Swaziland and expressed his appreciations for the role played by ACAT in the development of the people of Swaziland.

Key sponsors for this event were Farm Chemicals, National Agricultural Marketing Board, Green House, Swazi Wire, Euro Panel Beaters, Prime Bakery, FAO, Mbabane Motors, Swazi Can (Malkerns) to mention but a few. We are grateful to our local companies for supporting this annual event. During the year under review, ACAT Management constantly conducted monthly meetings where reviews of progress made on the implementation of all planned activities for the year were being done. On the same note, the ACAT Board of Trustees and all its subcommittees successfully conducted all its planned meetings for the year. This is a demonstration of the highest level of commitment on the part of the Trustees given that they fully volunteer their time and energy for the good of the organization and development of the people of Swaziland.
2.3. Sustainable Agriculture and Infrastructure Development Programme (SAIDP)

2.3.1. Introduction

This section of our work is about helping even the poorest household to produce and sustain their food needs using affordable and sustainable food technologies. We strive to assist every household with alternative food production methodologies. The programme also encourages the care for the environment to ensure that it remains productive even in the generations to come. Over the years and during the period under review, we have continued to learn and apply those production methodologies that have proven or promising to improve agricultural productivity even for small scale farmers. Progress made by this program is presented under each of the seven (7) key operational areas or activities for this programme, as detailed below;

2.3.2. Maize production (staple food)

That maize is the staple food in Swaziland explains the compelling need for its production even in those areas where studies and experience shown that it is extremely difficult to successfully produce maize under rainfall. The programme has continued to encourage farmers to improve their production methods in order to increase their chances of success; such included the use of recommended seed varieties for each agro-ecological zone. The Department of Agricultural Research and Specialized Services (DARSS) has been very helpful in guiding our extension service in this regard.

During the planting season within the period under review, through our SACCOs, 1000 families from 56 SACCOs jointly purchased various farming inputs through the SACCOs facilitated by our extension staff in the various communities. The value of this bulk purchase was E320, 000.00. This excluded purchases from Dumako and Kaphunga cooperatives because those now deal directly with suppliers. Further this is the amount members of the SACCOs are encouraged to save all year round for purposes of inputs purchasing.

We have further encouraged our farmers to diversify their food production in order to ensure that alternative food sources become available in the event maize production becomes a failure; such included the promotion of sweet potato production in the rural communities.
To support proper maize production, our extension officers conducted 54 maize planting demonstrations to over 2500 farmers in strategic sites in the various communities.

145 households, translating to 1160 people benefitted from sweet potato productions facilitated by our programme staff in the various communities. One of these farmers, Mr Mathobela from Mbhoke community who planted different varieties of sweet potatoes in his 2 hectar field was even used as a supplier of seed cuttings to other communities, thus also generating some income for his family. On a similar note, Zakaza garden at Kalanga area has also been doing well on a sweet potato nursery project whereby the sweet potato cuttings were sold to the community members.

Still on the diversification of crop production, 8 farmers managed to grow cassava in their homesteads, however, the size allocated for the cassava was small (about 10m x 10m) compared to the sweet potatoes. Efforts will continue to promote the nutritional value that cassava may add to household food security.

63 group members were trained on food preservations for purposes of ensuring food availability throughout the year. This activity shall continue in the next half of the financial year as wild fruits and vegetables shall be readily available for every family.

2.3.3. Vegetable Production

In an effort to promote household food security and a balanced diet, this activity plays a pivotal role in improving the current status of vegetable production in Swaziland.

The programme promotes vegetable production in Back yard (BYGs), on individual and communal gardens to assist rural people to produce food for their families. In the BYGs, the programme promotes the use of permaculture which has over the years proved effective in terms of productivity and affordable for the very small farmer whose aim is to feed his/her family first and only sell the surplus in case it is available.

During the reporting year, the programme was working with eight (8) active community gardens that are involved in vegetable production. The eight communal gardens have a total membership of 188 people (each member representing a family) whereby all the members had plots in the gardens with an average size of 10m x 10m. All the 188 members from the eight gardens produce the vegetables for consumptions at home and also sell some to the community members.
On another note, 42 new families have been assisted to establish permaculture backyard gardens in their homesteads. This brings the total to 461 families that were benefiting from BYGs that were facilitated by this programme and selling any surplus to community members. The vegetables produced included: cabbages, lettuce, onion, spinach, beetroot, green pepper, and tomatoes. Through the BYGs, the programme has been able to demonstrate the advantages of using locally available inputs which are both cheap and safe from chemicals.

2.3.4. Legume production

While the programme, from its inception, has been promoting the production of legumes for food as well as improving soil fertility, during the year under review through partnership with IITA, FAO and DARSS we were able to upscale awareness as well as actual farmer participation in the production of various legumes for both nutrition and income generation purposes.

Through our partnership with the DARSS in the production of basic seeds at the Buseleni government farm, we were able to sell about 4 tons of cowpeas seeds to our farmers who are keen to produce legumes. The Buseleni partnership proved very relevant in ensuring that legume seeds are available and affordable to the small farmers. Once again our long partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture proved its importance to meeting the needs of the small farmers, mostly in the rural areas.

During the planting season, 674 people were exposed to legume planting demonstrations by our extension officers in the various communities. As a result, 2556 people planted various legumes in their fields. The legumes that were planted this year included; ground nuts, beans, cow peas and soya beans. Though each farmer was encouraged to plant a small amount (2kg) for a start, but the yields that most of them got would be enough for food and seeds for next season and also sell some to their neighbors. At the end of the reporting period, most of the legumes demonstrations were not yet ready for harvest but were promising a very good harvest, the yields statistics for all the crops were not available subsequently.

2.3.5. Indigenous Poultry production
This is an activity that has also been promoted by the programme and has become a key contributor towards household food security as well as a source of income since these indigenous chickens are usually sold at a comparatively very high price than the commercial hybrids breeds.

During the year under review, the program recorded a total of 528 households that were assisted by the programme to improve the management of the indigenous poultry, “the happy chicken”. The number is expected to increase significantly as most rural household have a few chickens around their home, however the challenge being their proper management. Plans are underway to upscale promotions and campaigns to improve on this activity that has numerous socio-economic benefits even beyond our borders in terms of markets.

The programme, in collaboration with Poultry Specialists from the Ministry of Agriculture continued to train the indigenous poultry farmers to improve their record keeping so that they are able to measure the performances of their respective projects.

2.3.6. Good Agricultural Practices

ACAT is implementing this project in 10 RDAs located in the four regions of Swaziland. The main objective of this project is to help rural smallholder farmers who are faced with low yields to improve their yields by using the GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) principles. ACAT covers the 10 RDAs using her network of Extension Officers who are distributed across the country to promote and provide extension services to the rural farming households.

The GAPs project is based on four strong “pillars”, namely: 1. economically and efficiently produce sufficient (food security), safe (food safety) and nutritious food (food quality), 2. Sustain and enhance natural resources, 3. Maintain viable farming enterprise and contribute to sustainable livelihoods, 4. Meet cultural and social demand of society. In trying to achieve this the activities that are being undertaken are; (i) mobilization of 360 farmers and 15 farmer groups to practice GAP in their fields within the 10 RDAs, (ii) training of Conservation Agriculture (CA) individual lead farmers and 200 CA demonstrations established, each being 0.25ha, (iii) lead farmers introduced to Agro-Forestry (AF) farming and 160 AF demonstration plots, 0.25ha each established, (iv) a total of 15 composite demonstration sites with a total of 60 plots (15
Agro-forestry; 15 Conservation Agriculture; 15 Crop Husbandry Practices; 15 Root and Tuber) each 0.25ha establishment. The project is being implemented by FAO, ACAT and the Ministry of Agriculture as teamwork, which is something that has benefited the project immensely from the synergies the team members who were coming from diverse technical background present.

At the end of the period under review, the project was viewed as on target and set to achieve its target by the end of the season. ACAT is deeply grateful to Ministry of Agriculture and United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for the support received when two more motor bikes for use by our extension officers were donated to ACAT towards the end of the financial year under review. This support will go a long way in improving ACAT’s capacity to deliver quality extension services even beyond the life of the SADP project.

2.3.7. Basic Seed Multiplication

During the period, ACAT in partnership with the Malkerns Research Station of the Ministry of Agriculture has been involved in seed multiplication project which was undertaken at Buseleni farm. This project involved planting of different open pollinated varieties (OPVs) of maize, cowpeas, and beans.

In the same farm (Buseleni) ACAT also conducted some demonstrations to the farmers, regarding the nutrition-dense crops the organization planted 3ha cowpeas, 2.5 ha groundnuts, 2 ha yellow maize, 0.5ha soya beans, 1ha sorghum and 4 ha OPV maize. The Buseleni farm was made the main lead farmer to do the experiments for farmers to come and learn.

The activities at Buseleni include variety selection, seed production (which is done in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture under the research department) and market oriented crop production. Yields from these crops will be determined after harvesting.

2.3.8. Water Harvesting and Sanitation

Further to our collaborations with different Government Ministries, the programme with support from the Ministry of Health provided training to 139 people on proper Hygiene and Sanitation. The topics that were covered during the trainings included: a proper site for a pit latrine toilet, importance of using a toilet, cleaning a toilet and proper washing of hands, to name but a few, topics covered.
On the other hand, 88 people were trained on various methods of water harvesting to improve access to clean water for every member of the household throughout the year. Most of the programme’s focus has continued to be on rainwater harvesting during rainy seasons. With regards to rainwater harvesting, the programme during the year under review assisted 33 households to construct water harvesters with a capacity of 1200 liters each.

On the same note, 5 members of the SACCOs took loans and purchased 5000 litres plastic tanks to be used for water harvesting from their roof tops. A total of 126 families have been able to construct proper Ventilated Improved Pit toilets (VIP) in their different homesteads. The programme will continue to promote water and sanitation as part of sustainable living.

We are grateful to all those organizations that have worked with us during the year to achieve this noble purpose.

2.40 Entrepreneurial and Skills Development Program (ESDP)

2.4.1. Introduction

The ESDP is about the promotion and development of small and medium income generation activities in order to assist rural poor people to create self-employment using locally available business opportunities and resources. Central to the ESDP strategies for making this dream come true are the SACCOs and business training and support.

Under the year under review, despite all the challenges already alluded to above, in the other sections of the report, the ESDP it is pleasing to note the level of achievements recorded in an effort to review the performance of this programme during the year under review.

The implementation of this programme was done through the integrated approach, but without down playing the focus on the promotion, development and supporting individuals and groups income generation activities in the various rural communities where ACAT is in operation. The savings and credit structure, even this year remained a key strategy for helping poor communities overcome their social and economic
constraints. The following paragraphs provide a summary of those activities that were captured for documentation by our extension officers.

2.4.2. Savings and Credit Cooperatives

Our Savings and Credit model, continued to make strides and proved to be the most effective and efficient approach in helping our people take control of their lives without creating reliance on ACAT for their future development. The following performance indicators have been recorded at the end of the financial year under review;

- 26 new SACCOs have been established during the year, to make a total of 267 groups under the care of our extension staff in the communities. Such an increase means an increase in the number of people benefiting from our work. As indicated before, these SACCOs are the main conduit through which all our interventions are channelled. They are further used for the determination of critical information such as HIV/AIDS, Gender mainstreaming issues and the Gospel that remains unique and part of the success behind our work.

- A total of E681,032.29 has been recorded as savings and deposits for the year under review. Resulting in interest received amounting to E153,593.89 during the year. A closing balance of E3,049,916.15 was recorded at the end of the year, a figure that is slightly lower than last year’s closing balance due to unavailability of savings data from groups with pending issues that were under investigation by our programme staff.

- Further, new loans issued to members of our SACCOs was recorded at E733,523.80 against a total repayment of E708,429.82 representing a very high repayment rate of 96.6% as a result of close monitoring of SACCOs activities by the entire membership themselves.

As Management, we are happy with the performance and are doing all we can to improve the levels of savings as well as members using of these credit facilities at their disposal.

- As a result of our successful Savings and Credit development Model, ACAT Swaziland during the period under review, was working closely with the Ministry of Commerce and Trade, through a
steering committee that spearheaded preparations for the national commemoration of the Cooperatives day that was held in October 2012. Our Kaphunga cooperative has been used as one of the success stories of cooperatives in Swaziland.

- One group, from Dvumbe community, has been registered, during the period, as a legal cooperative. This process is only done by the Ministry of Commerce and Trade, through the Commissioner of Cooperatives.
- Two groups, from Manyeveni and Dvumbe, were also in the process of being registered also as legal cooperative at the time of writing this report.

2.4.3. Income Generation Activities (IGA)

Members of SACCOs have been encouraged and assisted to start income generating activities. They were trained in different topics which include: Business and family, Marketing, Loan Management, Buying, Record Keeping, Stock Control, Costing and Pricing, to name but a few. These trainings were attended by 628 members.

A total of 324 members managed to start their income generating activities (IGAs) this year and these IGAs included: Indigenous poultry, spaza shops, handy gas refilling, sewing of school uniforms, vegetables production, broiler production, making mats, brooms, sewing, meat retailing, hawkers, baking, grocery shops, floor polish making, vaseline making, keeping layers and hammer mills, to name some.

2.4.4. Summative Evaluation of ESDP

Since 2006 ACAT partnered with KNH to promote development in 8 rural communities of Swaziland within the Lubombo and Shiselweni regions. This work has produced a variety of food security and income generation activities, 57 savings and credit cooperatives in the target communities resulting in about 9,000 people benefiting directly. Through the trickle down effects of our work, thousands of people have benefited from this work. At the centre of this work have been the rural poor women who are mainly responsible for the welfare of their children and the entire household. Hence our work has been focusing in the empowerment of these women so that they are better equipped to support their families. Despite working in these communities for six years, a recent evaluation by LCC that was conducted in 2012 has revealed that
work in these communities needs further strengthening and consolidation to ensure its sustainability even when ACAT completely phases out. The main findings of the evaluation included that:

- The ESDP was found to be relevant to the country’s socio-economic development frameworks mainly the National Development Strategy and Poverty Reduction Strategy.

- According to the evaluation report, the ESDP programme did have a meaningful and positive effect on the designated beneficiaries with approximately 1,000 community members being mobilized in SACCOs indirectly benefitting another 9,000 people; 82 volunteers continue to offer home based care as well as training the communities on a continuous basis on how to care for the terminally ill; 160 backyard gardens were established and people trained on food security issues, 105 entrepreneurs are in operation, there has been extensive training on HIV and AIDS, there have been capacity building workshops on business management and income generating activities, community gardens were established, pilot community runs where undertaken for advocating for the participation of children in community dialogues.

- The report further states that some components of the program are already sustainably geared while others still require refining as well as additional work.

- One community (Dumako) was the only community deemed to be advanced to a level where it can now work independent of the programme as it is functioning as envisaged except for a few areas where they may need assistance.

Generally, the evaluation report states that the ESDP was implemented well, however, with some activities in which ACAT needed to improve in assisting the respective communities. These activities included: strengthening of SACCOs since 42 out of 57 were found to be active; on HIV/AIDS, only 84 out of 160 trained volunteers were found active while others had dropped out; and the children’s advocacy which was not properly implemented in all the 8 communities. As such, all the activities not implemented as earlier envisaged will have to be improved so that all the target communities or SACCOs may be able to sustain the work already established in the communities without ACAT going forward.
2.4.5. Awareness on HIV & AIDS

The programme has continued to create awareness on HIV/AIDS using trained volunteers within the communities as well as the SACCO members. As an organization we continue to mainstream HIV messages in our trainings and dialogues with rural people. We have done this to ensure that people are exposed and informed about their own behavior that may lead to HIV/Aids. All our extension workers have been exposed to the basics of HIV/Aids training. In most cases, we have used the services of professionals from the Ministry of Health and Health focused organizations to help us in dealing with bigger issues around HIV.

143 people were reported to be under care and support by our Volunteer - SACCO members in the 8 communities where the ESDP is focusing.

2.4.6. Promotion of Self Help Groups (SHGs)

In the middle of the year under review, through support from KNH we revived the support of our old SHGs that needed to be given some capacity in order to help them stand on their own even after ACAT and KNH have phased out their support. This intervention is under the national coordination of Imbita Women’s Trust support; all the KNH partners are involved in this work. Our work is in more than 10 rural communities, where we have 44 SHGs and all under Shiselweni region. Each community is under the close monitoring of a locally identified and trained person known as a community facilitator (CF). ACAT has 4 CFs who are in turn supervised by a project officer.

2.4.7. Children Sponsorship programme.

When we started this year we had 477 children. We recruited 131 children that made a total of 608 children under the sponsorship programme. These children have been recruited under Mbhoke community, adding to those that were recruited at Mphaphati and Buseleni communities. Most of these children who are supported by this project are orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs). A closer analysis of the vulnerability of the children revealed that 140 children (23%) are double orphans, 287 children (47%) are single orphans (one parent alive) and the rest, 181 children (30%) classified as vulnerable even if both parents are still alive. It is a pathetic situation for the children as they grow under very painful and harsh realities that they have no control over.
During the reporting period, 397 children participated in a campaign to create awareness on critical issues affecting children. These issues were HIV/AIDS, general life skills, Children’s Rights and spiritual issues which also becomes a key pillar for ACAT’s work and approach in rural development. This campaign was done in such a way that children were divided according to their age groups and gender to allow for fair and effective dialogues. The two age groups were for children from 6 -11 years old and 12 -18 years old respectively.

We are grateful to our child sponsors for the various gifts we have received during the course of the year. This has enabled the programme to extend a helping hand to our needy children in the various rural communities. The programme was also able to purchase and distribute pairs of shoes to 246 children. It was all smiles when these children received the new pairs of school shoes. We wish to express a big thank you to our sponsors for this generous gesture.

2.4.8. Project influence on children’s development

This project is making a positive contribution in the lives of children. We have made efforts, as ACAT, to encourage children to take their education as a priority. During the year we recorded 23 children who successfully completed their high school education; we were yet to establish if all of these children had been absorbed by our tertiary institutions already.

We further established that two (2) of our sponsorship children have enrolled with the University of Swaziland to pursue degree programmes of their studies for the next four years.

We have further observed that by the exchange of letters with their sponsors the children are always eager to share both positive and sad news with their sponsors. This in itself is having a positive influence in the development of our children.

Case study 1: A girl who became pregnant while at her primary level of her education. Through our Extension staff and Sponsorship Officer, we paid her a visit before and after giving birth. Nompumelelo, following our encouragements and counseling took it up to enroll for her education again. We received feedback that the girl is doing very well in her school work after her sad ordeal.

Case study 2: Another girl dropped out of school after the death of her father in the beginning of the period under review. Once again, our programme staff visited this girl at her home for encouragement of the widow and this little girl so that the little girl who had dropped from school may be encouraged to re-
enroll to pursue her education. Towards the end of the reporting period, it was reported that the girl was back in class.

**Case study 3**: Two of our sponsorship children, Zethu Gwebu 74701/197 and Sadam Seyama 74701/329 have both been accepted by the University of Swaziland to pursue a Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Arts in Humanities degrees, respectively. The organisation received this news with joy as this was viewed as the beginning of their promising and bright future. Both children had to leave the programme because they will be away from their communities for most of the time.

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### 2.50 Training Centre and Demonstration Unit (TCDU)

**2.5.1. Introduction**

Our TCDU facility remains an important component of our work which, over the years, has equipped staff and our clientele in the various communities to support and complement work done through our core programmes in the field. While the extent to which we have used the facility is far below our desire to meet all the training needs of ACAT staff and members due to lack of resources, we remain grateful to God for having used those meager resources available for the capacity building, through training, of our target trainees. Below is a narration of the Centre’s progress made in the year under review;

**2.5.2. Capacity building for ACAT Staff**

During the year, the Centre facilitated a series of community trainings, staff refresher training courses as well as staff meetings for the review of all planned activities for the year under review. Key planning and review meetings and community trainings included the following;

- At the beginning of the year, a five days planning meeting in which all ACAT field staff engaged themselves in planning and allocations of individual tasks and targets for the year in line with all funded activities for the year. This activity was to ensure that all ACAT staff were on the same level of understanding with regards to targets for the year.
In August, 2012, a mid-year review meeting was also facilitated by the TCDU where again the whole ACAT team took time to review progress made in the attainment of planned activities for the year. Again this meeting was attended by all ACAT staff.

A special 2 days meeting was arranged and facilitated by the Centre for all ESDP staff, in preparation for the ESDP evaluation processes that was to cover, specifically the 8 communities targeted by the ESDP and funded by KNH.

In December, 2012, a final review meeting for all ACAT staff to track progress made in all planned activities for the year. The timing of this review was meant to give all program staff the last two months of the financial year to focus their attention on those activities that were found to be lagging behind. It should be noted that during all review meetings at the TCDU, staff members are also exposed to some in-service trainings to address specific technical areas of their work.

On the other hand, two officers from the organization attended a workshop on the management of the sponsorship programme. This workshop was arranged by KNH for her partners in Africa. It was held in Ethiopia, where ACAT was represented by Mr Jonathan Mdlovu, ESDP Manager and Ms Sihle Khumalo, Sponsorship officer.

### 2.5.3. Community Training

With regards to community trainings, the centre facilitated in the in the following trainings to support our core development programmes;

A total of 343 SACCOs leaders from various SACCOs have been trained on leadership skills, which included the duties of committee members, conflict management and group dynamics.

183 committee members have been trained on SACCO management and on record keeping, which include writing of minutes and cash analysis in SACCO’s books.

During the reporting period, 520 members have been trained on vegetable production (permaculture backyard gardening and on indigenous vegetable production).

Other trainings conducted included the following;

- 702 farmers have been trained on legume production with emphasis on beans, cowpeas and groundnuts, this training was done in the communities as a spot training, where the training teams goes out into the field to conduct the training.
25 people have been trained commercialization of indigenous chicken

32 SACCO members have been trained on food storage and preservation methods

21 members have been trained on business management with special attention to: business and family; feasibility study; buying; costing and pricing; and record keeping.

362 farmers from 10 RDAs have been trained on conservation agriculture and in agro forestry, this training was done in the respective RDA sites, with our training teams together with officers from the Ministry of Agriculture, facilitating the trainings.

Further, 2 blocks of five (5) days each Business Management training of aspiring entrepreneurs and those already involved in some income generation activities, was offered to 17 people coming from various SACCO members.

Finally, 36 people coming from our SACCOs attend training to become HIV/AIDS Volunteers in their communities. These members were trained on the basics on home based care in order to equip them with skills to help them support their fellow community members in need of care and support.

2.5.4. Church Support

We facilitated the training of Pastors and church leaders from the Free Evangelical Assemblies and Africa Evangelical Churches. This was a Leadership training done by ACAT KZN, our sister organization.

Through our partnership with KZN, we have been able to purchase and distribute over 1000 Bibles to the needy individuals within the church as well as individuals identified by ACAT staff in the communities where they work. This activity has enabled over 1000 homes by placing the word of God in each home. This may translate to close to 10,000 people having access to the word of God. We are grateful to ACAT KZN for this kind gesture. We have been encouraged by reports and responses as results of people having access to the Word of God.

On another happy note, we remain grateful to Help for Brethren (HFB) for the support to design and develop the Sunday school tool. It has come at a time when the church of God in this country is beginning to realise the potential of raising true worshipers by planting the word of God in the young hearts.

During the year under review, the training manuals received the blessing and approval of the Swaziland Conference of Churches (SCC), the mother body of all Evangelical Churches in Swaziland.
This approval signified the acceptance of the manuals to be used by all churches affiliated to the SCC. Through the use of the Core team, the manuals have been piloted to over 200 Sunday school teachers from over 10 different denominations.

It is pleasing to note that by the end of the year churches from different denominations were calling for training on the use of this tool, where hundreds of copies have been distributed. Our role has been to ensure availability of original copies as well as facilitation in the training of Sunday School Teachers.

We further thank God for the opportunity to serve His Church in this area. We are committed to walk alongside the churches as they use the tool to reach children for Christ.

2.5.5. Support for Development of the TCDU

Our Training Centre has been promised some support from the Micro-project under the EU funding, which included various training equipment such as computers and sewing machines. This support is meant to enhance the capacity of our Training Centre to become one of the country’s Skills Training Centers.

As results of the EU support, we have been requested to build proper computer and sewing classrooms before these equipment are delivered around June, 2013. In line with EU funding arrangement the construction of the appropriate classes is part of ACAT’s contribution into the project.

We are further grateful to our long partner Help For the Brethren for coming to our rescue by making funds available to ACAT to put up the classrooms, towards the end of the period under review the construction process had already been commissioned. We are also grateful to God for His timely interventions in this provision.

With the support and partnership with Southern Africa HIV and Aids Information Dissemination Service (SAFAIDS), 60 community based volunteers (CBVs) have been trained on Care and Support. These CBVs were drawn from all the ACAT communities through our community based extension officers.

2.5.6. ACAT Program in VOC Radio Station

Even in this reporting period, ACAT continued to use the radio programme to disseminate information to farmers and general public and to use it for training purposes especially on farming activities.

When treating some of the key technical topics, ACAT would organise guests or subject matter specialists from relevant institutions such as: the Ministry of Agriculture, National Marketing Board, farmers, and commercial companies. The general public was also allowed time (towards the end of the programme) to
phone in the studio to make input or ask questions from the presenters. With an estimated Voice of the
Church radio listenership of about 70,000 people, we broadcast out trainings to such a huge audience. The
responses we got while inside the studios as well as outside were both amazing and very encouraging.

3.0. Conclusion

We are humbled as we look back to see that despite all the challenges and turbulences we have
experienced over the year, we have landed safely. We look forward, as the journey continues. Our already
confirmed transfer to the next leg of the trip (next financial year) leaves us with no option but to trust and
believe that the God who carried us through the first leg, in 2012/13, is still alive and has made a promise
not to leave us nor forsake. He will lead us again as we gear to take off into 2013/14 and singing all the way
our motto; **Food, Faith and Work for Africa**, for this is the reason for our hanging around!

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