



The Angel Gown Initiative

~ Out of grief comes grace,
beauty and dignity ~

ANNUAL REPORT:
THE ANGEL GOWN INITIATIVE
203-283 NPO
PBO 930061837
1 MARCH 2019 TO 29 FEBRUARY 2020



The Angel Gown Initiative

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The Angel Gown Initiative

1) Organisation Overview

The Angel Gown Initiative, TAGI, started as the CSI project of the fashion house, Erik House, on 21 June 2017. So immediate was our success that on 7 February 2018 TAGI was registered as a non-profit organisation (203-283 NPO) and as a Public Benefit Organisation (930061837) on 25 June 2018.

With a pregnancy you are preparing for the joyous occasion of a new baby. The thought that you might have to go home with empty arms are often the farthest thing from your mind. It is our privilege to assist these bereaved parents with an important practical issue: how to provide your angel baby with the greatest dignity and grace when sending him or her into the hereafter.

Under the leadership of our founder, Eric Elronde, and alongside the assistance of our volunteers, we are charitably repurposing preloved wedding gowns and formal dresses into exquisitely handcrafted Angel Gown™ garments. An Angel Gown™ is a burial gown for infants who pass away before, during or shortly after birth.

TAGI is the first organisation in South Africa to manufacture Angel Gown™ garments and with that we quickly realized our focus must expand beyond the Helderberg area, where we are situated. With this we entered into cooperation agreements with both Mediclinic and Netcare, the two largest medical groups in Southern Africa. With their assistance we can now distribute our Angel Gown™ garments throughout their entire hospital networks.

This is our second annual report and will cover the activities for the financial year end of 1 March 2019 to 29 February 2019.





The Angel Gown Initiative

2) Management

2.1) Board of Directors



From left to right: E. Elronde, M. Bottomley, A. van Wyk and R. Erasmus

Eric Elronde – Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Milla Bottomley – Chief communications Officer
Anso-Mari van Wyk – Chief Compliance Officer
Radie Erasmus – Chief Information Officer

Our four founding members was Eric Elronde, Anso-Mari van Wyk, Radie Erasmus and Chrismari Elsburry. Chrismari was the individual that brought this concept to Eric. Last year we said goodbye to Chrismari and welcomed Milla Bottomley to take over from her. TAGI has shown exceptional growth and we are finalising the appointment of a fifth member to our board who will take the role as our Corporate Business Development Officer.



The Angel Gown Initiative

3) Major Objectives and Activities

3.1) Angel Gown™ production

We identified four sizes, determined by a weight group, that range from 600g – 3.2kg. Each Angel Gown™ is individually wrapped, accompanied by a handwritten condolence card, and then sealed with different coloured stickers to identify the size.

While we keep a simplistic pattern, our Angel Gown™ garments are embellished to be suitable for either boys or girls. The boy gowns are wrapped with a pastel blue satin ribbon, while the girl gowns are wrapped with a pastel pink satin ribbon.

As our network of distribution channels expands, so does our demographics. As our country has so many diverse cultures, we decided to manufacture our Angel Gown™ garments in a variety of colour and textiles to accommodate this need. Further to this, we ensure that each of our Angel Gown™ garments stay unique, to ensure that each Angel Gown™ is as unique as your angel baby is to you.

In 2017 Eric Elronde was the only person involved in this production and he left his career as a couturier to pursue this on a full-time basis. As the need for our Angel Gown™ garments became more demanding, he realized that this task is too much for one person to carry.

Eric invested a lot of time to train potential volunteers in person, but still the need kept growing. Soon he compiled an in-depth construction manual to train volunteers in other provinces, thereby expanding our pool of volunteers.

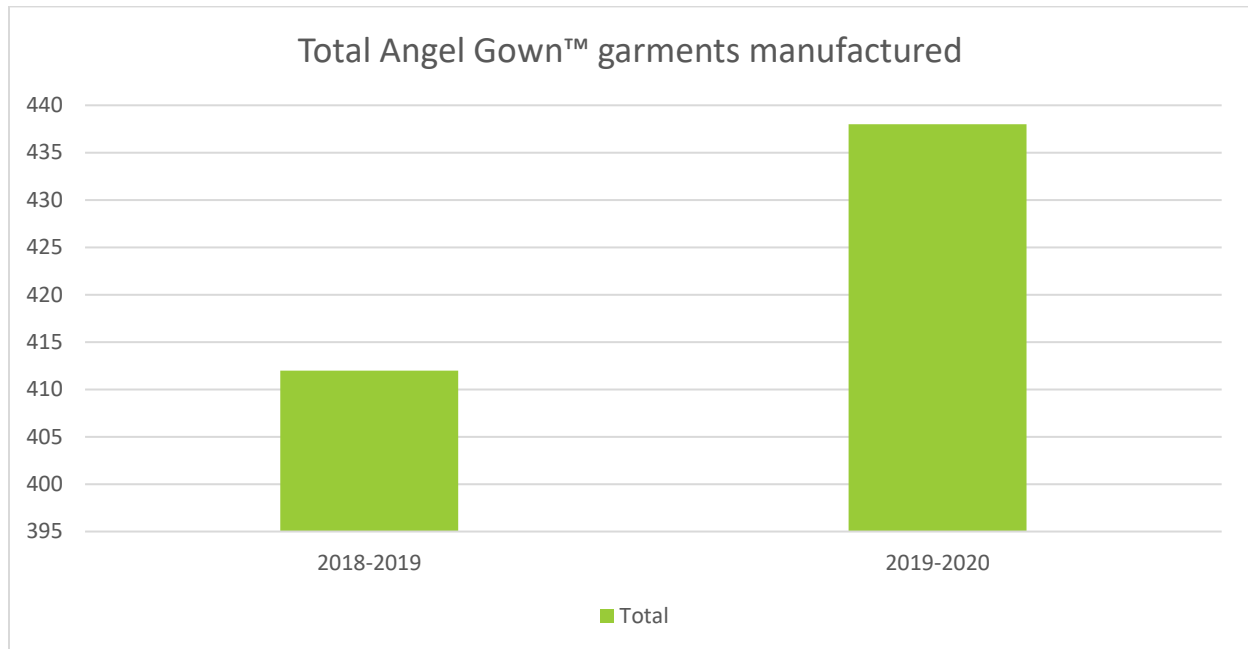
While Eric still personally designs every Angel Gown™, the bulk of the manufacturing is now being done by our wonderful group of volunteers offering their sewing skills to our cause.



In 2018-2019 a total of 412 Angel Gown™ garments were manufactured. During 2019-2020 this number increased to 438 for the year.



The Angel Gown Initiative



3.2) Angel Gown™ distribution

Originally, we focused on hospitals close to our head office in the Helderberg Basin. Here we would hand deliver the Angel Gown™ garments and we quickly realized how draining this is on our resources, but more so on the personal psyche. As much comfort as our Angel Gown™ garments can provide, we know that professional training should go alongside it – training we do not possess.

Early on in 2018 we had discussions with the head offices of Mediclinic and Netcare. As they are the leading medical groups in Southern Africa, we thought it wise to start building relationships with them. After all the parties concerned reached consensus, official documents were signed, and we had secured cooperation agreements with both hospital groups.

Now we manufacture the Angel Gown™ garments and supply them freely to the hospital groups so that they can donate them, on our behalf, to their patients. In return they generously pay for the transportation to all their hospitals throughout Southern Africa. They also have professionally trained staff that can assist the bereaved parents.



The Angel Gown Initiative



We identified a model of sustainable growth which led us to focus on these two groups for 2018-2019. We have matured from a once-off favour to an international organisation that successfully supports the needs of 48 hospitals in 7 provinces throughout Southern Africa. And we do proudly say Southern Africa, as we also support hospitals in Namibia.

In 2018-2019 we scheduled a meeting to discuss distribution through Doulos of South Africa (DOSA), which concluded in a cooperation agreement in March 2019. This has enabled us to serve members of the public that are not patients at the hospitals currently in our network, while still giving them the high standards of care that the public has come to associate with The Angel Gown Initiative.

3.3) Hospitals

3.3.1) Mediclinic

Although our first handover was at a provincial hospital, Mediclinic Stellenbosch was the first hospital to interact with us. Mediclinic was instrumental in helping us understand the procedures around how Angel Gown™ garments would work in a South African hospital environment. With their assistance we established the procedures that govern how we collaborate with South African hospitals.

Mediclinic was the first private hospital group to collaborate with us and the first to supply our Angel Gown™ garments on an international scale.

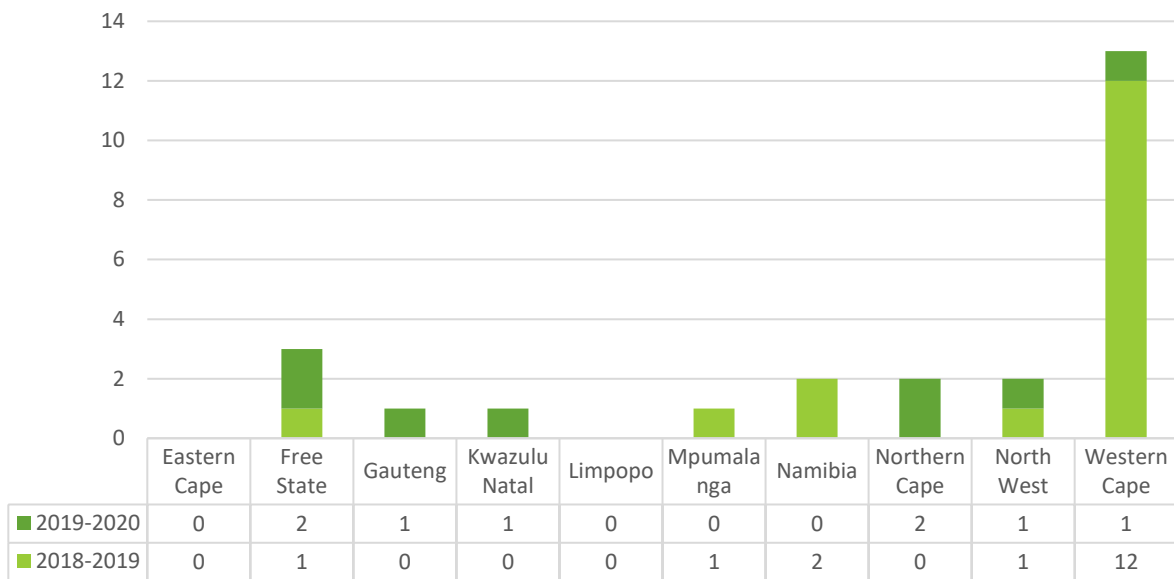
We have expanded extensively into their network and currently support 25 of their hospitals spread over 7 provinces, as well as Namibia. We are currently supporting 53% of all their hospitals in Southern Africa.





The Angel Gown Initiative

Mediclinic distribution and growth



3.3.2) Netcare

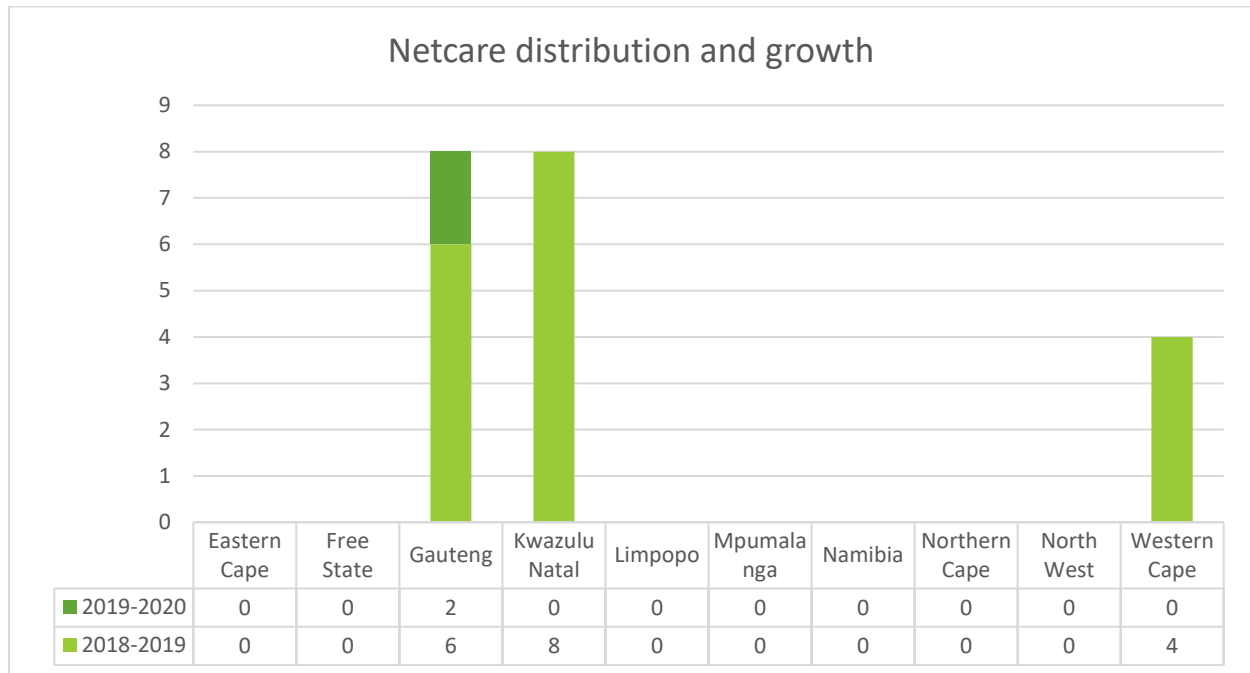
Netcare was the second private hospital group to collaborate with us and the first to supply our Angel Gown™ garments on a national scale.

We have expanded extensively into their network and currently support 20 of their hospitals spread over 3 provinces. We are currently supporting 52% of all their hospitals in South Africa that deals with birth.





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3.3.3) Provincial

Vredendal Hospital was the first ever hospital where we donated an Angel Gown™, this also happens to be the birthplace of our founder, Eric Elronde. Since our initial donation in 2017 we have collaborated with Tygerberg Hospital, the second largest provincial hospital in South Africa, to distribute Angel Gown™ garments within other provincial hospitals. Through collaborating with DOSA, our Angel Gown™ garments have become more accessible to the patients at these hospitals.



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3.4) Bereavement Workers

3.4.1) Doulas of South Africa

While DOSA is an umbrella community of doulas in South Africa that promotes, develops and supports doulas and the doula profession, we collaborate with selected DOSA Bereavement Doulas.

A bereavement doula provides support to families who are experiencing or anticipate loss. They understand how grief affects people. They offer assistance for miscarriage, stillbirth or terminal diagnosis during pregnancy, sudden infant death and NICU care.

Through this collaboration we are more accessible to the general public, as these doulas are active in hospitals we do not yet collaborate with, as well as parents that give birth out of hospital.



3.5) In summary

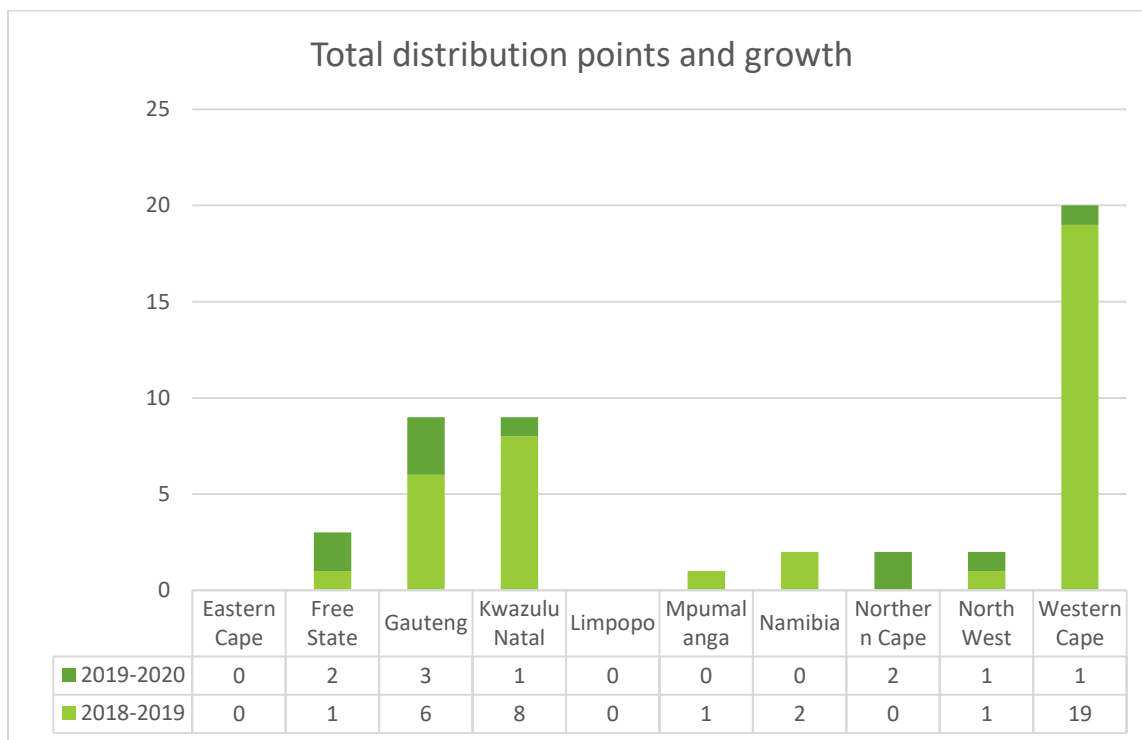
As we work with sensitive information, we cannot disclose the amount of Angel Gown™ garments donated through our individual distribution channels.

We can say that we have assisted 100's of families to grieve their angel babies with grace and dignity.

The feedback we received from our distribution network, and bereaved families, has been overwhelmingly positive.

We have opened discussions with local funeral homes to explore the possibility of assisting more parents. This will be explored further in 2020.





3.6) Capacity building activities

TAGI started as a once-off favour that grew overnight into the international organisation we are today. Although we prepared our foundations well in 2017-2018, there was still a lot of learning we needed to do as TAGI kept growing and evolving at an unpredictably rapid rate.

Many of our original operational procedures quickly fell short and we needed to adjust accordingly. While TAGI has become an established organization, we continue to better ourselves. Listed below are some of the 2018-2019 events that assisted us to achieve our goals.

3.6.1) Donations

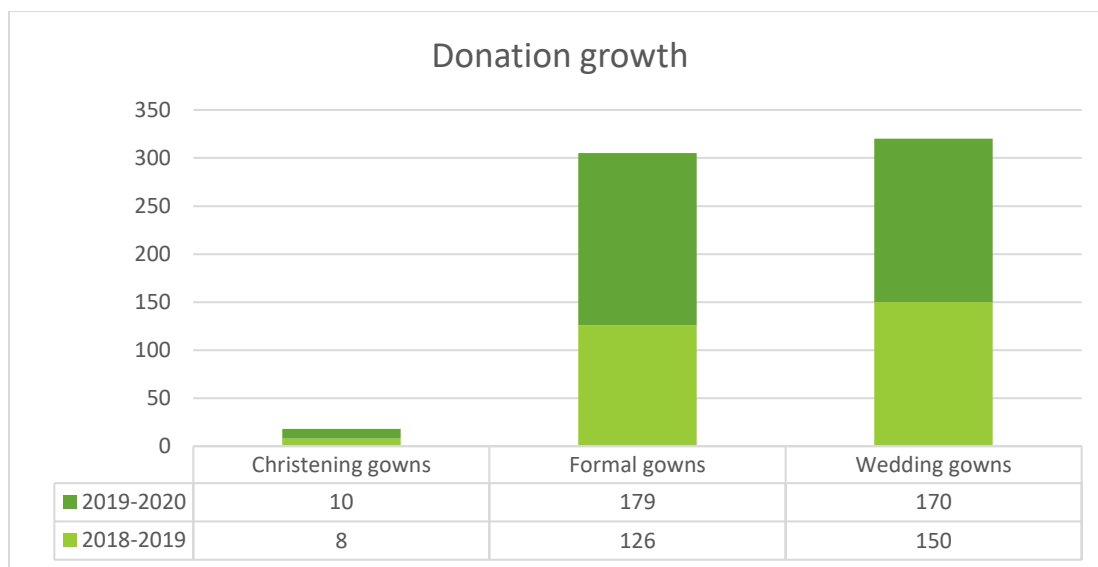
Due to South Africa's diverse population, we realised early on that white wedding gowns alone will not be enough to cater for everyone. We now accept donations of various colour and textile. There are some donations we receive that are unsuitable for the manufacture of Angel Gown™ garments and we donate them to other charitable organisations that we work with.



Although we still have drop-off locations spread over South Africa, with our courier sponsorship it has become easier to have our donations collected directly from our donors. With that came an influx of donations nationally. Tracking our donations and donors became harder as more third parties became involved.

With this a new online tracking system was implemented. We can track every donation we have ever received. Our system is so advanced that we can track the origin, corresponding donor, transitional status of the garment and the amount of Angel Gown™ garments repurposed from a single gown. We keep records on our website of all donations received and Angel Gown™ garments repurposed.

In 2018-2019 we received 150 wedding gowns while in 2019-2020 we received 170 wedding gowns. We receive so much more than wedding gowns and have divided our donations into the following categories: christening gowns, formal gowns, wedding gowns and other. Other consists of everything else such as fabric, ties, non-formal clothes, ribbon, trim etc. Monetary donations are recorded in our financial statements.





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3.6.2) Transportation

We received interest from potential donors all over South Africa, but with rising courier costs, TAGI was losing precious donations. We bridged this obstacle in October 2018 when ACT-Logistics generously agreed to sponsor their services to us.

They collect all our donations throughout South Africa and deliver it to us at no cost to TAGI or our donors. It is also through this generous sponsorship that we can transport the pre-cut Angel Gown™ garments to our volunteers. After assembly, ACT-Logistics transports them back to us.

ACT-Logistics has become crucial to our survival, and we will not be able to continue our work without their assistance.



3.6.3) Branding



A great deal of resources has gone into building our professional reputation. Our Angel Gown™ garments are known for their high standard of craftsmanship, gracious designs and quality of work. We wanted to ensure that wherever an Angel Gown™ is handed over, that they are distinctly identifiable as ours.

Babette du Toit, Owner of ZingDigit Embroidery, generously donates her services to ensure each Angel Gown™ has our logo embroidered on the back. Without her generous contribution we will not be able to continue with the work we do.



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3.6.4) TAGI Bear

In an attempt to supplement our financial needs, we reached out to Kim Heyburgh from My Forever Bears to manufacture hand-made bears that we can sell.

With this our first ever TAGI Bear was born. The design is based on the original German brand, Steiff, having movable limbs. They are available in pastel blue or pastel pink, Duchess Satin or Coral Fleece and is finished with trim for boys or girls.



3.6.5) Volunteer work

As we grow, so does our volunteer interest. This interest isn't only locally, but comes from all over South Africa and we implemented the following to accommodate this:

- For our volunteers that are further away, we have implemented a system where we prepare everything at our office, allowing them to focus on completing our Angel Gown™ garments. Through our courier sponsorship we can transport the prepared and finished gowns back and forth at no cost to TAGI or our volunteers. This has greatly increased our pool of volunteers, taking a huge burden off our shoulders.
- In addition to seamstresses, we have taught local volunteers how to write our condolence cards, dismantle donated wedding gowns and how to wrap our Angel Gown™ garments to our standards.
- While we reached out to businesses, several individuals reached out to us, to offer their premises as drop-off points for our donations. Here they are safely stored until a bulk collection can be arranged through our courier sponsorship.
- As our donations keep coming in, our storage space quickly ran out. Again ACT-Logistics came to our rescue when they offered us secure off-site storage facilities.





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3.6.6) Blogboss

As social media is one of our biggest platforms to reach the public, it goes without saying that our social media platforms need to represent the image we have established. Founder, Judy McGregor, offered her services and guidance to help us adjust how we approach our followers, and we could see a positive change in a very short time.

3.6.7) Collaboration with other organisations

Our needs to stay sustainable starts long before we manufacture a single Angel Gown™, and the parents we assist still needs support after they have said goodbye to their angel babies. Listed here alphabetically are organisations we work with to overcome these obstacles:

- **Angel Gowns of West New York (AGWNY)** – This organisation is situated in the USA and they also manufacture bereavement apparel for stillborn infants. They sent a second shipment this year to assist the growing need of provincial hospitals.
- **Cloud Rosa** – Claudia Konicke manufactures reusable sanitary pads, which she donates to the underprivileged. During the dismantling process, we are often left with materials that is unsuited to our work, but perfect for her needs, ensuring nothing goes to waste.
- **Phambano** – This NPC assists all forms of NGO's to acquire donations and sponsors from tech companies. Through them we have received the software that handles all our online tracking needs, as well as the software for our financial record keeping.
- **Single Parents Helping Hands** – Also situated in the Helderberg Basin, Trudie Coetzee-De Ville helps single parents with a variety of needs, including matric farewell gowns. As the gowns go out of fashion, she donates them to us for repurposing. Donations we receive that are unsuitable for our Angel Gown™ garments, are then again donated to this charity.
- **The Compassionate Friends (TCF)** – This is a self-help group with international chapters, as well as several spread over South Africa. They are designed to help parents, and siblings, grieving the loss of a child of any age. We had the opportunity to meet most of their South African chapter leaders and through this connection we have been enabled to help our bereaved parents find support groups near them. Through this collaboration, we are able to provide bereaved parents with emotional care after their loss.





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3.6.8) Trademarking

Although our organisation name is protected under the law, we initially didn't realize there would be a need to protect our product name. Who would abuse a charity?... we soon found ourselves locked with a for-profit company trying to do a hostile takeover of TAGI. Fortunately, our legal representatives quickly prevented this from being successful.

It was here that we realized the need to protect the image we created in South Africa for Angel Gown™ garments, but more importantly, to protect bereaved parents against organisations trying to extort their grief.

We filed in several classes and it is our privilege to say that within South Africa we have been given temporary protection to the sole use over our product name, Angel Gown. At the date of this document, our attorneys have confirmed that they are in the final stages of finalising the process as no objections were lodged against us.

4) Marketing and Public Relations

The widespread media coverage on TAGI has contributed a great deal to our growth. We cannot state enough how much the media attention has helped us grow. Most of our donations and volunteers are directly linked to this exposure. We want to thank every media outlet that has produced material on us and their continued support.

Presented alphabetically is a list of all the media outlets that published media on us during 2019-2020.

4.1) Media

- Magazine: Rooi Rose
- Radio: Groot FM, KFM, Radio Helderberg, Radio Sonder Grense



The Angel Gown Initiative

4.2) Public relations



- Birthday function: On our birthday we decided to take the day off from TAGI and spent it helping other charitable organisations in our network.
- We were personally invited to attend the first ever Blogboss meet-up to talk about our cause to local bloggers. Some were newcomers to the blogging community, while others are established influencers, giving us exposure to their audiences.

5) Financial Matters

We are grateful to every individual, company and organisation that donate to our cause, be it in kind, a supporting message or a financial contribution. We are thankful that you are entrusting us to honour your special gowns, and that we will manage your resources ethically. We truly cannot continue to do this work without the support of kindhearted people and organisations such as yourselves.

5.1) Donors and sponsors

The list of individuals that has donated to our initiative is too extensive to include here, but extensive records are available on our website. Listed in alphabetical order is our regular sponsors and new comers:

* ACT Logistics * Blogboss * Claudette Hasenjager * Denielle Photography * Dr Susan Rabe * Elbeth Gillis * Exceed (Johannesburg) Inc * Fun Mamma SA * Happy Blocks & Toys * Home is where the Hart is * Lilrose * My Forever Bears * Krystal Beach Hotel * Lindi Gous Bridal and Evening Wear * Mambo's Storage & Home - Somerset West * Microsoft * Moira Du Toit Art * Muga Muga * Pick 'n Ink – Strand * Robyn Roberts Bridal Wear * SAGE * Sew 'n Sensations * Tafelberg Furnishers * Tommy Dell* Von Seidels * ZingDigit Embroidery and Branding *



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5.2) Fundraisers

As our biggest currency is gowns, it is no surprise to hear individuals having dress drives on our behalf, but this year there was a very special fundraiser that happened all without our knowing.

Jonathan Cohen, from Exceed that generously sponsors the audit of our books, held an unconventional fundraiser in our name. He and his wife were celebrating their youngest's' first birthday and asked their friends to put the money for gifts together and donate it to us instead. This was absolutely one of the most beautiful gestures we heard of and yielded the biggest financial donation to date. What was even sweeter, is how their friends was so generous and still bought gifts for their little one. Truly amazing!

Several individuals held different types of dress drives that yielded more than 100 unique gowns for us to transform into Angel Gown™ garments.

We approached several businesses and individuals that donated products, ranging from art to wine, that we were able to raffle through the course of the year to supplement our finances.



The Angel Gown Initiative

5.3) Financial statements

For a full audited report of our financials please visit our website. The key extracts are presented here:

The Angel Gown Initiative NPO

(Registration number: 203-283 NPO)

Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 29 February 2020

Statement of Financial Position as at 29 February 2020

	Note	2020 R	2019 R
Assets			
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	2	5 689	6 953
Current Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	2 321	731
Total Assets		8 010	7 684
Equity and Liabilities			
Equity			
Retained income		(36 629)	(35 955)
Liabilities			
Non-Current Liabilities			
Loans from members	4	44 639	43 639
Total Equity and Liabilities		8 010	7 684



The Angel Gown Initiative

The Angel Gown Initiative NPO

(Registration number: 203-283 NPO)

Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 29 February 2020

Detailed Income Statement

	Note	2020 R	2019 R
Revenue			
Sale of goods		1 060	-
Donations received		19 513	49 301
	5	20 573	49 301
Other income			
Raffle sales		940	-
Operating expenses			
Advertising		820	5 490
Bank charges		1 184	1 190
Consumables		2 522	3 158
Delivery expenses		200	36 461
Depreciation		1 264	632
Entertainment		5 461	-
General expenses		7 874	636
Cost of sales		590	-
Gifts		57	2 394
Legal expenses		30	21 125
Motor vehicle expenses		518	-
Packaging		1 293	507
Postage		54	117
Printing and stationery		190	2 802
Repairs and maintenance		130	10 744
		22 187	85 256
Loss for the year		(674)	(35 955)

6) Constitution

There were no amendments needed to our constitution for this year.

7) Final Word

This has truly been an exceptional year of growth for The Angel Gown Initiative. The interest from the public to become involved continues, corporate sponsors grow stronger, and we attract new donors on a weekly basis.



The Angel Gown Initiative

We apply a lot of effort and time to keep the public informed on our activities, how their donations are managed and to stay true to our transparency ethos. We keep an open line of communication with every distribution point in our network and through that we have built long-lasting personal relationships.

Ultimately, we know that bereaved families are benefitting from our unique service. We firmly believe it is not only due to the quality of our Angel Gown™ garments, but the key role the hospitals, their professionally trained staff and bereavement workers contribute when assisting bereaved parents.

The success of our initiative is evident by the number of hospitals that continue to join our network, as well as alternative routes, such as the assistance of bereavement doulas. We continue to explore new avenues to ensure that one day we will be assisting every hospital, and every parent, within Southern Africa.

The positive feedback from parents assisted with an Angel Gown™, paired with the ongoing consultations of specialists in the baby death community, we will ensure that our Angel Gown™ garments evolve with the needs of bereaved parents, while keeping the highest possible standards of quality.

One in four pregnancies result in death, and with a rising pregnancy rate we are aware of the challenges that await us. We continue to implement sustainable procedures and build new relationships to ensure we reach as many families as quick as possible, while still delivering high quality Angel Gown™ garments.



We thank every friend and family member for your continued support. We thank all our donors for trusting us to honour the memories of your gowns. We thank our sponsors for enabling us to continue with our work. And we thank every bereavement worker and staff member involved in our distribution network to assist us in providing bereaved families with the utmost love and care in this terrible time of loss.

We have the greatest confidence that TAGI will continue to grow and develop strong relationships and partnerships to help us reach our full potential.

Yours faithfully,

Eric Elronde

Chief Executive Officer