

Editorial - Talking Point

**“I need to change myself
before I can become a true peer
educator.”**

**“I have decided to stop fooling
around with girlfriends”**

**“You must respect other people
and change yourself before you
try to change them”**

Hearing peer educators saying words like these really excites us at GOLD. Not only do these Fikelela peer educators understand the heart of peer education, but their words echo a challenge to us all to live humbly with integrity. When the young people you're working with challenge you to be a better person, you know you're doing something right!



Ncumisa starts a new adventure

Someone who is an excellent example of living humbly with integrity is our ex training co-ordinator, Ncumisa. Ncumisa has been with GOLD from the beginning and left a Ncumisa-shaped hole at the end of March when she said goodbye to explore new opportunities.

We're going to miss Ncum's wicked sense of humour, uncompromising honesty and clarity of vision. And we know we're not alone. Many of you have said how sad you are to say goodbye

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to our bubbly training guru. It was a testimony to how much Ncumisa's warm personality and caring was appreciated when Charmaine and Eric from Ukuthasa drove all the way from Somerset West to Rondebosch to say goodbye on her last day at GOLD.

**We're all going to miss you Ncum
and look forward to hearing all
about your quirky adventures!**

In her own words ...

We asked Ncumisa, what had been the highlights of her time at GOLD.

“I’ve loved interacting with and getting to know the facilitators. They have always been so nice and friendly and have made me feel like I’ve been doing something significant. I’ve learned so much.”

“Interacting with the teenagers when doing assessments was also great. And I’ve been around to see past peer educators becoming facilitators – long may it last!”

“Working with the people in this office has been a privilege. There is a level of personal caring that makes a big difference.”

“Having my own facilitation skills questioned by facilitators who had gone through the basic facilitation skills training was amazing. They were like, ‘Hey, where is your transition statement!’”

“At the end of one facilitator training, Sibusiso from Masoyi became a GOLD praise singer. The spontaneous appreciation was really encouraging.”

Training Team Update

Roz and Gerald are going to miss having Ncum in their team especially. They are both having to dig deep to be able to continue in the tradition of her legendary organizational skills, but say they are up to the challenge.

In January, Roz returned from a holiday in India to go straight into Track 1 training in Cape Town. She was excited by the talent and enthusiasm she saw and wishes all the new facilitators the best of

luck for 2007 and hopes they integrate well into their teams.

WISE WORDS FROM ROZ:

Above all, remember that in learning, everyone has a gift to bring.

Gerald enjoyed spending time with the organizations from Mpumalanga, Botswana and KZN when he delivered the counseling course *Equipped to Serve* with Gillian Frame.

Monitoring & Evaluation

January saw the much anticipated release of the reviewed, updated M&E tools. The tools are electronically linked which should make them easier to use and also provide valuable insight into the programme so we can all learn from each other.

Sharon and Monique say that their vision for GOLD M&E is to create a store of information which implementing organizations can access. Hopefully, in this way organizations can research how other organizations handled difficult issues and we can all learn from each other’s experiences.

Monique did a 3 week training tour of KZN, Botswana and Mpumalanga after the release of the tools as well as a visit to George and Knynsa. Both the tools and the training were very well received. Monique and Bulelwa were treated to a game drive by Masoyi in Mpumalanga as thanks for their efforts.

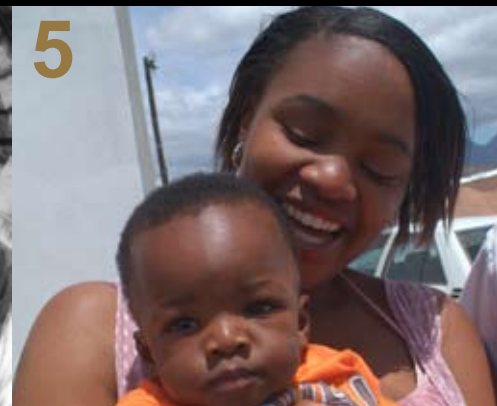
Sharon is currently collating the quarterly reports and will be sending out an overall assessment from GOLD shortly.



1. Monique and Angel take in a game drive after M&E Training in Mpumalanga. 2. Monique, Bulelwa and the George facilitators. 3. Ncumisa opens a card from the Ukuthasa team as Charmaine and Eric look on.



1. Dream Team - Yulande and the George facilitators with Sharon and Bulelwa. **2.** Angel from Masoyi and Bulelwa take time out to relax after on site training in Mpumalanga. **3.** Noah's Ark: Desire, Thobile and Debbie. **4.** Wedding Bells for Jacqui and Pat. **5.** Luleka and her bouncing boy, Dumisani



Busy Bulelwa

Bulelwa accompanied Monique on her mammoth 3 week M&E training tour to meet with programme managers and set up cluster meetings.

Bulelwa has also been very involved with Susannah and Thando meeting with implementers to formalise our collaboration with each other. We are excited to strengthen our relationship with each implementer and continue to work together with a common vision.

Curriculum Update

Version 2 of the GOLD Curriculum has been completed and is at the printers as this newsletter is being put together. Hopefully, you will receive your materials shortly. GOLD is really sorry about the delay in getting your materials to you caused by funding for the printing coming in late.

We're currently putting plans in place to support you as you adopt the new curriculum. We believe this curriculum will help the delivery of peer education be more effective and better equip peer

educators to impact their peers and communities.

The development of the new curriculum has been a huge task which Andree and Jacqui, along with a team of experts from implementers to curriculum gurus, have been working on for nearly a year. Jacqui managed to fit getting married into the tight curriculum schedule, signing off the December print proofs a week before her wedding to Patrick. The tall bride and groom enjoyed their wedding celebrations and honeymoon and are now settling down in Glencairn near Simonstown and expecting a small brown puppy soon.

Lovely Luleka

Luleka joined GOLD at the end of July 2006 and hers is the first voice you hear on the line when you phone the office. We've all benefitted from her gifted administration and although she says there have been challenges settling into her role, she is enjoying being part of the GOLD team and forming relationships with implementers. She has a particular soft spot for Alfreda from Oudtshoorn whom she says always makes you feel special even if she's calling in to be put through to someone else.

From the Frontlines

Welcome to new implementers!

The following organizations started implementing the GOLD programme in 2007. **Welcome to the GOLD family!**

Sethani is a community-based organisation working to empower the community and relieve orphan poverty in KwaNgcolosi, a semi-rural tribal area of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Noah (Nurturing Orphans of AIDS for Humanity) was conceptualised at the end of 2000 in response to the realisation that South Africa will face an 'epidemic of orphans' following the AIDS pandemic in the country. Its overall goal is to support communities to sustainably improve the quality of life of orphans and vulnerable children and their families. GOLD is partnering with NOAH in KZN.

Youth Health Organisation (YOHO) is a Botswana youth initiative that promotes sexual health among young people. It aims to contribute to the reduction of HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and teenage pregnancy amongst young people aged 14-29 in the country.

YFC Mpumalanga is a non-profit, non-denominational, Christian youth development agency directly addressing problems and needs of the young people of South Africa. GOLD has been working with YFC in George and Knysna for the past few years and in 2007 partnered with YFC in Mpumalanga.

YFC Knysna host their own Academy Awards

At the end of 2006 YFC Knysna held a graduation and certification camp at VCSV Camp Site in Groot Brak near Mossel Bay. Sixty students attended the camp which opened with a formal "Academy Awards" themed awards evening. All the candidates were given certificates and six Mentors were identified as outstanding Peer Educators for their efforts to impact their peers and transform their communities. They each received a R50 gift voucher and a trophy in the form of an academy statuette.

Knysna Traffic Chief, Richard Meyer was the guest speaker and delivered an inspiring speech. The food was superb and the young people had an opportunity to party. The rest of the camp saw lots of fun, games and celebration on the beach and after the festivities peer educators were bussed back to their relevant schools.

Well done to past track 3 mentor peer educator Redley-Anne Allie who has joined the YFC Facilitator Team, as a co-facilitator. She is a great asset to the team.

Life Choices on SABC1

At the recent Commonwealth "Good Practice Awards", GOLD (one of the 9 finalists selected out of 52 countries) walked away with first prize for supporting education in difficult circumstances. This victory was a product of the collaboration we have with grassroots implementing organizations.

Life Choices, part of the Western Cape GOLD Programme, was selected to represent all GOLD implementers on the ground for an SABC1 insert to be flighted across South Africa. The purpose of the insert was to reflect best practice youth HIV prevention programmes supporting Education. Thank you Life Choices for doing such a great job!



YFC Knysna peer educators step out in style at an Academy Award themed graduation ceremony.

Noah blasts off from the starting blocks

Even though they are brand new GOLD implementers, NOAH already has 2 successful community upliftment activities under their belt.

One event was organized to coincide with Human Rights Day and saw peer educators addressing the community on crime and gender rights. The event worked well as it called on the entire community and school. Food was provided and helped strengthen networking and relationship building.

Another "Keep our School Clean" event responded to a need within the school and engaged the entire school body. A measure of the event's success is that the bins in the schools are now being used. The principal and teachers have also commented on the improvement in environmental consciousness among learners.

Fikelela Camp Fun

Fikelela has been partnering with GOLD to pilot GOLD peer education methodology in a church youth group setting. In January they ran three camps for a total of 26 churches, to train peer educators and facilitators. Here are some of the things the peer educators said:

"If you don't know where you are going, you will go nowhere."

"I must change before I can be a leader – live the message."

"I need to change my life because much of what I am doing is not right."

"This was a real wake up call and I just hope I will successfully implement it in my life."

"I need more self control and to be more firm and not to do things just to please others, but also to please myself."

OIL Change

Exciting new development have been taking place at OIL Reachout. The organization has said a fond farewell to Director Richard Lundie and his shoes are being filled by Shanileze Prinsloo, with Zanele Rawuza taking over as GOLD Programme Manager. The changes are in line with the organization's vision to become genuinely community based and led.

Shan says she is excited about her new role and looking forward to piloting new projects in the longer term which will support the organisation's GOLD Peer Education programme. These include an impact reading project, academic support and facilitating the Think Twice programme in primary schools.



Shanileze Prinsloo takes over the reigns at OIL.



Fikelela peer educators have fun on camp.

Ukuthasa Unleashed

Charmaine Easton of Ukuthasa says her Junior peer educators have a very good idea of the problems in their communities. Many of these peer educators come from broken or abusive homes, neighborhoods where drugs and alcohol are abused and communities where teen pregnancy is the norm. The Juniors are still busy processing the ideas they've looked at in their first term skills training sessions but are very keen to do community upliftment activities that will make a huge impact on their communities.

Not to be outdone by the enthusiasm of their juniors, Charmaine says that the Seniors have developed more confidence and their presentation skills are improving impressively.



Charmaine and Ukuthasa mentor peer educators discover how to role model school leaving success by exploring practical steps to success in a skills training session.

SAPSSI – Planting seeds for the future

At 8am on a bright Saturday morning recently, over 20 GOLD Peer educators from the Salvation Army Psychosocial Support Initiative's (SAPSSI) in Gaborone gathered to begin their latest community upliftment activity. They set to work clearing a patch of ground of rubble to prepare the soil for a community garden at Mogaditshane Anglican Church.

The garden project was initiated by Canadian volunteer Tara MacDonald who saw the need for further nutritional programs to meet the needs of the orphans and vulnerable children whom SAPSSI works with. The garden will not only

serve to meet the nutrition needs of the children SAPSSI reaches, but will also provide valuable life skills such as agriculture training, a sense of responsibility, ownership and pride for community members.

Fifteen year old Name Boitumelo said, "I have learned in the garden things like team spirit, socialization and hard work. I have realized that you must work hard in order to achieve your goals." Emanuel Dick expressed a similar view: "The garden is going to show the community that we – as peer educators – are hard workers and we can lift up our community. At the end of it, we can be proud of ourselves."

Tara was very proud of the hardworking peer educators who worked through the heat of the day until the job was done. Father Andrew from the Anglican Church was equally impressed, "I was so impressed with these children and their love of the community. The day was really good and I am excited to be involved in this project with them."

The next step of the project is to secure the tools, seedlings, security fencing and shade cloth needed to establish the garden. SAPSSI are very grateful to the many sponsors who have contributed to this project and proud of their peer educators.



SAPSSI peer educators start work on a community garden that will help feed orphans and vulnerable children.



SAPSSI peer educators are excited about reaching their peers and impacting their communities.

Success Stories

Behaviour change isn't easy. GOLD peer educators know that behaviour change amongst their peers starts with change in their own lives.

These stories of peer educators who have turned their lives around and are role-modelling positive behaviour change to their peers show young people living out the belief that personal transformation leads to group transformation leads to community transformation.

Names of peer educators have been changed for the sake of privacy.

George is an 18 year old who has been a peer educator for 2 years. George repeated his grades four times during primary school, often missing classes and smoking a lot of dagga.

After 2 years on the GOLD Peer Education programme, George is reporting a 90% school attendance rate and is proud to have quit marijuana and cigarettes. He is still struggling to improve his academic performance, but has been playing a leading role in the community garden that the group has undertaken as their community project. He hopes to take advantage of the government's young farmers grant and engage in vegetable farming.

Nana is a 15 year senior peer educator who was suffering from low self-esteem and struggling to interact with other learners when she joined the program.

After a lot of input from her facilitator and going through the skills training sessions, Nana is now one of the most outspoken members of the group. She has been spearheading talk groups where peer educators discuss issues and share information around HIV/AIDS and other youth issues with other learners in her school. She now plans to become a psychologist and wants to host her own talk show one day.

Etienne is a Senior Peer Educator whose life has been turned around by peer education and joining the SEA Cadets. Many of Etienne's friends drink alcohol regularly which often leads to violence and even sleeping around. He suspects two of his friends are HIV positive. There came a point where Etienne realized he needed to change his lifestyle if he didn't want to end up dead or in jail.

He started by joining the SEA Cadets, who encouraged positive behaviour and community involvement. This led him to inquire about The GOLD Peer Education Program. Now Etienne says "Not only has my life changed but I can share my past experiences with others and put them on the right track." His GOLD Facilitator, contact teacher and principal agree that a marked transformation has occurred in this young man's life over the past two years. Etienne has led talk groups where peer educators discuss issues and share information around HIV/AIDS and other youth issues with other learners around the topics of "Alcohol Abuse", "Should one wait to have sex before marriage" and "Why Peer pressure is Dangerous". He hopes to join the Navy, in communications on the permanent Force when he finishes school.

Thandi is a peer educator in KZN where many of her peers are orphans. Orphans are exempt from paying school fees, but they have to prove their orphan status by providing a lot of documentation. Many of the orphans leave school as it is so difficult to get all the documentation Thandi went around to all her orphaned peers to help them gather the documentation they needed to become exempt from paying school fees. Some of these children had already dropped out of school. As a result of her efforts to help her peers, her orphaned peers are back at school.

Diary 2007

April

Health Awareness Month

- 7 World Health Day
- **20 Peer Educator Forum**
- **20 Community Development Training (CT)**
- 25 Africa Malaria Day
- 27 Freedom Day

May

Anti Tobacco Campaign Month - CANSA

- 1 Workers Day
- 8 World Red Cross Day
- 10 World Move for Health Day
- 12 International Nurses Day
- 21 Candlelight Memorial Day
- **22-25 Equipped to Serve Counselling Training (CT)**
- **29 May - 1 June Equipped to Serve Counselling Training (CT)**
- 29- 3/06 Child Protection Week
- 28 International Day of Action for Women's Health
- 31 World No Tobacco Day

June

National Youth Month

- 1 Children's Day
- 1 International Day of Innocent Children - Victims of Aggression
- 5 World Environment Day
- **5-7 Camp Training (CT)**
- **11-13 Camp Training (CT)**
- 16 Youth Day
- 19-26 SANCA Drug Awareness Week
- **25-27 Camp Training (JHB)**
- **28 Community Development Training (JHB)**
- **29 Boundaries Training (JHB)**
- 26 International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking

What peer education means to you ...

"Peer education is about making a difference in young people's lives. It's about peer educators influencing their peers. A peer opened up about being raped to one of our peer educators during a strat chat. The peer educator referred the girl for help and the girl later shared with the whole peer educator group about her experience. As a result of this, the group advocated for the rapist to be arrested and he was."

Kaydo Ntebe

**Peer Education Programme Co-ordinator
MAfrika Tikkun**

"To me peer education is about influencing peers in the right direction towards behaviour change."

Lindeka Nyathela

**Peer Education Programme Co-ordinator
PPASA**

"Peer education is an effective way of changing youth behaviour and we have seen it bare amazing fruit in our 2 and a half years of doing peer education with youth. Peer educators have influenced their peers towards positive behaviour. We've seen things like young people coming off drugs and promiscuous lifestyles changed."

Charmaine Etson

**Peer Education Programme Manager
Ukuthasa**



1. Charmaine and the Ukuthasa Facilitator Team. 2. SAPSSI peer educators hard at work during skills training.