

# Editorial - Talking Point

I really love putting this newsletter together. In the middle of year-end business, it is wonderful to put time aside to read your stories and browse through the photos you send in. The pictures of peer educators and facilitators at trainings, badging ceremonies and community events makes me so proud to be part of a collaborative programme that is reaching young people in such a vibrant way in so many parts of South Africa and Botswana.



Community Care Project camp rowing fever in KZN

Seeing how you, our implementing organisations, are investing in young people in your communities is really humbling and makes everything we do at GOLD worthwhile. When Monique is at her desk at 6am trying to make the tools user-friendly, or Gerald is missing his wife and baby daughter when on a training trip, it is YOU and the work you are doing that helps keep us going. When we spend time with you during training, focus groups or as part of your community events – that one-on-one contact with you is what energises us and makes us excited and hopeful about the future.

2006 has been a year of learning and growth for GoLD. We have been working very hard to make the programme the best it can be. We've been looking at research around effective HIV prevention strategies, what came out of Toronto and most importantly trying to listen to you, our implementers and responding to what you're telling us from your experience. Through task teams, focus groups, informal conversations, cluster meetings, PEF forums and visits; we have been deeply impressed by your wealth of wisdom and knowledge and have used what we have learned from you to enrich the GOLD programme so that it can effectively impact even more young people.

**Something that we heard loud and clear was that not having clearly defined roles and responsibilities can be very frustrating.**

In response to this, we initiated a process of formalising our collaboration relationships and arriving at a Collaboration Agreement that clearly lays out the nature of the relationship between GOLD and implementing organizations. We are looking forward to having a more structured relationship with you, our implementers, going forward and the increased confidence and trust this relationship clarity will give us all. In future you will not be the only ones putting together quarterly reports to send to us to let us know how things are going with your implementation of GOLD peer education, but we at GOLD will also be sending you quarterly reports to let you know in depth what has been happening at GOLD Peer Education Development Agency!

## **GOLD wins First Prize at Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards!**

After a year of hard work from everyone involved in the GOLD Programme, it was wonderful for GOLD Peer Education to be awarded first prize at the Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards. The award was given to GOLD under the action area of: "helping education in difficult circumstances". The awards, were the culmination of the 16th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (16CCEM) which was held in Cape Town, from 11-14 December 2006. The conference was chaired by the Hon Naledi Pandor, MP, Minister of Education, and opened by the Hon Trevor Manuel, MP, Minister of Finance. Delegations from 36 countries, of which 29 were led by Ministers, met to reflect on the theme 'Access to Quality Education: for the Good of All'.

Minister Naledi Pandor, summarised the essence of the meeting as follows: "Our hope for this Conference is that it should move us beyond talkshop towards a process that concretely develops strategies for promoting and monitoring, and where necessary, supporting progress."

Professor Mahmood Mamdani, the Keynote Speaker, highlighted the link between general and higher education. He emphasised that **"If your object is to transform general education, you have to begin with higher education. For higher education is the strategic heart of education; it's where choices are developed."**

Professor Mamdani's comment speaks to the heart of GOLD which aims to equip young people to have the confidence and knowledge to make choices that promote their health and well being and that of their communities.

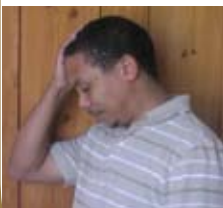
It is an enormous honour that GOLD has received this award and we share the credit with you. We'd especially like to thank YMCA Junior Peer Educator Frans Jordaan from the Cape Flats for doing us proud during the conference. He was chosen from a number of candidates nominated by various GOLD implementing organisations in the Western Cape after an intensive selection process. Frans attended the conference with Susannah and co-presented on GOLD Peer Education to a panel of judges made up of ministers of education from various commonwealth countries. At one point during the conference he was even explaining to Naledi Pandor what he thought needed to change in education in South Africa. Talk about advocacy going straight to the TOP! Well done Frans and well done to all of you for being part of the GOLD family who is being committed to seeing young people becoming leaders of character and transforming their communities.

Jacqui and The GOLD Team



Frans and Susannah with the Commonwealth Education Good Practice Award

**The GOLD Team  
hopes you have a  
wonderful Festive  
Season and well  
deserved rest !  
We look forward to a  
fruitful 2007 together.**



**The GOLD Team.**

**MAIN PICTURE - clockwise from top left: Monique Thornley, Sharon Rumble, Thando Mniki, Duncan Lamb, Scott Turner, Susannah Farr, Roz Pillay, Ncumisa Ncgaweni, Andree Gacion**

**INSETS - clockwise from top left: Bulelwa Ndibongo, Gerald Petersen, Luleka Domo, Jacqui Zurcher**

# From the Frontlines



Nhlanhla Ngubane, Slindelo MMkhize, Nkululeko Shezi and Mocketso Ntamane at the CCP camp. Mocketso and his 14 year old cousin are orphans who lived with their grandmother until she passed away in May 2006. Now they are living with their young aunt. The GOLD Team went to the funeral with all the PEs from Mocketso's school to support Mocketso.

## Creating caring communities in KZN

Mthokozisi Mvalelwa, one of our peer educators from Kwapata high school is an amazing orator and Zulu praise poet. Through GOLD training, especially in the area of community development, one day he was touched by the story of a young 22 year old woman who lives with her 6 siblings ages between 4-16. He rang our office and requested us to come and see for ourselves the state in which these children live. I went with our facilitators to see the children and to hear their story.

We discovered that these kids lost their father do to HIV/AIDS. The children and their mother were chased away by their community because everyone thought these children would infect their children with the disease. The mother who is unemployed, lives with a distant relative, while her 22 year old daughter lives with the younger children: 3 boys, 3 girl. They live in a rented room and don't know where their next meal or rental money will come from.

We could not hold back our tears as this young, pretty matriculant, who pulled out of her IT training due to poverty, narrated her story. Sadly, in spite of the fact that her father passed away due to the disease, her neighbours who happen to be sex workers were advising her to come with them and sell her body in order to raise money to look after her siblings. Certainly we could understand why Mthokozisi could not rest until we got to see and



SAPSSI peer educators say cheese!

assess the situation.

We decided the situation was a crisis that needed immediate intervention. As CCP, we organized some food, clothes and rental money. We are visiting these children regularly. We are praying that either the mother or her older daughter gets a job and that the rest of the children find places in schools for next year.

We are really proud of our peer educators and the way they are not only accepting the GOLD training, but are beginning to implement what they are learning.

The CCP Team

## SAPSSI – Growing in confidence in Botswana

“GOLD has increased by self belief” Rethabile from Ledumaduane

At their graduation ceremony, five peer educators gave testimonies about the impact the programme has had on them. Most of them confessed that they were initially a bit skeptical of the programme, but got to learn about their strengths and how to channel their negatives into positive energy. They mentioned activities like the GOLD mirror, doing their life plans and the Sex, love and reasons session as their favourites. They felt the programme has initiated a sense of visionary thinking in them.

The SAPSSI Team.

## A DELIGHTFUL MEMORY – Institute for Social Concerns

On the 1st of December ISC (Institute for Social Concerns) planned an outreach with their Facilitators and some of the Peer Educators in an underprivileged school in Faure. Three of the schools, Gordon High, Somerset College and Paarl Vallei, participated in collecting 150 boxed toys for the children.

The Peer Educators also decided to plan a programme for the children. This consisted of games, a band playing and some solo singing. The kids loved it and were shrieking with delight. The Peer Educators worked together as a team and handed out the toys according to age group. Some of the toys were second hand and as I was watching the procedure I noticed a little boy receiving a soft toy which was well used and with one eye dangling. I was concerned that this would upset the young boy as most of the other toys were new and well packaged. On voicing my concern to the teacher she assured me that this was possibly the only toy he would be receiving for Christmas!



We went back inside and the children sang to us and thanked us. It was so moving that most of us had tears in our eyes. My most precious memory was when I glanced over the children as they were singing to us, this particular little boy was clutching and stroking his ragged soft toy as if it was the dearest possession in his life! I realised how we take the small things in life so for granted. The Peer Educators who took part in this social event walked away changed and refreshed at having given, not only toys, but of themselves to these children.

Shane and I came to the conclusion after this, that we would like each of the schools we are involved in to adopt an underprivileged school and make it their social project for the year 2007.

Hazel Swart

## In the words of Frans Jordaan

Frans Jordaan is the 17 year old Junior Peer Educator from Cape Flats YMCA who was chosen after an intensive selection and interviewing process to accompany GoLD Executive Director, Susannah Farr to the Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers. Frans and Susannah did a presentation in front of a panel of judges made up of education ministers from various commonwealth countries as finalists in the Commonwealth Education Good Practice Awards. GOLD was awarded first prize. When asked whether he'd like to contribute something to the GoLD newsletter, Frans was thrilled. This is what he has to say about being a GOLD peer educator.

Hi, my name is Frans. I am currently a track 1 peer educator. Before I was nominated by my class to become a peer educator, I already had leadership within me, but never really knew how to use it. I used it to deprive people and was disrespectful to adults.

During my first year on the peer education programme, I have changed spiritually and educationally. I have also realized how my change has made a difference to me and to my school and community.

I want to be a politician one day to further my contribution to South Africa. If you are a leader and you know it, come and show it and use it in a positive way. That is what you do when you sign your GOLD Peer Education Programme contract.

## Masoyi Home Based Care - making a difference

"The programme enables us to address problems and it's easy for us to make our own decisions. It's an investment for GOLD to give us knowledge; they are creating the leaders of tomorrow that can be a good influence on our peers"  
Andile Dlamini (18)

Eighteen year old Andile Dhlamini attends Khanyisani Secondary School where she is a GOLD peer educator. During the week she stays with her grandmother and visits her mother, two brothers and three sisters at home on the weekends.

Andile's mother is a pastor and because they differ in beliefs, their relationship is not strong and Andile finds it difficult to stay with her. Andile moved to her grandmother's house as she also had problems communicating with and understanding her family. Andile also had friends that lived unhealthy lifestyles and influenced her negatively. She admits she struggled to stand up to peer pressure as she hadn't really thought about her beliefs and values.

Through GOLD, Andile has learned about teenage pregnancy and prevention. "I know that having a baby unprepared would destroy my chance of achieving my goals and dreams," she says. "To be successful, you must choose your values and beliefs and stick by them and not let peer pressure influence you."

The Masoyi Home BAsed Care Team

## OIL – Year in review

Track two and Track three training took place in February where we kick started the curriculum for the year and begin the year off with unity between the schools. This event also helps to build cohesion between the track two peer educators and encourage cross-cultural interaction. This was particularly good this year and a very tight group was formed within our programme, making for a very strong year.



Peer educators take a moment out of OIL Track 2 and 3 training

We have had two Lube Lounges, in May and October this year. These Lube Lounges are forums that we hold for the teens where we have invited guests, which are usually celebrities, to come and be interviewed for the evening. The teens have a chance to challenge them on their lifestyle and it is a very inspiring opportunity both for the

teens and the OIL staff. This year's themes were Careers and Young achievers respectively and our teenagers were very challenged and inspired by these evenings.

June Camp was packed full of the skills training and remained one of the highlights of the track one's year. Peer Educators in their first year, attend a three day camp which allows them to consolidate what they have learned. This really set the tone of our Track one group and has instilled and brought out incredible skills to equip them for tracks ahead.

We held a marketing event in September called the Fun Walk. This event was aimed at getting all the peer educators together in one place, with their friends and family from their communities to come and meet OIL and see what we are doing in their communities and schools. This was the first time we hosted an event such as this, and in doing so, learnt a lot and grew tremendously. We did not have the amount of teenagers we would have liked attending the event, but all in all it was a great success.

Our teens did a fantastic job of arranging community days per school, aiming at bringing about awareness on a certain topic of their choice. The community days that took place this year on the topics of teen pregnancy, drugs, self-esteem and advocating for police stations in your community, all made an enormous impact on the teens organising the events and the members of the community who attended each event.

Due to financial restrictions and booking availability this year, we were unable to have a Summer Conference, which is usually a three day camp, and therefore we organised a Graduation Ball in its place. This was a great success and the teens were enormously excited to be getting an official graduation either from the programme or into the next track.

The OIL Team



Stop and Learn - a Wagon of Hope peer educator hands out AIDS leaflets to truck drivers at the Hugenot tunnel near Paarl on World AIDS Day.



# World AIDS Day

GOLD implementers put a lot of effort into getting information about prevention out into their communities on World AIDS Day on 1 December. One of the events that was organised in which a number of implementers participated was the Vuyiseka event, organised by Leadership South.

## World AIDS Day at Vuyiseka

Leadership South organised a World AIDS Day debate and VCT event for peer educators and their friends at Vuyiseka High school in Philippi on the theme of 'STOP AIDS: KEEP THE PROMISE. Whose promise would that be then?

We decided to engage our youth with the four programme areas of the W Cape's HIV/AIDS STI and TB Strategic Plan. After all, this is where our government is putting its money and how many people even know there is a plan?

Here are the four debates and the promises we each can make as young nation builders ...

### **PRIORITY AREA 1. PREVENTION**

**DEBATE:** Shouldn't we all know our HIV status especially at this time of year – the festive season?

**PROMISE:** We can each promise to know our status and help stop the spread of HIV.

### **PRIORITY AREA 2. TREATMENT CARE AND SUPPORT**

Two critical messages for HIV, STIs and TB are to 1) Seek treatment, 2) Comply with treatment

**DEBATE:** What are the obstacles to these messages being followed? How can they be overcome? **PROMISE:** We can each promise to seek and comply with treatments and support others to do this.

### **PRIORITY AREA 3. RESEARCH MONITORING & EVALUATION**

**DEBATE:** What do we do while we wait for new treatments? How do we understand the statistics? Do percentages translate into anything meaningful to us or not? **PROMISE:** We can each promise to understand the progress of the epidemic and commit ourselves to constructive behavioural change.

### **PRIORITY AREA 4. HUMAN AND LEGAL RIGHTS**

**DEBATE:** What obstacles are in the way of human rights and how can they be overcome?

**PROMISE:** We can each promise to maintain human and legal rights and a stigma free environment.

In the context of these debates we presented a one page summary of the new W Cape HIV/AIDS STI Accelerated Prevention Strategy that was presented to us by Dr Keith Cloete (Director of HIV/AIDS STI & TB for the W. Cape) at the Provincial Service Partners Management Meeting in November.

Dr Keith Cloete, Msokoli Qotole, Patsy De Lora and Peter Fenton joined the debates and engaged with the youth. Exactly what we were craving for!

In parallel, with the debates we ran an HIV Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) clinic with nurses from Phumlani Clinic and Planned Parenthood (PPASA) and counsellors from Etafeni and Leadership South. This was the first time we had run a non-medical site VCT operation in partnership with health, the education department and GOLD implementing organisations.

We ran a 3C VCT model based on Counselling, Confidentiality and Consent with Group Pre-Test Counselling. Before clients received individual pre-test counselling a final choice to test or not is made. It is not about the numbers! We want the first counselling experience to be a formative one that sets you up for life, so that counselling can be seen as a normal part of healthy lifestyles.

Eighty two people were counseled and tested on the day. Of these, only two clients were HIV positive and one already knew their status but wanted more counselling. No names, that's confidential and there is follow up counselling for them, but we are pleased that so many young people have the courage to undertake this.

Two hundred youth and their facilitators attended the event in total. We'd especially like to thank peer educators from PPASA and Wagon of Hope and GOLD and we were sorry OIL couldn't attend because of transport problems.

GRAHAM PHIPPEN, Leadership South

# Diary 2007

## February

Reproductive Health Month  
Sun Smart Awareness Month - CANSA

### January

Sun Smart Awareness Month CANSA

- 16-18 Facilitating Track 1 (JHB)
  - 16-18 Facilitating Track 2 (CT)
  - 19 Peer Education Forum Meeting
  - 19 Self Development Facilitator Training (JHB)
  - 19 Self Development Facilitator Training (CT)
  - 26 Self Development Facilitator Training (CT)
  - 30 Jan - 1 Feb Facilitating Track 1 (CT)
- 4 World Cancer Day
  - 6-8 M&E Training (Mpumalanga)
  - 12-18 STI / Condom Week
  - 12-18 Pregnancy Awareness Week
  - 13-15 M&E Training (KZN)
  - 14 VALENTINES DAY
  - 15 Boundaries Facilitator Training (George)
  - 16 Self-Development Facilitator Training (George)
  - 20 M&E Training (KZN)
  - 23 Positive Health Facilitator Training (CT)



The ISC team of facilitators and peer educators entertains kids as part of a World AIDS Day outreach to an underprivileged school in Faure.



Peer Educators at the Club Coffee Bar badging ceremony in Oudshoorn which was attended by a Namibian official.



Peer educator enjoyed the extreme adventure activities at the Masoyi Camp



Wagon of Hope peer educators Palesa Tshali, Nomaxabiso Seyise, Verushcka Angel, Nompumelelo Vungu Vungu and Nombulelo Zenani show off their Track 3 certificates

### March

Health and Nutrition Campaign -CANSA

- 2 Positive Health Facilitator Training (CT)
- 8 International Women's Day
- 9 Positive Health Facilitator Training (CT)
- 21 Human Rights Day
- 26 Self Development Facilitator Training (JHB)
- 27-30 Equipped to Serve (JHB)
- 24 World TB Day

## Resources

- **The International AIDS Alliance website** - <http://www.aidsalliance.org>. The alliance believes that sharing knowledge, experiences and good practice is a key way to improve the effectiveness of all organisations and individuals involved in the response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. On their website, you can download Alliance publications or order a CD-ROM, containing all Alliance publications, free of charge. Their online toolkits bring together learning and resources from the Alliance and other organisations on a range of topics. Finally, the links area on this site offers information about complementary resources that are available from other organisations' websites. You can also sign to receive a regular e-bulletin to keep you informed of the work and new publications produced by the Alliance.