



annual report

HOME-START MALTA

FEB 08 - FEB 09

Foundation for Social welfare Services



Home-Start Malta - The Third Year of Service Provision



Introduction from the Chairperson

I am proud to be presenting the third annual report of Home-Start Malta. I am pleased to see this service developing slowly but surely. When I took upon the endeavour to get Home-Start going, I was, to say the least, very confused on how I should go about it. Now, nearly 4 years later, I am surrounded by a group of people who fully support Home-Start Malta, and give their advice, expertise and precious time to see it grow – ultimately, to see more and more families being supported. I am motivated by the principles of Home-Start because I understand the significant and valuable support that it can give to families in distress. I am also motivated by the enthusiasm of my fellow committee members, of the volunteers and other friends who put their heart into Home-Start to keep it going.

Of course, developing a new service is not an easy task, especially, with so much happening in our society. As times change, society changes too. The financial crisis has affected more vulnerable families, who have to face more unemployment, rising costs and hence, more financial hardships, not to mention the pressures that come along with those. The number of people who are available for voluntary work is decreasing. In a financial down turn, many people who would otherwise be happy to give their free time for voluntary work, would now think of trying to find a paid job.

Retaining volunteers can be difficult too, because, when volunteers go through the preparation course and start to visit families, they also start to see their potential developing and feel more confident and valued. Many a time, this has helped to bring them to decide, consciously or unintentionally, to seek paid jobs – and, with newly appreciated skills, this would be easier to obtain. This is, of course, excellent for those who go through a positive process during their involvement with Home-Start.

However, we must always keep in mind that we are working in this climate, constantly – that is, training and empowering people who we might eventually lose.

There are also other NGOs who seek volunteers. Therefore, Home-Start Malta, a relatively new and small service, has to compete with other larger and more established NGOs.

However, we need not be negative about it. We are able to appreciate the contribution other NGOs give to society; we are able to accept that, while investing in people, we may be eventually losing them. However, we are certain they will be contributing positively in another sphere, and that is important to our society too.

We also need to make the most of this and see how we can utilise the help of people who like Home-Start and what it represents, but are unable to commit themselves regularly. These people could contribute in various things – fundraising, awareness, financial donations, contacts with families or potential volunteers – any hand is a helpful hand.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the people who, although do not form part of Home-Start, have offered their help so whole-heartedly – my colleagues in the Appogg Management, the Marketing Team of the Foundation for Social Welfare Services, the workers of the Cottonera Community Services, the Appogg Administration team and other volunteers who are no longer able to offer their regular service but are willing to help out informally. A hearty thanks to all!

Of course, I would like to show lots of gratitude to the support that our main funds, HSBC Cares for Children Fund and Vodafone Malta Foundation, have shown us throughout these years and I hope we will be working together for many years to come.



Catherine Fleri Soler

Chairperson

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1. THE SERVICE

1.1 HOME-START FAMILIES – THEIR NEEDS AND OUR SUPPORT

At Home-Start Malta, our constant concern is whether we are reaching out **enough** to families in need. We always do our bit of reaching out - it is normal practice for us to talk about Home-Start wherever possible, to ensure that we are taking every opportunity to reach out to families who would be going through a crisis or who would be on the verge of one. This could be done by using the media, during formal meetings with other professionals, stakeholders or with parents at school meetings or even meeting people informally; we also try to spread the service by word of mouth – through service users. We know that families who are satisfied with the service they receive or have received are the best promoters of the service!

However, we have to be wise and attentive about whether the type of service we provide is really relevant to the needs of the families we meet. Since families' needs vary, we need a group of volunteers with a range of skills and personalities to be matched to the needs of the families. A good assessment of the family situation is fundamental. However, the Organiser also needs to know her volunteers and their abilities and match them accordingly. We are pleased to say that the Organiser receives positive feedback from the families that receive the service. Below are two examples:

One mother used to feel isolated and was very distrustful of people. She had been wary about receiving a volunteer at home, yet, she is now gaining more confidence in herself and others. Consequently, her family is gaining from seeing their mother more comfortable with herself, and more loving in the way she relates to them. She has experienced positive changes and this is very encouraging for both the volunteer and the Organiser who can see that the service is making a difference to the life of this woman and her family.

Another woman agreed to be interviewed by a local newspaper because she wished to share her positive experience of Home-Start with others. She found that someone understood what she was going through and was able to support her, albeit in a seemingly simple way. She states that the support she received even helped her marital relationship since tension and anxiety were getting in the way. She felt motivated to move on with her life and has even shown her wish to be able to do

the same to others one day.

Unfortunately, the situations some families go through are very complex; they may include mental health problems of one or both parents, precarious situations of the children that may require protection, potentially aggressive situations due to a violent partner or very dysfunctional family dynamics. It is not always possible to find a suitable volunteer to deal with the situations presented in these families. The Organiser would have the dilemma to choose whether to send a volunteer that would not reach all the needs of the family or not provide the service at all. Of course, Home-Start tries to provide a service to everyone who asks for it, however, sometimes a mismatch could be more damaging to both the family and the volunteer and therefore, the matching process is a very delicate one.

To deal with this issue, there are a number of actions that Home-Start Malta is carrying out or will be carrying out in the future. This is outlined in the section dedicated to the volunteers.

1.1a Social and Educational Activities

One of the commitments that Home-Start Malta had made was to organise social activities for the families. Most of the families would be either going through financial difficulties or through other forms of problems that limit their motivation or opportunity to treat themselves to something different that would provide a form of recreation for them. As in previous years, in 2008, Home-Start gave the families a Christmas treat which was an activity with the volunteers at the Valletta Waterfront. This activity was a great success and the Home-Start Management committee agreed to try and organise such events or similar ones more often throughout the year. Educational activities, such as a session on budgeting, or personal hygiene, could also be organised.

1.1b Swap and Change

Home-Start Malta is providing the "Swap and Change" service. This is widely used amongst Home-Start schemes worldwide. "Swap and Change" is where the families could exchange used items with each other. The idea is, firstly, that one doesn't just expect to take, but needs to give too. However, an important second point is that the women are happy to bring their own items for the use of others who may need them. This gives them a sense of value and

solidarity with others who are also in need. All the items received and exchanged are in a good condition – as ensured by the Organiser.

This service has picked up nicely, however, there is need for more organisation so that the families would benefit more from it.

1.1c Toy Lending Library

Another service that is offered is the Toy Lending Library. There are toys available for families to borrow or for volunteers to take with them while visiting the families. However, this service needs more attention and organisation, since there are a number of toys which have been donated which still need to be sorted out. Ideally, there would be a fixed day when the families can call at the office and make use of the service.

A practical problem that Home-Start Malta is facing is the lack of physical space and lack of adequate storage which renders both the above-mentioned services difficult to manage.

1.2 THE VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers make a crucial part of the service. Without the volunteers, the service cannot be offered. They are the core of the service. Therefore, it is very important to keep a steady number of volunteers.

At the moment, there are seven active volunteers in Home-Start Malta, six of whom visit families, while the other is helping out in the office. There are another six who are giving their service less regularly, while another two are waiting to be matched. Five volunteers have stopped giving their service altogether. Eight persons are waiting to start the preparation course due to start in March.



There are four volunteers on the Management Committee, one of which is a volunteers' representative. The other volunteers who are on the Management Committee are not family visiting volunteers. Another volunteer helps out with the accounts of Home-Start Malta.

Recruiting volunteers is only part of the Home-Start responsibilities towards its service users. Home-Start has to ensure the quality and commitment of the volunteers.

When asked "What makes a good volunteer?", the Committee members shared their thoughts:

"...being **committed, versatile, tolerant, motivated, non-judgemental, good listeners** and above all *having a **good understanding** of the ethos of **Home-Start.**"*

These are the basic qualities that volunteers require while being part of Home-Start. However, Home-Start has a responsibility to:

a) **attract and recruit** the "right" type of people – not every one who has free time or who wishes to do voluntary work may be cut out for Home-Start. Yet, one can rightly argue that a committed volunteer may always be useful – maybe not for the most challenging family situations, but, for example, for less demanding ones, such as for office help and for help in fundraising activities. Therefore, one needs to be sensible and open to the skills that prospective volunteers bring with them.

b) **recognise a person's inability** to contribute to the service. If, for example, a person does not show the right qualities, then it would be difficult to match the person to a family situation or indeed rely on him or her to help out in Home-Start. Therefore, the initial interview and the preparation course thereafter are important indicators of the value of the person as a Home-Start volunteer.

Of course, Home-Start tends to look at the **abilities** of a person, but we need to acknowledge that unfortunately, there are times a person could be a mismatch with the service, although he or she may be valuable in other voluntary settings.

c) **train and support** the volunteers, by offering a comprehensive preparation course, and on-going support in the form of individual supervision as well as holding monthly support groups to which the volunteer should be committed.

d) **matching appropriately**, because a wrong match would easily have an adverse effect on both family and volunteer, and therefore, matching should be done prudently.

e) **make the best use of the volunteers**, since it is important that they feel that they can contribute to the well-being of the families. In fact, the waiting time until a volunteer is matched to a family may be vital in the sense that a volunteer may feel useless and hence get demotivated if it is too long.

It is important to point out that from the outset, Home-Start Malta has been careful in selecting persons who are suitable to work with children and their families. The necessary checks are made to ensure that the volunteers are fit to be around children.

With these points in mind, the Management Committee set the following targets for 2009 for the volunteers:

a) **Preparation Course**

In the next preparation course (starting March 09), which prepares the volunteers to start their work with the families, one of the committee members will be co-facilitating with the Organiser. The intention is to assist the Organiser in assessing the abilities and qualities of the participants, to facilitate discussions that arise during the sessions, and to help get the best out of the sessions. This is the first time that this will be done, and it should prove to be a positive and enriching experience.

During a discussion with the Management Committee, one member commented that people

may be discouraged by the length of the preparation course and would opt out of the service immediately since it may be too difficult to take up such a commitment. However, there are vital arguments against decreasing the training input – preparation is an integral part of the service provision; material covered is very relevant and essential in preparing the prospective volunteers for visiting the families. The commitment to the preparation for the voluntary work would reflect the commitment to the actual service provision. Finally, the organiser has a chance to get to know her volunteers better - which is essential when it comes to matching them with a family.

However, it should be noted that the preparation course is that which is required by the Policies and Procedures of Home-Start International. Nevertheless, it is our responsibility to ensure its relevance.

b) **On-Going Training - Support Groups**

The Organiser already provides the opportunity for the volunteers to receive support through a monthly meeting. This is organised apart from the regular individual supervision sessions for each volunteer. The Management Committee is proposing that the support groups would also be used for training; that is, each month, a topic of interest, that is relevant to Home-Start volunteers, would be chosen by the volunteers and presented by a person who is conversant on the topic.

c) **Motivation and Appraisals**

Keeping the volunteers motivated is a crucial part of working with volunteers. Training and increasing volunteers' knowledge may be a way of keeping up the motivation. The Management Committee discussed the possibility of introducing opportunities where, for example, volunteers, during the support group meetings, could observe and comment on each other (the "Fish Bowl" exercise) for more growth and awareness. There was also the idea of starting performance appraisals for the volunteers. This would be a way of acknowledging the worth and value of the volunteers. They would also help targeting points for development and can also be used as certification for the voluntary work that they do within Home-Start.

d) **Team Dynamics**

The volunteers need to feel that they are part of a team. In fact, the support groups and the

other activities organised are aimed to bring them together as a team. To build on the relationships that already exist between the volunteers, the Management Committee came up with the idea of having the volunteers participate in an annual exercise, facilitated by an external professional, that would enhance the team dynamics.

1.3 THE ORGANISER

During the evaluation exercise that the Management Committee carried out in 2008, there was particular attention on the Organiser – the role, the tasks and the support that she needed to carry out all the work that is assigned to her.

The Organiser has a varied number of tasks, ranging from assessing families and volunteers to running the office, to facilitating the support groups, providing supervisions, organising events and participating in Public Relations during media campaigns (such as attending radio and television programmes) . This can prove



rather challenging because it is so diverse and one sometimes has to switch roles from one task to the next. The discussion was positive and led to a number of relevant decisions that would hopefully help the Organiser to cope better with her wide-ranging tasks.

a) The preparation course for volunteers entails a lot of work, for example, carrying out the first interview, organising and delivering the sessions. She needs to stay focused on the delivery of the session whilst assessing the abilities and barriers that the participants bring with them. The Organiser proposed having someone co-facilitating the preparation course with her, a proposal that was welcomed by the Management Committee. One committee member offered to help and this suggestion was welcomed by all for it would not only help the Organiser with the preparation course and eventual selection of the volunteers, but it would also start to establish a better relationship between the committee members and the volunteers and give a better understanding of the hands-on work carried out by the home visiting volunteers.

b) A person approached the Organiser offering help in the office. Therefore, there will be

assistance in the administrative tasks as well as in the organisation of the toy-lending library.

c) Another important assistance comes in the form of help in the management of the finances. One committee member and her husband help in the management of the petty cash and help draw up (on a voluntary basis) the financial reports for Home-Start Malta.

d) There is a group of people who volunteer a helping hand on a more ad hoc basis, for example, when there is a fund-raising activity. This group is made up of ex-volunteers, ex-committee members and/or other persons, including social workers, who are interested in helping families through Home-Start Malta. In this way, the Organiser has help in the organisation of such events, and it is also a means of spreading the word about the service.

2. THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Management Committee has, unfortunately, lost another committee member. The only male committee member, who had been in the Committee for around a year, had to resign because of personal matters. All committee members thanked him for his very valid contribution on the Committee and hoped that he will be able to contribute in a more informal way, depending on his availability.

It is unfortunate that yet another committee member had to resign. However, it must be noted that over the past year there has been more stability in the Management Committee than there had been in previous years. The Committee has strengthened, has more understanding of its role, is clearer in its targets and has shown an overall increasing commitment and dedication to the service. The Committee members come from various backgrounds and thus are able to provide a variety of opinions, ideas and suggestions.

The desire to reach out to more families in need and to support the volunteers is evident in each committee member. This is a driving force for all to continue to build a quality service together.

Each committee member feels the need to receive more training and it is hoped that Home-Start International will be able to provide more training, as a follow up for the first training received in October 2005.

2.1 THE PURPOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Home-Start schemes worldwide are mostly run by Management Committees. The Management Committee promotes a more autonomous and democratic way of running the service. In Malta, however, Home-Start runs within the set-up of Aġenzija Appoġġ and therefore cannot be completely autonomous, since it has to run within the parameters and working ethos of the Agency. This situation exists in a few international schemes, amongst them Canada (Calgary), and the Netherlands where Home-Start operates within an “umbrella agency”, that is, within an agency that provides various services besides Home-Start.

Unfortunately, this set up may hinder the smooth-running of the service; there may be too much involvement from the “umbrella” agency, impinging on the ethos of Home-Start; Home-Start may rely too much on the “umbrella” agency, making it difficult, if not impossible to take free decisions which seek the well-being of the families.

If, on the other hand, a balance is struck between the autonomy and ethos of Home-Start and the resources and experience offered by the “umbrella” agency, this would give the service an added value. Home-Start would be able to enjoy the benefits of a wealth of experiences, views and opinions of the committee members who are there on a voluntary basis, whilst enjoying the assurance of workers offering their experience and expertise, as well as other resources that the agency could offer.

Happily, it is safe to say that Home-Start Malta enjoys a healthy relationship with Aġenzija Appoġġ. The Agency allows the Management Committee to run the service, without any over involvement and provides the support of the day-to-day running of the service, advice and guidance in delicate situations faced by the volunteers during their visits, the support of the marketing team, the premises used as the Home-Start office and others. Equally, the Agency workers have the advantage of working with people, who are giving their time, energy, commitment and their constructive contribution to Home-Start.

Each committee member, whether a volunteer or an Appoġġ worker, has a lot to offer and the value of their contribution and their influence in decisions are clear issues such as, marketing campaigns, the extension of service, the use of funds, decisions on preparation courses, the volunteers, contacts with prospective volunteers, families or referees etc.

2.2 THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND THE VOLUNTEERS

The committee members have raised the issue on several occasions, on the need to get to know the volunteers and hence get a closer look at the service on the grassroots level. The committee members and the home visiting volunteers are able to socialise during the annual activities such as the presentation of the annual report, the Christmas or summer social activity, the fund raising activities and other events organised by Home-Start. However, it has been seen that this is not sufficient. Therefore, the committee members are committed to giving opportunities for them to meet, perhaps in a training session or discussion setting.

The decision to have a committee member co-facilitating the new preparation course is also a way of bringing the committee members and the volunteers closer together.

3. MARKETING

3.1. RAISING THE PROFILE OF HOME-START

Marketing for Home-Start has three main aims:

- To increase awareness of the service for prospective service users
- To recruit suitable volunteers to provide the service
- To obtain resources that may be needed to run the service

The most common way of raising the profile is by meeting people in the communities where Home-Start operates; generally, the Organiser meets Heads of schools, parish priests and members of the Local Councils. Some meetings serve to introduce Home-Start, however, other meetings are held to update those who already know about Home-Start. Some Heads of schools invite the Organiser to address the parents in the first meeting of the scholastic year. This is an effective way of communicating the service with both potential service users as well as potential volunteers.

In April 2008, Home-Start had a media campaign to reach out to families. This consisted of an extensive e-mail shot to various entities, TV appearances (4), radio programmes (3), school meetings with parents (6), and meetings with 7 Local Councils. There was also an interview

published on a local newspaper by a newspaper journalist carried out with a family who used the service.

Generally, it is the Organiser who holds the meetings and heads the campaigns – the idea is to have a “Home-Start Person”, for people to identify her with the service. However, due to the demands of her daily tasks, other committee members and / or volunteers were also involved in the marketing of Home-Start.

It is proper to mention the invaluable help that Ms. Sara Bianchi (Committee Member) and the rest of the Marketing Team of the Foundation for Social Welfare Services give to Home-Start throughout the year

3.2 OTHER MARKETING EVENTS

3.2a Tislima Sajf in Zejtun



Upon learning about the service, the Vice Mayor of Zejtun invited Home-Start Malta to set up a stand during a summer activity that the Local Council was organising in August in Ġnien San Girgor. The stand was attended by a few people, who answered questions from interested or curious persons.

3.2b Joint Marketing Campaign

In the beginning of 2009, Home-Start held the first joint campaign for volunteers with other Appoġġ services which require volunteers to run the services. It was the first time that Home-Start teamed up with other Appoġġ services. The campaign was intensive and ran for 3 weeks. The campaign aimed to attract anyone who is willing to do voluntary work. Following the campaign, applicants were invited to an information meeting and were given information on

the three services requiring the service of volunteers. An evaluation of the campaign is still to be carried out. Home-Start Malta is to decide whether this was a positive move or not, and whether it should be repeated in the coming years.

4. FINANCE AND FUNDRAISING

4.1 THE FINANCIAL REPORT

For the Financial Report please see Annex 1.

4.2 HOME-START MALTA'S FINANCIAL POSITION

Home-Start Malta is funded by two main sponsors – Vodafone Malta Foundation and HSBC Cares for Children Fund. These two sponsors have committed themselves to funding Home-Start Malta at least till February 2010. Whilst hoping that the partnership between the sponsors and Home-Start Malta will continue for many more years, Home-Start Malta is aware of the fact that there are many demands for funds from other NGOs, and that, in the present global financial crisis, such financial security may no longer be forthcoming. It is hoped that, even in such critical circumstances, which affect mostly the more vulnerable in society, our sponsors would continue to support Home-Start Malta, which keeps striving to support those who are most in need.

There is also an important element to be considered – with the imminent development of community services in the North of Malta (Qawra and its surroundings), there is a great probability that the demand for a service like Home-Start grows there too. Consequently, Home-Start Malta would have to think of further expansion – which would obviously need further resources, hence more funds.

Therefore, the Management Committee is committed to work on securing funds for the service, as well as preparing itself for possible new demands on the service.

4.3 FINANCIAL TARGETS

For this purpose, the Management Committee came up with a strategy – trying to attract more

fundress who could join the partnership with Vodafone Malta Foundation, HSBC Cares for Children (that is, of course, if these two main sponsors will commit themselves beyond February 2010) and trying to get sponsors for mini-projects which are listed below:

Organising activities for the families

(in the form of social activities or activities that would enhance their personal development and intra family relationships)

Funding training for both committee members and volunteers

(this could include sponsoring trips to meetings organised by Home-Start International)

Sponsoring Marketing Material

(assisting in helping Home-Start Malta raise its profile to reach more families facing difficult moments)

Upgrading the office

(furniture, assisting in telecommunications expenses, help in administrative tasks)

Expansion of the service

(with the demands increasing, Home-Start would need to develop, possibly have new premises, more human resources to help out, etc.)

4.4 FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

During 2008, there were two major fundraising activities which have become annual events –

- The Car Boot Sale, held at Fortini, Birgu on the 30th March
- The Retro-Night, held at the Access Community Resource Centre in Birgu, on the 3rd October

In December 2008, Home-Start Malta was invited to the “Birgu by Candlelight” event organised by the Birgu Local Council. During the event, Home-Start Malta sold a few things that were either donated or made by volunteers and parents. These fundraising activities serve as a means to raise awareness on Home-Start and the family situations that it aims to address.



5. EVENTS OF 2008/9

5.1 Calendar of Events February 08 – February 09



May 08

Home-Start Malta presented its first Biennial Report in May 2008. The event was held at the Senglea Local Council and was attended by the main sponsors, Ms. Catherine Gonzi, Chairperson – HSBC Cares for Children Fund, Ms. Gemma Mifsud Bonnici, Vodafone Malta Foundation, Mr. Joe Gerada, the CEO of the

Foundation for Social Welfare Services, Ms. Yvonne Mallia, Operations Director, Agenzija Ap-pogg, as well as a number of committee members and volunteers. During this event, the main sponsors signed their second contract with Home-Start Malta, committing their funds for another two years.

July 08

Home-Start Malta organised a general meeting for volunteers and committee members at the Radisson SAS Baypoint. There was a guest speaker, Ms. Vivienne Cassar, who gave a presentation on Story Telling. This was a topic of interest for the volunteers who could adapt some ideas during their visits to the families. Those present went for a meal together after the presentation.



September 08

The Home-Start Management Committee and the volunteers got together for a pizza during the summer social activity.

November 08

Catherine Fleri Soler attended the Global Conference organised by Home-Start International in Prague. This was attended by the Chairs and Directors from around 20 countries worldwide. A summary of the Conference is found in 5.2

January 09

The Management Committee had decided in the previous evaluation meeting to start holding the evaluation meetings at the beginning of the year, so as to facilitate the drawing up of the annual report. The evaluation of 2008 was discussed during two meetings held by the Management Committee.

5.2 The Global Conference

The Conference ran over 5 days and was packed with discussions and talks. There were guest speakers, who made presentations on:

- UN convention for children
- Dealing with the media
- Campaigning

Other Home-Start personnel:

- Working with fathers (returning from incarceration) - Australia
- Understanding hard to reach families – The UK
- Working with families with a person with a disability – Norway
- Development of Ken La Em (meaning, the Nest, a service similar to that provided by Home-Start) - Israel



The workshops dealt with the three topics of the OAK Project, that is:

- Safeguarding Children
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Quality Assurance

These were discussed in workshops, during which the participants discussed the draft procedures that were drawn up during a global consultation exercise throughout 2008. Each member had a lot to contribute and it was very interesting to see the different view points which underlined the different contexts where Home-Start operates.

Home-Start International – Governance

The participants discussed the issue of the role of Home-Start International and whether it should be the governing body of all the Home-Start projects around the world. The original purpose of Home-Start International was to support the implementation and development of new projects. However, along the years, Home-Start International, which is based in London, England, has been seen as a point of reference and support by most of, if not all, the Home-Start projects.

The role of Home-Start International was discussed, since there were issues raised regarding whether it should be a managing body and, if so, how it should be managed. At the moment, the Management Committee of Home-Start International is made up of members from the UK only, although it is meant to represent an International body. A proposal was put forward to include other members from different countries, who would part of the Management Committee. This proposal was welcomed by all present. The Home-Start International office committed itself to implementing this agreement.

Others

- Due to the recession, Home-Start International only had funds secured till April 2009. However, they were negotiating the possibility of obtaining more funds which would enable them to operate even after that date.
- The conference allowed for many discussions on various aspects of the service – recruitment and retention of volunteers, fund-raising, campaigning, targeting families etc. These were done during what was known as “discussion cafés” where a number of topics were chosen for discussion. A person was selected to chair a group per topic, for around 15-20 minutes, after which time, the participants would move on to another discussion café of their choice. This was an effective way of getting a variety of opinions on pertinent subjects in a relatively short time.
- There was a discussion on the idea of having a payment from each Home-Start scheme, which would be a small percentage of the yearly income. This would partly fund Home-Start International to support and guide the schemes in their service provision, whilst committing each scheme to the Home-Start ethos and quality service provision. There was no decision on this.

6. CONCLUSION

We can gladly see that Home-Start Malta is growing and gaining more knowledge and experience. It is attracting more interest and reaching out to more families. We keep striving to develop the service, with care and determination, to make it a more friendly and happy service, to give positive experiences to help families grow closer together.

7. The Home-Start Management Committee

Catherine Fleri Soler - *Chair*

Marija Zahra – *Vice Chair*

Jacqueline Vella – *Home-Start Organiser*

Carmen Galea and Sarah Bianchi – *Marketing and Public Relations*

Marvic Grixti – *Volunteers' Representative*

Marina Mamo – *Member*

Karl Coleiro – *Member – (resigned)*



ANNEX 1

Financial Report

This report will be presented shortly.

Service for families March 08 - February 09

	Referred	Matched	Not accepted*	Service Refused**	Awaiting Service	Total received service during period	Active as at end of Feb 09	Terminated during period
Families	19	9	2	2	6	18	12	6
Children	42	17	3	4	18	44	34	10

* not accepted by Home-Start because of criteria
 ** families refused service after initial contact with Organiser

Localities

	Referred	Received Service (Mar 08-Feb 09)
Cospicua	5	6
Senglea	1	1
Vittoriosa	0	1
Fgura	1	0
Zabbar	4	3
Zejtun	1	2
Other	7	5

Number of Volunteers

	Active	Inactive	Irregular service	Awaiting match	Terminated
Family visiting volunteers	6	3	3	2	5
Administrative help	1	/	/	/	/
Help in keeping accounts	1	/	/	/	/
Management Committee	2	/	/	/	1

ANNEX 3

Targets for 2009

Home-Start Malta is committed on working on the implementation of the following:

Families

Constantly seeking means to reach out to more families to provide a service for all those who request it;

Providing educational and recreational for parents and children (e.g. parental skills training, budgeting skills etc...)

Volunteers

Increasing opportunities for personal and professional development to render a better service to the Home-Start families;

Providing opportunities for interaction between volunteers and the management committee to ensure better communication and support;

Appraisals for the volunteers

Training for the Management Committee to improve output;

Finance

Securing further funds from the main sponsors

Exploring funding for other sources for planned projects

Revising any expenditure to ensure efficiency

The Service

Upgrading the office to make it more user friendly;

Strengthening administrative support to relieve the Organiser to be able to focus better on the actual service provision;

Home-start International

Constant contact and support from Home-Start International and other Home-Start schemes worldwide;

Nominating a representative on the Management Committee of Home-Start International.