Northern Synod
SCMM Company
Report

1. ASSIGNMENT

The SCMM Company (SCMMC) is the Northern Synod's permanent service arm for the diaconate and professional social services. The company is registered as a non-profit company (NPC) in terms of the Company Act (Act 71/2008) and is registered as a non-profit organisation (NPO) in terms of the NPO Act (Act 71/1997). The main purpose of the SCMMC is summarised in the Acts and Statutes (MOI) as follows:

> *The care and counselling and provision of educational programmes and health care services for abandoned, neglected, poor, needy, physically, mentally abused and substance dependant persons. The provision of residential care and actively nursing and related services to retired persons, where more than 90 percent of such persons are over the age of 60, including poor and needy persons, without full recovery of costs.*

The relationship between the Northern Synod and SCMMC is governed by a Memorandum of Agreement.

2. MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors consists of a minimum of 7 members, of which the Northern Synod of the DR Church [Dutch Reformed Church] appoints the majority. For the period **2025-2026** the board was composed as follows:

- **Rev. DH Janse van Rensburg (Chair)**

  20 November 2009 - present

- **Rev. JHP Serfontein (Vice-Chair)**

  19 October 2007 - present

- **Mr CAS Weber**

  11 May 2012 - present

- **Rev. PJ Grobler**

  3 November 2015 – present

- **Dr M van Niekerk**

  8 September 2017 - present

- **Adv. SA Visser**

  8 September 2017 - present

- **Mr JN Swart**

  8 September 2017 - present

- **Rev. R Rheeder**

  30 May 2022 - present

- **Rev. W van Niekerk**

  27 February 2023 – present

- **Ms A Booysen**

  8 September 2017 – 25 May 2026

- **Dr RB van Aarde**

  1 January 2019 – 31 January 2025

- **Rev. L Dorfling**

  24 February 2025 – 31 December 2025

3. FULL-TIME STAFF

- **Rev. W van Niekerk** (Executive Head)

  1 February 2025 - present

- **Ms SJ Maritz** (Financial Manager)

  1 May 2024 - present

- **Ms H Odendaal** (Administrative Manager)

  1 April 2024 – present

- **Dr RB van Aarde** (former Executive Head)

  1 January 2019 – 31 January 2025

- **Ms A van Deventer** (former Financial Manager)

  1 March 1994 - 30 April 2024

- **Ms L Kotze** (former Administrative Manager)

  1 April 2016 - 31 March 2024

4. EXECUTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

4.1. Introductory

For the SCMMC the past term was a **time of transition** and strategic rethinking. It includes a conference with the former Transvaal Synods shortly before the session of the synod.

In South Africa poverty, unemployment, inequality and broken families prevail. There are aging communities and growing pressure on children

and young people. The need for professional social services is also growing, but rising costs and uncertain state subsidies put financial pressure on these services.

Despite these challenges the service organisations have continued to serve children, families, and older persons, as well as people who struggle with addiction.

The SCMMC believes that the road ahead is full of hope—a road where collaboration with the Northern Synod, Presbyteries and Congregations will grow stronger; a road of simpler and more accountable governance structures; a road on which we continue as church to bring hope there where the Lord is working.

The SCMMC stands on the eve of a new era. We also invite the synod to celebrate it with us, together with the inauguration of our new name, at the session of the synod.

4.2. Theological foundation

As church of the Lord, Jesus Christ, we are called and sent to make visible, with compassion and service, God's loyal goodness to the world, to listen to his prophetic voice of righteousness, and to then to proclaim it to the world, and live it.

Our perspectives on Diaconate and Mercy are inextricably bound to our Reformed understanding of the Triune God, his bond with all creation, and his will for all people. This perspective always begins with the Bible that proclaims that God the Trinity …

4.2.1. as **God the Father,** reveals himself as the One who sees us in our brokenness, who calls us by name and who frees us by his goodness

and loyal love. His saving work not only reconciles us with him, but restores our relationships with one another—he invites us to be bearers of his love, righteousness, and peace, and in this way we become part of his restoration of the world (cf. Exodus 3:7-8; Isaiah 58; Michah 6:6-8).

4.2.2. as **Jesus,** proclaims that the Kingdom of God is near. Wherever people place their lives under God's sovereignty and do his will, the kingdom breaks through—a new reality where the power of sin is wrecked, where the Spirit reigns, and where love, righteousness peace and joy begin to flower (cf. Mark 1:14-15; Luke 6:20-49).

4.2.3. as **Holy Spirit,** fashions us according into the image of Christ, so that we can love with God's heart. Under his guidance we become merciful to one another as our Father is merciful. In this way he makes God's kingdom visible in the world—by means of people who live in love, righteousness, and peace (cf. 2 Corinthians 3:18, Roman 14:17, Galatians 5:13-26).

In the Old Testament we get to know God as a God of mercy and faithful love. The Hebrew word *héséd* describes his deep, covenantal love—a love characterised by loyal goodness and faithfulness to his people.

In the New Testament this heart of God is expressed by the word *diakonia*, which means to serve. Jesus himself is called the Diakonos of God—the One who came to serve and not to be served (Matthew 20:25–27; Romans 13:4). He calls his followers to live out of the same attitude of ministry and compassion. What was formerly known as the 'Ministry of Mercy' we today call the diaconate—a ministry of people sent by God to make God's love known in practical ways.

4.3. SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

Under the shared vision of 'We Bring Hope' the SCMMC's diaconal services

are provided mainly on a decentralised basis by our service organisations. This promotes involvement in the local congregation and community. The success of this can be ascribed to committed staff, council members, and volunteers who often make significant personal sacrifices to promote service delivery. These services would struggle to be maintained without them.

The following services are provided by the SCMMC Service Organisation:

4.3.1. Children and family carte services (professional social services)

CSC North is the service organisation that focuses on family care. CSC North offers family conservation, child protection, poverty relief, and community development services to individuals, groups, and communities in need.

Protection of children	172
Family care services	14144
Poverty relief	2937
Short-term cases	629
Adoptions and Origins	20
Generic Social Work	2620

4.3.2. Child and Youth Care Centres

In three Child and Youth Care Centres 466 children in need are cared for. These centres offer a holistic educational service to children who have for some reason lost the care of their biological parents. All the Child and Youth Care Centres mentioned below function with separate houses on a larger terrain where house parents take care of the children within a family context and guide them in their development.

4.3.2.1. Jacaranda Child and Youth Care Centre

Jacaranda Child and Youth Care Centre is a residential facility in Derdepoort, Pretoria, where 199 children are cared for.

4.3.2.2. Louis Botha Child and Youth Care Centre

This Child and Youth Care Centre is in Queenswood, Pretoria and cares for 97 children. The Child and Youth Care Centre is jointly managed by the same management team as Jacaranda and has the same management members. Louis Botha is part of Jacaranda's fundraising efforts and functions on the same basis.

4.3.2.3. Abraham Kriel Child and Youth Care Centre – Modimolle

Abraham Kriel is one of the few Child and Youth Care Centres in Limpopo province that offers the abovementioned high level of care. It cares for 170 children.

4.3.3. Care for older persons

Homecare

Older persons who still live independently and function on their own, are reached in several ways. Except for the congregations that in their diaconal services offer physical and spiritual care to older persons under their care, the CSC North also reaches older persons in family care programmes. The Houses for Older People also reach people in the community by means of homecare programmes, with 116 people who are formally served.

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Residential care

In the SCMM system about 909 older persons are cared for in 7 facilities. This care is holistic and attempts to provide for all the needs of

the older people. Most of these houses provide for self-care, semi-care, and full care. About 195 older persons are housed in 3 retirement villages where most of the units are sold on a life rights basis.

Tivoli and Alberta are two blocks of flats in the Wonderboom area where independent older persons can rent flats at subsidised tariffs. This rental is managed by Deo Gloria NPC.

RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES	
Brits Rusoord ***[Rest Haven]***	**Warmbad Rusoord**
Harmonie Oord	**Rustenburg Rusoord**
Huis H J Piek	**Huis Vergenoeg**
Tivoli Flats (Deo Gloria)	**Alberta Flats (Deo Gloria)**

4.3.4. Rehabilitation for substance abuse disorders – Stabilis

Stabilis Treatment Centre annually provides treatment programmes for **328 residential patients.** Preventative programmes are also offered at schools and other centres.

Stabilis supported individuals and families through the challenges of substance dependency. With medical care, compassionate counselling, and spiritual guidance Stabilis creates a safe and supportive space where recovery can strike root. At Stabilis healing begins, hope grows, and the joy of life returns.

4.4. RESOURCES

4.4.1 Human resources

SCMMC understands that employees and volunteers who work in service organisations are the most important asset of professional diaconal services. **518 permanent employees** often work in difficult circumstances, under enormous work pressure, and at low salaries. Yet the services provided are of high quality because the employees and volunteers regard their ministry as a calling from the Lord in service of his kingdom.

4.4.2 Properties

All the properties used by our service organisations where services are provided are registered under the name of the SCMMC. The SCMMC makes the properties available gratis to our service organisations. The properties are maintained by each management board and functionally upgraded as needs arise. Where possible, the properties are also utilised within the framework of the Act for raising funds and subsidising service delivery.

4.5. HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR: A new home for a new chapter

During the year we moved **Harmonie Oord** from its long-existing site, which had become increasingly unfit and financially unsustainable. Instead of simply maintaining the status quo, we opted for investing in a new beginning. The service organisation moved to a new house which is smaller but safer, is more accessible and better suited to the needs of the people we serve. The new site provides easy access to good shopping facilities, a nearby park, and a safer community environment. Most importantly, it is a place of which our residents and staff can feel proud to call home. The move represents **a practical expression of our commitment to dignity, sustainability, and the creation of surroundings where people can flourish**.

4.6. CHALLENGES

One or more of the SCMMC directors serve on each of the management bodies of our service organisations and report to the SCMMC board. The Executive Head provides management support services throughout to managers and management boards concerning all organisational functions. Outside experts are appointed when necessary.

4.6.1 Financial sustainability

The financing of professional diaconal programmes offers significant challenges, and the sustainability of services is highly uncertain, especially as a result of the struggling economy and heightened pressure caused by decreasing state subsidies and subsidies not always paid on time.

Critical factors to be considered are

- the annual decrease in government subsidies as a percentage of the unit cost of services;
- the continued decrease in public donations due to economic circumstances;
- the financial capability of congregations and members;
- the present weak economic climate;
- government policies and priorities;
- decreasing income of older persons and of their children/sponsors.

4.6.2 Management challenges

SCMMC's accountability concerning service organisations lies in ensuring that the management board fulfils its responsibilities effectively regarding legislation, government policy, the applicable management plan, and the agreement with the SCMMC.

As owner, the SCMMC must ensure compliance with all statutory aspects and risk management concerning properties used by the service organisations. With regard to the properties the SCMMC supervises the maintenance responsibilities of the management boards, the insuring of assets, the effective utilisation of properties, upgrades and expansions, statutory compliance requirements, energy costs, and sustainability.

The fact the members of the management boards of service organisations are volunteers creates challenges that demand constant vigilance. That is why there is continued attention given to the composition and capacity of management boards. Against the backdrop of continuous statutory amendments and policy changes, there is a growing need to train and equip managers and management boards.

4.6.3 Service delivery strategies

New needs in the South African society mean that a growing focus should be placed on a community- and development-oriented approach. SCMMC has begun a process of the restructuring of services to adapt to changing societal needs.

The following shifts are expected in the social service delivery environment:

- from care and intervention to development and prevention;
- from government subsidies and donations to social entrepreneurship and business models as income streams.

4.6.4 Positioning as custodian of faith-based social services

To position oneself as a faith-based organisation providing social services in a secular South Africa is a growing challenge. It must constantly be proved that social services based on a Christian ethic does not compromise professionality. Other challenges arise from the constant need to realign oneself with the Church's new thinking and

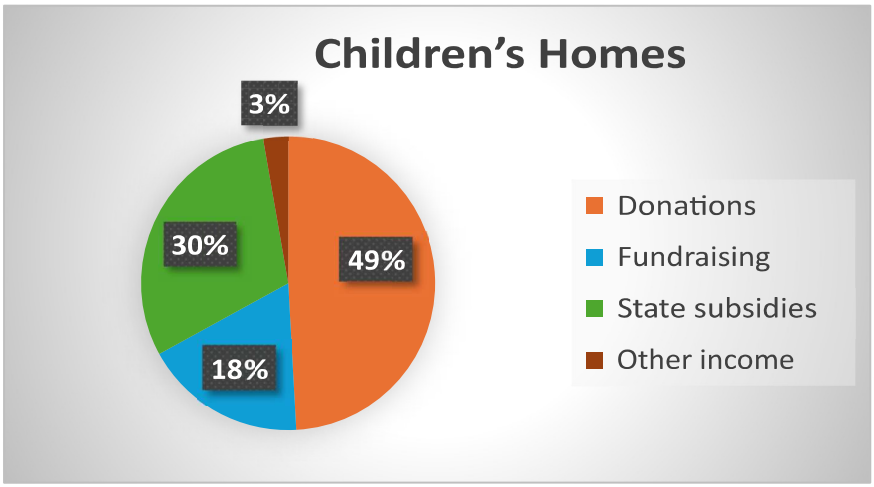
future way of working regarding its understanding of the diaconate. The SCMMC and its service organisations must also convince congregations of how crucial it is to collaborate with other role players (churches and community organisations) on a local level.

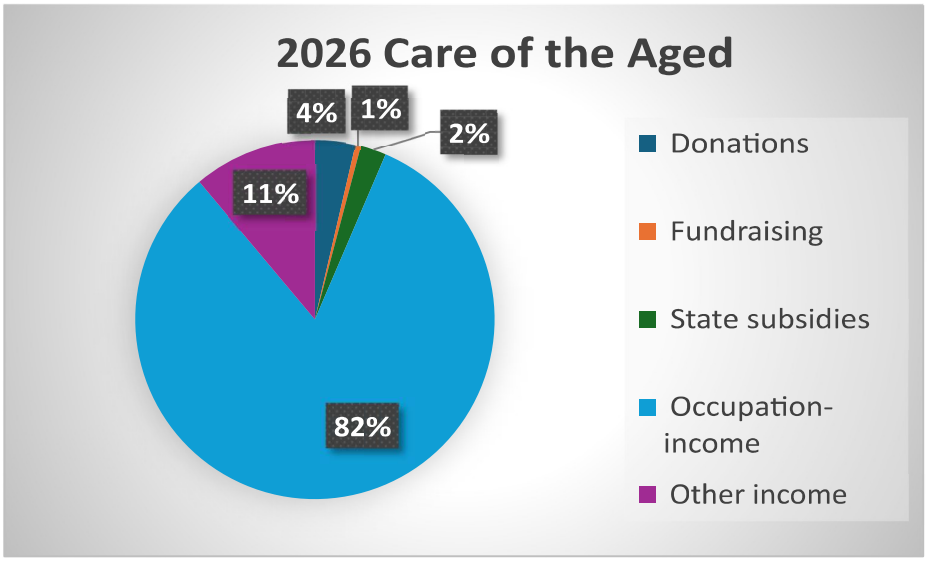
4.7 FINANCES

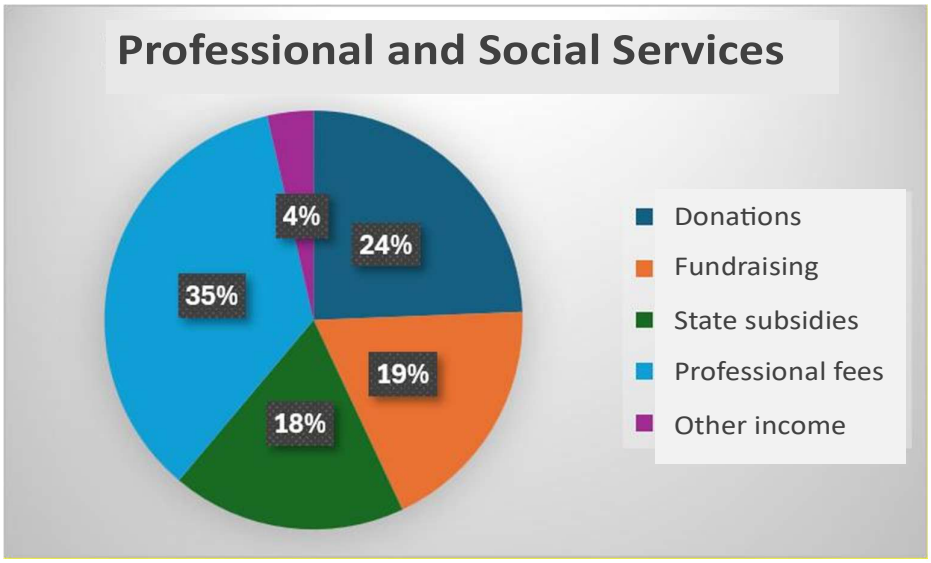
4.7.1 Financial management

The total income from all our service organisations for the past financial year was **R 199 546 466**, and the total expenses were **R 196 945 769**. Government subsidies only contributed 16% of the joint income of all service organisations.

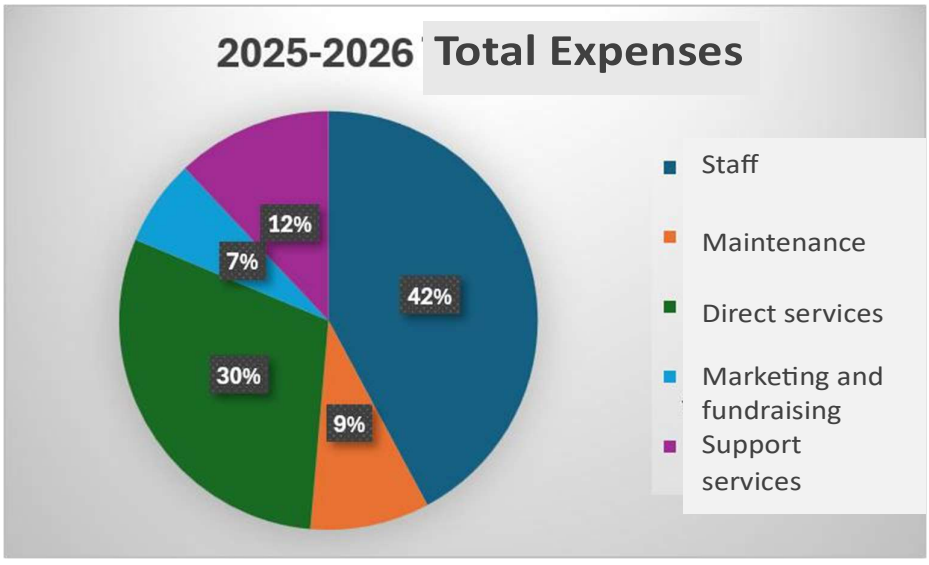
The different income streams of the organisations:


Children's Homes
3%
49%
30%
18%
Donations
Fundraising
State subsidies
Other income


2026 Care of the Aged
4%
1%
2%
11%
82%
Donations
Fundraising
State subsidies
Occupation-income
Other income



Combined expenses



4.7.2 Social entrepreneurship

Against the backdrop of the above challenges, we actively strive to expand our income streams and to raise our income. This includes:

- a centralised support fund;
- centralised service delivery;

- large-scale fundraising efforts in organisations;
- business initiatives.

4.8 CONCLUSION

At the end of a challenging year and with even more challenges ahead, the SCMMC holds on to the words of Isaiah 58:6-8:

6 'Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will quickly appear;
then your righteousness will go before you,
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

With its vision of bringing hope and making a difference
the SCMMC embraces the challenges lying ahead.
We do prayerfully and in deep dependence on the Lord.