

# Caring Schools *Dialogue*

Clarens, Free State, 26 November 2007



| DIALOGUE |  
FOR JUSTICE



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*The text in this booklet is an edited version of the Caring Schools Dialogue, which took place on November 26 2007 at the Cranford Inn in Clarens, Free State, South Africa. Special thanks to our donor, Betterworld Fund, for making this project possible.*

# Foreword

Achmat Dangor

CEO, Nelson Mandela Foundation

*“Our children are our nation’s future. Prospects for development are seriously undermined by the kind of large scale deprivation of children that South Africa has experienced. On the other hand investing in their health, nutrition and education not only improves our children’s quality of life – the gains reverberate into the future generations.”*

*– Nelson Mandela, 1996, Launch of the National Programme of Action for Children*

The Nelson Mandela Foundation in support of the caring school model continues to support a call for concerted action to reach all children and assist them in reaching their full potential. “Putting children first” is a philosophy that can transform the way we approach human development. It will require the close collaboration of government, communities, teachers, donors, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. There is of course no “oneway” to make a child-friendly/

caring school and the approach may differ from country to country.

Through our Schools for Africa partnership with UNICEF and the Hamburg Society (Germany) we have learnt that effective schooling builds individual confidence and enhances the way children participate in the lives of their communities. Educated children are less likely to become victims of violence and abuse. They are more likely to invest in improving their community when they are grown. And the follow-on effects of even basic education quickly multiply, as children who have benefited from schooling themselves strive to secure even better opportunities for their own families.

The estimate that 20 to 30 % of children under the age of 15 will be orphaned in 11 sub-Saharan countries in 2010 is of great concern to us. It is a startling reminder for the need for greater collaboration by all concerned to assist children in reaching their full potential.

Various models of care and support have evolved over time and in different parts of the world. Fundamental to the best of these is the human rights based approach as outlined in the convention of the rights of the child. This emphasises prioritising support to children where they are, in the communities where they live. The caring schools model detailed in this publication shares that aspiration.

One of Mr Mandela’s priority interest areas has been rural education and development. To ensure that this legacy continues to receive the attention it deserves, the NMF, in partnership with government and the University of Fort Hare, created the Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development. The Institute is based in the Eastern Cape, but has a national mandate to pursue its vision of enhancing the quality of education in rural areas, thereby contributing towards sustainable rural development. It will use “caring schools” as an underpinning approach.





# Introduction

## Mothomang Diaho

Head of the Dialogue Programme, Nelson Mandela Foundation

*The Free State Department of Education (FSDoE) and the Nelson Mandela Foundation (NMF) commissioned an impact assessment of HIV/AIDS in the education sector in the Free State province in 2004.*

Following the impact assessment, both partners agreed on the need for urgent action in support of orphans and other vulnerable children in the education system.

The NMF provided seed funding and commissioned Save the Children United Kingdom (SCUK) over a period of approximately two years to develop, implement and test comprehensive support mechanisms in five clusters of schools across the province. The project was implemented within the parameters set by the department. The model of support developed by the partners places youth facilitators in schools to identify orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs).

The aim of the Caring Schools project therefore is to provide support to the school to develop as a caring school that channels sustainable physical, social and emotional care to orphans and vulnerable children. The youth facilitators are critical to this model achieving its stated objectives.

The youth facilitators were most effective in identifying learners who required support and linking their needs to the school, community support groups, and government departments such as the Department of Safety and Security, Social Development and Home Affairs. During a recent evaluation, both principals and youth facilitators rated the programme highly in terms of support to the learners.

The youth facilitators need clearly defined roles within the school, and more focused and appropriate training in order to improve their impact. It is also clear that more attention needs to be paid to support provided to youth facilitators by parents, teachers and the community.

Better communication and clearer roles need

to be developed between the youth facilitators, the principals, teachers, school governing bodies (SGBs), school management teams (SMTs), parents and communities.

Furthermore, the Free State Department of Education plays a critical role in providing continuing guidance and ensuring sustainability and solid support of the project. Implementing partners with strong capacity, such as SCUK, were critical in providing day-to-day management and monitoring of the project.

It is strongly recommended that the Department of Education provide ongoing support to such projects to ensure sustainability and policy implementation. The same goes for the Department of Social Development.

Continuing community mobilisation to support vulnerable children should be developed as part of the support provided to the efforts provided at the school.

Education is the government service that has the most sustained contact with children over about 12 years of their lives. Schools are also a sustainable community institution that can be mobilised to provide care and support to orphans and vulnerable children.

Finally, all children need to be supported to realise their full potential and the NMF believes that projects like this should be fully supported.



# Speaker's Welcome

## Mofumahadi Mathokoana Mopeli

Thabo Mofutsanyana District, Free State, South Africa

*On behalf of the Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality, I would like to heartily welcome each and every one of you. I'm told that this gathering comprises various stakeholders. And Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality is one such stakeholder.*

I want to believe that what has brought us together is, in a way, to take a cue from what the honourable former state president is doing through the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

In the main we will be dealing with children who are vulnerable for various reasons. That they are vulnerable, that they are from poor backgrounds, that they are orphaned, does not mean that the doors should be shut when they approach. They, as well, are deserving.

But coming together as we are doing today should really assist the key stakeholder, especially, which is government, to realise its goal: the betterment of the rights of all South Africans in this, our country.

We have this partnership with Save the Children. We are trying our level best – maybe what we are doing might not be enough, but if you don't indicate to us that it is not enough and you need us to do more, there's no way of knowing.

We are a very willing partner, and by the way, I'm saying this on behalf of all the local municipalities under Thabo Mofutsanyana.

We have a very lively and vibrant partnership. I'm saying we are a very willing partner. We are prepared to do more if needs be.

I wish the deliberations of today vibrancy and serious commitment. Because at some point, which might be in 20 years to come, those who are young now – the children – will be able, through technology, to access the work we're going to be doing today.

And they will start questioning issues, if our commitment does not bear fruit for them. Let's not talk a lot, let's do.



*“In the main we will be dealing with children who are vulnerable for various reasons. That they are vulnerable, that they are from poor backgrounds, that they are orphaned, does not mean that the doors should be shut when they approach. They, as well, are deserving.”*



# Participants



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# Participants



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# Proposal

## Save The Children UK's proposal to the Nelson Mandela Foundation

*In August 2005, Save the Children UK submitted its Caring Schools proposal to the Nelson Mandela Foundation. In summary, it said:*

The rapid rise of one of the largest HIV and AIDS epidemics in the world has been superimposed upon an already dire situation for children in South Africa. Poverty, abuse, neglect, separation from parents, domestic violence, poor access to services as well as alcohol and substance abuse, are all factors that contribute to the vulnerability of children. The impact is multi-dimensional and complex.

*13% of South African children aged 2-14 years have already lost one or both parents.*

Education is the government service that has the most sustained contact with the greatest number of children over about 12 years of their lives. Schools are also a sustainable community institution that can be mobilised to support children. Further, the Department of Education (DoE) has issued a number of policy statements and guidelines that encourage schools to develop a culture of caring. The Free State Department of Education (FSDoE) has already instituted practices of caring within the Life Skills Programme and a number of schools have initiated programmes to support orphaned learners.

*The total number of children who will be orphans could reach 5.7 million by 2015.*

Save the Children UK (SCUK) has been working in Thabo Mofutsanyana District in collaboration with the District AIDS Council to support community care for vulnerable children. SCUK has supported four of the five municipalities to establish Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) task teams of the Local AIDS Councils to co-ordinate the response to OVCs and also to develop child care forums at ward level to identify vulnerable children and refer them to government and community resources. SCUK has also supported some programmes of the DoE and is embarking on an expanded programme of support. SCUK is facilitating the establishment of the national Caring Schools Network (CASNET) to bring together as many stakeholders as possible who are involved in supporting schools to develop a culture of care. CASNET aims to generate knowledge and catalyse action for the support of OVCs through schools.

*Children affected by HIV and AIDS have to live with illness, deprivation, uncertainty and fear.*

This programme will involve SCUK and four partner NGOs, each of which will work with five schools within one district. The schools include all the schools in the Free State whose establishment was supported by the Nelson Mandela Foundation. The additional schools have been identified by the DoE. The programme will be based within the Life Skills Programme of the DoE. Together the five NGOs, 25 schools and the DoE will seek to develop a model of sustainable care

for OVCs. As the impact of HIV and AIDS is multidimensional, the response must be multisectoral. The programme will therefore also involve all other government departments as well as the development of community networks of support with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs) and business as critical partners.

## *School is still an oasis of normalcy for many South African children.*

The NGOs will facilitate a process of dialogue within each school community to develop the concept of a culture of care for each school. This dialogue will then proceed to the development of a plan of action. The plan will build on existing programmes and strengths within the school community, make use of existing resources and mobilise additional resources from government and non-governmental sources to address priority issues. It is anticipated that priority issues will include the provision of food and psychosocial support. Other issues that are expected to be addressed are the physical environs of the school, skills development for children, ensuring that children access other government services and the development of linkages between the school and other community support mechanisms for vulnerable children. The plan will also include indicators of success and impact and a plan for the collection of baseline and monitoring information.

## *Only 40% of South Africa's children are raised with both parents present and involved in their lives and 20% grow up without either parent.*

Each school will have a female and a male youth worker attached to the programme to support its implementation. Training of the youth workers and the development of a training curriculum for youth workers are integral

components of the overall programme. Every school will also establish a children's feedback group to ensure that children participate in planning, implementing and monitoring programmes to provide care within the school. The partner NGOs will manage the youth workers and support the schools. At the end of the first year each school community will review its plan of action and prepare a plan for the second year. SCUK with the Nelson Mandela Foundation (NMF) and DoE will arrange for a mid-term review and final evaluation of the programme.

## *76% of South Africa's 19 million children live in poverty.*

In July 2002 the total enrolment in schools in South Africa was over 13 million, of whom 757 000 were in the Free State. Schools in the Free State reported a total of 21 219 orphaned learners who were enrolled in them in 2003. This number has risen to 42 562 in 2005.

## *The impact on children has been largely invisible for too long but we can no longer ignore the enormous numbers.*

The programme seeks to support schools to develop a culture of care for vulnerable children. This includes but is not limited to children who are living with and are affected by HIV and AIDS. The programme recognises that other factors such as poverty, abuse, domestic violence, alcohol and substance abuse and separation of children from their parents contribute to vulnerability. The programme will, therefore, seek to work with school communities, including children, to define vulnerability in their local contexts and to develop appropriate responses to support those that are vulnerable irrespective of the underlying causes. The programme will seek to avoid stigmatising children.

*Sources for pullquotes: Save the Children UK, Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA), Johnson, LF and Dorrington, RE 2002, the Demographic and Epidemiological Impact of HIV/AIDS Treatment and Prevention Programmes: An Evaluation Based on the ASSA2000 Model, Presented at the 2002 Demographic Association of Southern Africa Conference*



# Report

## Baseline Report 2006

*A baseline report on the support and care of OVCs in Free State schools, funded by the Nelson Mandela Foundation, was compiled by Professor JP Strauss of the Research Institute for Education Planning at the University of the Free State.*

The report was based on a survey of 25 schools, five in each of the five school districts in the province: Fezile Dabi, Lejweleputswa, Motheo, Thabo Mofutsanyana and Xhariep.



District	School Name
Xhariep	Holpan P/S
	Lerethlabetse P/S
	Panorama C/S
	Phambili P/S
	Reikaeletse S/S
Motheo	Morago P/S
	Sediti S/S
	Tala P/S
	Tlhabaki I/S
	Tsimatsima P/S
Lejweleputswa	Ikgwantlille P/S
	Letsibolo P/S
	Magakajane P/S
	Rainbow S/S
	Tataiso P/S
Thabo Mofutsanyana	Katleho P/S
	Maanankoe S/S
	Phofung S/S
	Sekgompepe P/S
	Thibella PF/S
Fezile Dabi	Credo P/S
	Dibaseholo P/S
	Ipatleleng P/S
	Rebatla Thuto S/S
	Tsatsi P/S

Data was collected in April and May 2006. Its purpose was to find out how these schools provide care and support to OVCs.

Sixty percent of the schools surveyed were

primary schools. Sixty percent charged an annual school fee of less than R50. On average, the rate of school fees paid was between 35% and 40%. Sixty percent of schools received no compensation from the provincial department of education for unpaid fees.

On the subject of safety at school, only 28% of the schools surveyed controlled access to the school grounds. Schools with uncontrolled access were sometimes next to busy roads, or could not keep animals out of vegetable gardens.

Fifty-six percent of the schools had a library. A higher percentage had a TV (76%) and a VCR (68%). This equipment was not always used for learning. Seventy-two percent of schools did not have a computer that could be used for learning. The availability of school furniture was rated as poor or very poor by 20%, as average by 36% and good by 32% of the respondents.

Water availability was rated as good by 50% of the respondents. Forty percent rated toilet cleanliness as average. More than half rated the warmth and ventilation of school buildings as poor or very poor.

Nutrition programmes were run at 88% of the schools, most of them feeding children daily. Just over half the schools distributed food parcels to learners. Almost a quarter of the



girl from returned to school after her pregnancy. About the same proportion of schools were concerned about substance abuse.

The support given to neglected learners in more than half of the schools entailed home visits from members of the school governing body or attention from the Department of Social Development. Fewer

schools rated the nutrition programme as poor or very poor.

Regarding assistance for learners infected or affected by HIV, no schools received funding from the Department of Education for this purpose. But 40% of schools received some kind of non-financial support from NGOs.

More than 80% of schools had a School-Based Support Team (SBST). Only one-third of the schools had youth groups.

All but one of the schools had an HIV/AIDS policy and 64% of these policies covered care for infected or affected learners.

Concerning information that could help schools take care of OVCs, only one school did not have an up-to-date attendance register but only 20% had an updated list of learners who were critically ill. More than half the schools had updated lists of learners who lived with their relatives and about the same percentage had updated lists of learners who did not stay with their parents or guardians. More than 80% of the schools indicated that they had an updated list of learners who needed help because they had lost their parents. More than half the schools also knew which learners were absent very often and which had dropped out of school in the past year. Fewer schools, however, followed up on why these learners had dropped out.

Only a quarter of the schools in the survey had a policy on the handling of abused and neglected learners. All had a group of educators who supported vulnerable learners.

Only 20% of schools did not have an HIV awareness programme.

More than a third of the schools indicated that teenage pregnancy was an issue. None barred a

than a third of the schools had a counsellor to attend to such matters. In most cases, learners who had been absent were able to stay after school and catch up with help from educators. Sometimes a peer group in the class helped the learners.

Children with learning barriers (physical or other) were assisted in more than 50% of the schools through extra help from teachers or referral to psychologists.

Regarding the school as a site for other services, less than half of the schools had links with the Department of Agriculture but more than half had links with a social worker, a clinic, the police, the Department of Home Affairs and with Local Government. Most schools had tried to help learners get birth certificates, identity



documents and child support grants.

Seventy-six percent of schools involved volunteers or CBOs in their programmes. These activities ranged from cleaning the school to providing AIDS awareness.

# A View From

## Save The Children UK

The project came about when the Nelson Mandela Foundation commissioned research and realised that a lot more could be done through schools to support vulnerable children.

In partnership with the Department of Education, specifically the Life Skills section here in the Free State, they then came up with this Caring Schools Project. Save the Children UK was commissioned to be the lead of five non-governmental organisations working together on it.

*Save the Children worked in Thabo Mofutsanyana district, Child Welfare in Sasolburg, Matabeng Consortium in Lejweleputswa, Sacred Heart in Xhariep and World Vision in Motheo. We've come together quarterly this year to look at what this programme has done and how it's been run.*

### The issues in schools

In some communities, children are on their own most of the time because adults work elsewhere. At Koppies, there's a sex house just across the road from the school, and that's where many of the girls are to be found.

Peer pressure is another issue. Children as young as nine or ten are under pressure to join groups.

The druglords are now after the youth facilitators, because we are trying to stop children from buying drugs. Youth facilitators kept an eye out around the toilets at one school and last week we found 23 boys up in the ceiling smoking marijuana.

At this school there are at least 30 children who are HIV-positive. We're talking about a primary school, Grade R to

Grade 6. They're being monitored by the clinic and some are on anti-retrovirals.

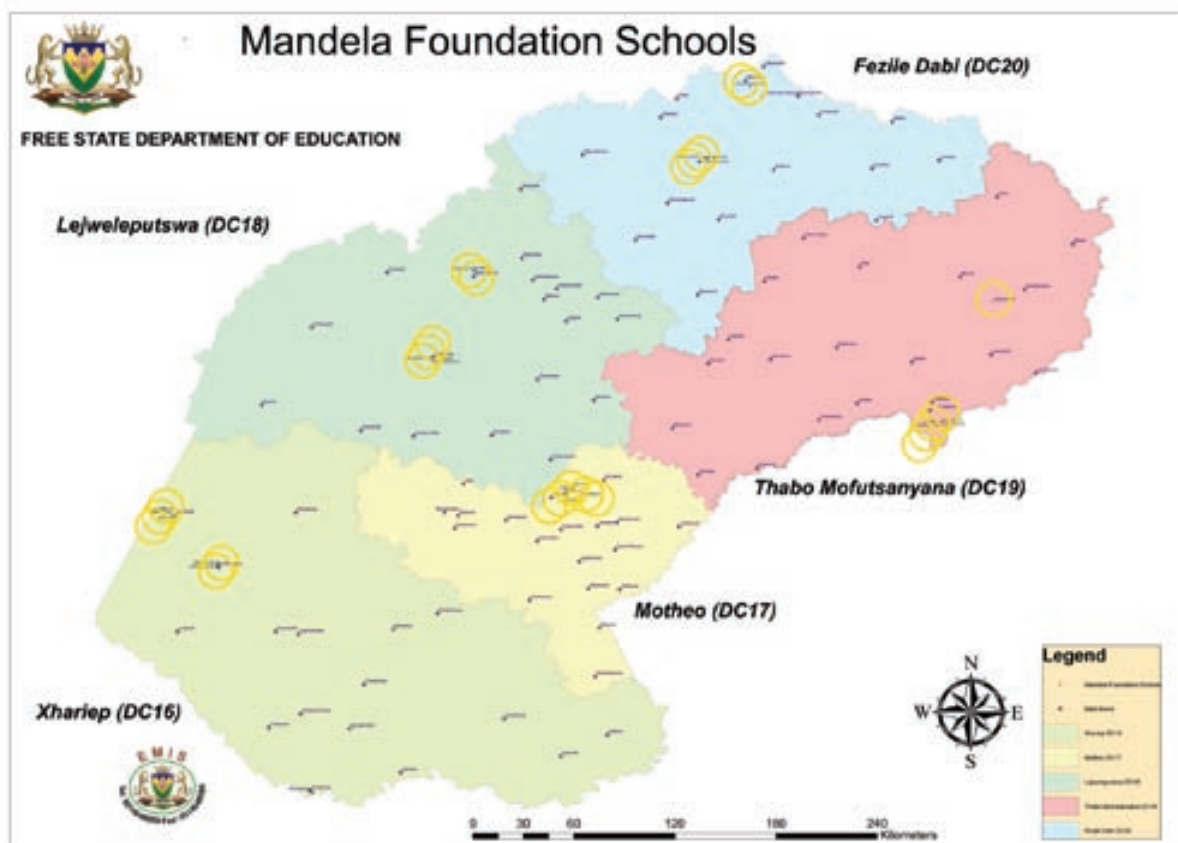
The members of our children's group report to us when there's a child who hasn't come to school. I followed up and visited their homes to find out why. The parents told me the children were sick, but they were playing in the street. And I think the problem is really they didn't have fuel to heat the water so that the children could bath before they came to school.

Children eat at school. But what about the weekends? Sometimes there is not enough fuel to cook with either.

We identified 596 children in one school, and in the community around it, who don't have birth certificates. Home Affairs came on a Saturday, and about four or five months since then, we've been able to get 183 birth certificates. You do the maths: 413 don't have birth certificates yet.

Key Components of a Caring School	
1. Physical	A school that is attractive, clean and hygienic, that appeals to its children and educators and provides for the nutritional needs of its vulnerable children through food gardens and food preparation.
2. Social & emotional	That would provide psycho-social support for caregivers, educators, grandmothers and siblings to enable them to cope with the additional burden of care and support.
3. Support development of skills for children	A school that would provide children with skills for food production, knitting & sewing, pottery, budgeting and financial management, entrepreneurship and parenting.
4. School as a centre for delivery of other services to children	Making the schools available for other government services such as Home Affairs for citizenship documentation, Health for immunisations and the Police Service for child protection services.
5. School linking with community programmes for children	Children being linked with existing community initiatives such as child care forums, home-based care groups, multi-purpose community centres, FBOs/CBOs and other forums.





*The yellow circles indicate school clusters involved in the Caring Schools project.*

These are just a sample of some of the things I've heard over the last couple of years. And just a range of all the different kinds of issues and vulnerabilities that confront our children and our communities. They don't come from any particular area, they're across the board.

The Caring Schools programme was implemented in 25 schools, five in each of the five districts (see table on page 14).

If you want to know why we should work with schools, you need to consider how many there are in the Free State. There is absolutely no other service that has that kind of reach across this province.

But we've got a long way to go. That was 25 schools out of the total. And that's why we're here today. As many schools as there are here in the Free State (1 748), there are many, many times more than that across the rest of the country (about 28 000).

#### **The design:**

This programme had five major components to it.

The first one was physical. A school should be a place which is attractive, which is appealing, which is a happy place for educators and children, where they want to be. Where you

don't want to leave – it's a second home. Which is safe, and where the physical needs of children are met: for food, for clothing ... and in the Free State clothing is not a luxury. Shoes in the wintertime here are an absolute necessity – it snows, it's cold. Clothing banks have been set up in many of the schools.

Second was meeting the social and emotional needs of children. And providing activities and different things that they can be involved in. Where we find out why they haven't come to school, and follow up and see if we can do anything about it.

We designed the programme with the needs of educators in mind too, but I must say we didn't do very much about that. I think it's a gap.

The third area was the development of skills for children. Food production, budgeting, entrepreneurship, caring for ill caregivers. Again that's an area that I don't think we concentrated on enough. We need to do much more on it.

Fourth, the school as a centre for delivery of other services. I must say, in this regard Home Affairs has been fantastic. Agriculture in some districts was really good, Social Development in some areas was very good. The police and the Health Department were involved too.

The fifth component was to link schools with

Schools in the Free State		
District	Supporting NGO	Schools
Fezile Dabi	Moqhaka Aids Consortium Child Welfare	Dibaseholo Primary, Koppies Rebatla Thutho Secondary, Koppies Ipatleheng Primary, Koppies Credo Primary, Sasolburg Tsatsi Primary, Sasolburg
Lejweleputswa	Matjhabeng Aids Consortium	Rainbow Secondary, Bultfontein Magakajane Primary, Bultfontein Ikgwantelle Primary, Bultfontein Tataiso Primary, Wesselsbron Letsibolo Primary, Wesselsbron
Motheo	World Vision International	Sediti Secondary, Morakge Tala Primary, Morakge Thlabaki Intermediate, Sediba Morago Primary, Morakge Tsimatsima Primary, Middeldeel
Xhariep	Sacred Heart	Phambili Primary, Jacobsdal Holpan Primary, Jacobsdal Panorama Primary, Jacobsdal Lerethlabetse Primary, Koffiefontein Rekaeletse Secondary, Koffiefontein
Thabo Mofutsanyana	Save The Children UK	Maanankoe Secondary, Thibela Thibela Primary, Thibela Katleho Primary, Thibela Sekgompepe Primary, Thibela Phofung Secondary

communities. I think probably our best efforts in that regard were with faith-based organisations around the schools. That has gone quite well.

#### Youth facilitators:

These are young people from the community who get to know the children. They are “*ousi*” and “*abuti*” (sister and brother) to the children. *The children are free with them, they easily come to them and talk to them about their problems. The facilitators then refer these children to whoever can help them. They also organise activities for children to take part in.* They mobilise resources and visit children’s homes, which has been crucial. It’s really helped to develop a relationship between the school and the home environment.

#### Evaluation of the project:

Without any doubt, across the board, the youth facilitators have added incredible value to the programme. There’s been improved attendance in schools, lower dropouts, improved achievement.

Of the 25 schools, 21 now have a vegetable garden. In some cases these

were new and others have been improved. Nineteen have a feeding programme. Secondary schools do not have a government feeding programme, and this is one of our biggest stumbling blocks. Seventeen schools are distributing food parcels and have been much better linked with the Department of Social Development on that.

The grounds of the schools have improved and this has coincided with the province’s competition for school beautification. Three out of the 25 schools have won one of the prizes, and it’s R100 000 so it’s worth winning.

Extracurricular activities have been introduced or strengthened. Children have opened up and they speak more

openly and more confidently.

All of the schools have made contact with the Department of Home Affairs. Many of the schools have introduced clothing banks. And what we found is that the programme gave the site-based support teams a focus. Often you have committees which don’t function as effectively as they could. This gave them something to coalesce around. Children were being referred to them.

*Lynette Mudekanye, Senior Programmes Advisor, Save the Children UK*



# Case Study

## Case study 1: Youth facilitator

*I just want to elaborate on what our roles as the facilitators are in the schools. We work closely with the site-based support team (SBST) and the principal. We report matters from inside the school premises to the SBST, and the SBST co-ordinator will take the matter from there to the principal and to the school governing body (SGB). As the facilitators, we have so much work to do in this school.*

We started working there in April last year, but already we have so many cases. The educators have a big workload, so they can't afford to help those children after hours. Most of the work is done by the youth facilitators.

And let me share this with you. Last year in November, one of our learners was raped. She was 12 years old. And she was afraid to talk to the educator. She came straight to me and asked for help. And then she said I must not tell anyone what had happened. But I managed to convince her to tell the co-ordinator of the SBST and she agreed. We went together to the co-ordinator and the co-ordinator took the matter to the relevant department. And then we took the child to the clinic. When they checked her, they found out that this was not the first time she had been raped. That's why we're saying that sometimes educators are not aware of the things that are happening in the child's life. That's where we intervene.

You might see a child who comes to school dirty every day. The educator will shout at the child. But he or she doesn't know the reason behind that dirtiness. And then the facilitators do a home visit, and find some very serious problems. The parents don't have even one single document. They don't have an ID, they don't have anything. And when you go to Home Affairs with that situation they can't help you because they want the document of the parent before helping the child.

Now, what I'm trying to say is this. This facilitators are very, very important in these schools. We collect data at the beginning of every year, and we check what causes the



vulnerability of each learner in the school. We found that most of them didn't have birth certificates, so they couldn't get the government grant. We tried our best to help them get their birth certificates and IDs.

When we signed the contract as volunteers, it was said that we must work 20 hours per week. It's not enough. Because we are doing extramural activities with children, we are doing the Life Skills programme with them, we have the peer groups with them, we've got the Soul Buddyz with them. And 20 hours is not enough time for all these things.

At that school where I am now, the choir and the soccer team coach are very good. In the soccer teams that will represent Free State from 1-8 December in Durban, we've got two girls and one boy from our school. We have table tennis, traditional dances, all those things. But the problem is our school is so small, we can't establish a rugby team!

*Molefe Velembo, youth facilitator,  
Letsidolo Primary School,  
Wesselsbron, Free State*



# Case Study

## Case study 2: Youth facilitator

*As my colleague said, there's so much to do at this school, we are doing our best to cover all the areas. We have done a lot since our arrival there in September 2006.*

This year, about 150 orphaned learners got school shoes from the Department of Education, and there are about 150 food parcels from the Department of Social Development every two months. And one of our learners was adopted by the executive mayor of the local municipality.

We also network with local business. Let me give you an example. We have about 28 children who are from child-headed households. When we were doing home visits early this year, we discovered that the house of one of these children had been burnt in December last year. It was not in good condition at all. There were no windows. The door was broken. When they slept they had to bring in the cupboard just to close the door. And after we approached the local businesses, they provided glass for the windows. They provided a two-plate stove, and also they provided the cables, the extensions. Because the electricity setup got burnt so it was very dangerous. When it rained, the roof leaked. But since we networked with local business as well as the community at large, the house is in good condition.

One of the things we do as youth facilitators is to support the establishment and functioning of what we call the children's group, which is the main group of the school. So with the help of the children's group we managed this year, from the school vegetable garden, to feed all the learners of the school.

I've realised that the impact we have on

the children is wonderful. Even during school holidays, they want to come and play with us. And they recognise you wherever you go. They will greet you wherever you go, and you can see



there is something that you are doing.

One boy, who was aged 16, was living with his grandmother. Unfortunately the grandmother couldn't take care of the boy properly, and we heard that sometimes he'd sleep under a tree. And we talked to the boy, asked him about the situation. And he told us the story, that the grandmother doesn't even care about him. She doesn't even want him in the house. So with the help of the Child Care Forum, as well as the Community Policing Forum, we managed

to take the boy from the grandmother, with of course his participation in the decision. Because you cannot just take the child. We managed to take the child to another relative, and he's doing great in school.



One boy's mum didn't care about him. His mum drinks alcohol all the time. And the boy had to take care of his younger sister, who's two years old. And the boy is only 12. So he had to take care of the baby the whole day, while his mum was out there drinking alcohol. And with the help of the local ward councillor, the help of the Child Care Forum, the help of the Community Policing Forum, we managed to talk to the mother. With the help of the SBST, the SGB, the mum is better now. She's trying to work, she's trying to find something to do, so that she can take care of the boy. And the boy is doing very well also.

And then, we have what we call homework support. Every Tuesday we meet with the children; we don't necessarily help them with their homework but we allow them to help each other. So from Grade 5 to Grade 9, the children will be helping each other, and we intervene where it's necessary.

We have the drama group, where they perform wonderful stories. I was amazed one day, when they performed a drama where there's a king with about four wives. I was amazed that children take note of these things. They also performed wonderful stories on Valentine's Day, Youth Day – they do wonders.

And when we arrived there last year, there was only one teacher who was willing to

monitor and help the three teams that the school had: soccer, netball and ladies' soccer. We helped the teacher, and I can tell you that the ladies' soccer team won the Transnet Tournament, and right now, this week, they'll

be in Vereeniging, representing the school.

So, we are doing so many things. Our traditional dancing group is doing very well. There's so much to talk about!

We took 20 children to the local clinic. These are the children who had hearing and sight problems. And they were referred to hospital, and are receiving necessary medical attention. Three of those students have epilepsy.

So we had to take them to the clinic also, to ask the clinic to make sure that those children go there on a monthly basis to receive their medication. And it's going very well.

And, speaking of the clinic, there's a case that happened at the school last year. There was a boy who couldn't speak. He was afraid, very scared. And so the teachers thought that he was mentally disturbed. They suggested that we take him to the clinic and find what actually is the problem. When we arrived there, we found that there was nothing wrong with the boy – the boy can speak properly. He's just scared. And when we asked what he was so scared about he said because he couldn't speak properly – he stutters. So he said that when he speaks, people laugh at him; that's why he decided not to speak. And when you look at his books, and the teachers tell you that this boy performs very well in tests, in the tasks given in the classroom when it comes to writing.

So there's so much that we do, and we are grateful for that. And happy that there's something that we are doing for the future generations of the world.

*Lebohang Mokoena, youth facilitator, Tebang Intermediate School, QwaQwa*

# Case Study

## Case study 3: School principal

*I am going to give you an outline or briefing about this programme at our schools. I say at our schools, not at my school, because I'm not representing Molibeli here, I'm representing Thabo Mofutsanyana district.*

Since these youth facilitators have been introduced, there's been a lot of change. They play an important role as far as psychological, physical, sexual, moral and emotional issues are concerned.



Regarding the issue of absenteeism: they keep registers. And when there is latecoming, youth facilitators visit the homes of these children. It is not easy: our communities are not the communities of the past, where we could go anywhere at night without seeing any dog that disturbed us. Without being disturbed by the tsotsis. The way it is now is because of this understanding of freedom and rights.

Now, the safety of children is also in the hands of children. Youth facilitators organise the school patrol. In a place like QwaQwa there are many roads which children must cross without any help from the traffic department. The youth facilitators play the role of the traffic department. And in Thabo Mofutsanyana we are working hand in hand with the Community Policing Forum. At the school we get them in the same room; they work together, share ideas.

Children were coming to school without anything in their stomachs. The youth

facilitators planted vegetables. We have a problem when it comes to the type of soil. But we are not folding our arms. These youth facilitators work with the children and show them what to do in order to have something in their stomachs.

Children come from different backgrounds. Some come to school without uniform and feel ashamed about it. The task of the youth facilitators is to correct their thinking. Because to perform well, the child must be psychologically and emotionally all right.

Another issue is bullying. According to the constitution of the country, every child has the right to education. We cannot tell a child he or she is too old to be at school. Bullied children need some guidance.

Another problem these youth facilitators address: children are misused by their parents. Children are looking after other children. They come late because they are looking after other children. Children have to cook. Instead of doing their homework they have to sell beer. That is one of the problems we come across. The youth facilitators try to make the parents aware that a child is a child. To become like President Mandela, a child needs to work hard.

Another issue is dagga abuse. The school premises are surrounded by shops where children can buy what you might think is a drink or a packet of food. But when you open that parcel, you will see something else. We invite the Community Policing Forum and social workers to the school. Unfortunately we don't have enough psychologists. But the youth facilitators are the psychologists at our schools.

They also have the task of supervising group work, where the children share ideas. They spend time with the children and in some ways know more about them than the educators do.

*Motlalepula Tlhanyane, principal,  
Molibeli Intermediate Phase School,  
QwaQwa*



# Recommendations

## On the youth facilitators

*The partners in the Caring Schools pilot project agreed that the youth facilitators employed were crucial to the progress made. Many schools reported that these youthful, locally based people were closer to the children and to their families. They were able to identify concerns and follow up on these, while educators did not always have time to do so.*

Selection of the youth facilitators is critical. The partners believe they should be from the school community. A minimum age or maturity level (and ways of determining this) and a maximum age should be agreed on. One of the advantages of youth is their vibrancy and energy. However, there are things that they cannot and should not be expected to do.

The partners recommend that there should be two different kinds of facilitator in the school – the caring or counselling facilitator and the energetic initiator of activities for children. They would work as a team but have some areas of specialisation.

What Youth Facilitators Should Do	What They Should Not Do
<b>The caring counsellor facilitator:</b> Identify vulnerable learners Initiate and support the children's group/learner support Groups to provide care for each other (eg Soul Buddyz) Refer learners to site-based support team (SBST) for counselling, referral to police, social workers etc Make home visits Link to child care forums, home-based care groups, faith-based organisations and other programmes of care for children outside the school	Be teachers Do administration Clean the toilets Cook the school meals Do things in isolation without the SBST or the educators responsible for sports etc Take total responsibility for extramural or other activities Be responsible for fund raising Solve problems – they should identify problems and refer these Run errands for teachers
<b>The energetic initiator of extramural activities:</b> Identify vulnerable learners Initiate and support a number of extramural activities such as music, sports, drama and traditional dancing Make sure there is an awareness component in the activities on issues that affect the children in the school – assist in the life skills programme Refer children to the SBST for referral to clinic, social workers etc Link to youth programmes outside the school	
<b>Either or both can:</b> Help to organise groups where children are encouraged to do their homework, use the library for reading etc Help to organise children for feeding Support the clothing bank Arrange for Home Affairs to visit the school and be sure that children who need birth certificates and IDs have correct papers Keep records, make reports	

Recommended person specifications for the two roles	
Caring counsellor	Extramural activities
Age: 25– 35 Mature Evidence of a caring role previously (at home or in the community) Passion for children Matric or relevant experience and training Able to read, write and be trained From the local community and respected in the community Sober habits Able to maintain confidentiality Male and female	Age: 20–25 (can be younger if known to be mature and responsible) Mature Evidence of involvement in extramural activities Able to work with groups of children and young people Matric Confident A role model Male and female

**Support and supervision:**

Youth facilitators must report to and be supervised by a strong SBST with active support from the school management. The caring counsellor must also link with the school governing body.

The support and supervision structures must be agreed and set up properly. Mentoring of the facilitators is critical but mentors must be aware of the training that facilitators have received and play a part in developing it. Reporting structures need to be clarified.

**Training:**

Training that is accredited needs to be adapted or developed and materials to accompany this produced. The project partners suggest that the following areas should be covered in the training:

Training for Youth Facilitators			
Caring counsellor		Extramural activities	
Primary school	Secondary school	Primary school	Secondary school
Induction	Induction	Induction	Induction
Identifying a vulnerable child, causes of vulnerability – abuse, poverty, HIV/AIDS, bereavement	Identifying children who are vulnerable, abuse, poverty, HIV/AIDS, suicidal, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy	Children's participation, some activities with the children	Participation of young people, understanding drugs, teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS
Immediate steps to take	Immediate steps to take and referrals	Interpersonal skills, planning, time management, organising an event, report writing, case studies	Interpersonal skills, planning, time management, organising an event, report writing, case studies
Basic listening skills, counselling, coping with emotions	Basic listening skills, counselling, coping with emotions	Identifying children who are vulnerable and referring them – signs of different vulnerabilities; abuse, HIV/AIDS	Training on different activities – drama, art, music, sports, how to integrate awareness with the activities
Children's participation, beginning groups of children to support each other – Soul Buddyz	Children's participation, beginning groups of children to support each other – support group	Training on different activities – drama, art, music, sports, how to integrate awareness with the activities	Identifying children who are vulnerable, already abusing substances etc and referring
Interpersonal skills, planning, time management, report writing, case studies	Interpersonal skills, planning, time management, report writing, case studies, stress management		
Available resources in your community – who can help you and how	Available resources in your community – who can help you and how	Available resources in your community – who can help you and how	Available resources in your community – who can help you and how
Gender	Gender	Gender	Gender
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship
Computer literacy	Computer literacy	Computer literacy	Computer literacy

# Report

## Caring Schools Evaluation Report 2006

*Professor JP Strauss of the Research Institute for Education Planning at the University of the Free State compiled a report evaluating the NMF/SCUK Caring Schools project in the Free State, based on data collected in July and August 2007.*

The purpose of the survey was to establish how schools provided care and support to orphaned and vulnerable children and how the implementing agents had gone about running the project.

The central question was: how had the project made a difference for vulnerable children?

First, Prof Strauss noted that in the Free State, 63% of the population fell below the poverty line. In 2005, 23 527 learners (3,62%) in the province were orphans (bereaved of both parents). So there was certainly a need for such a project.

Principals commenting on the project said that it had improved awareness of the problems facing schools and that the youth facilitators



employed in the project had played a big role in improving the lives of learners. They had helped with extramural activities and improved school attendance and achievement. It was

noted that learners did better in many ways when properly cared for, made welcome and given a sense of hope.

Nutrition had improved, with more vegetable gardens and more feeding schemes. The involvement of parents in school matters, and in particular with helping vulnerable children, was not very well rated. Poverty was one reason. The Department of Social Development's involvement in helping vulnerable children was

seen as only average.

More training was called for. Youth facilitators also said they wanted to be paid by government, not by NGOs, and they wanted to be taken seriously. Day-to-day supervision could be done by SBSTs because the distances between schools made it difficult for an outside agency. It was also suggested that internet connections for schools would help with communication.

Principals, Education Department district co-ordinators and youth facilitators rated the success of the project at almost the same level (around 70%).

The following proposals were made for improvement:

- Before a project is implemented, good communication must take place between the stakeholders so that all have a clear description of their roles. Making roles clear should be the responsibility of the project overseer (in this case, SCUK).
- Service providers must have the capacity to deliver the action plans, and the time frames for these must be followed. Regular progress reports should be made to the overseer.
- If the amount of financing available for the project could be increased, it should be earmarked for the schools and youth facilitators. Otherwise, a re-allocation of the funds ought to be considered, giving a higher percentage of the funds to the schools and youth facilitators.

The national departments of education and social development have the task of setting policy and making funds available to the provinces. They also recruit and receive donations from NGOs and foreign governments. They could ensure that projects like Caring Schools were implemented at schools where there was a desperate need to assist vulnerable learners.



# Lessons Learnt

## Summary of key recommendations of the programme

*In meetings, the partners deliberated the lessons they were learning and documented what they recommended should be the structure for caring schools, based on their experience of implementing the programme for two years.*

### **The schools:**

Management in the schools is fundamental. Well-managed schools are able to take on the caring schools component easily and incorporate it into the general running of the schools. In this regard, there are marked differences between Section 20 schools (which have to order whatever they need from the Department of Education) and Section 21 schools (which are allocated funding and allowed to spend it themselves). Section 20 schools need much

more sustained support that needs to be planned and budgeted for.

School management requires support from the Education Management and Governance Development section of the DOE at district level. The School Management and Governance Developer who works with the school is crucial.

<b>The suggested role of management is:</b>
Provide leadership; be supportive and be able to delegate especially to the site-based support team (SBST)
Ensure that different programmes are all integrated into the caring school programme – such as school safety project; beautification; best-performing school; health promotion; HIV/AIDS policy; sports and recreation; school nutrition
Develop a blueprint of a quality product – a caring school
Identify learners as consumers to benefit from a quality product
View children as more than learners – holistically, as unique individuals who must be developed and who have rights, who need discipline and boundaries, care and warmth
Develop schools into second homes for children
Ensure that resources are allocated and budgeted to support the development of a caring school and that the caring school components are within the overall school plan
Consult with the school governing body, learners, staff, parents and other stakeholders
Resolve conflicts and promote collaboration
Identify resources, draw up a plan, implement and report on it

<b>The suggested role of the SBST is:</b>
Run the caring schools (plan, implement and monitor) programme in each school; the principal should provide overall leadership to the activity, the SBST co-ordinator must manage the programme
Ensure that the whole school community, including the broader community (governing body, parents, other role players such as clinic, the police etc), is involved in the caring school programme to create a conducive environment for the programme
Counsel learners and refer for further support to district-based support team and other role players around the school
Ensure the welfare of the staff
Liaise with sports, bereavement, environmental and other committees of the school that are involved in aspects of the caring school
Advocacy
Networking; develop a directory of service providers and relevant sources of information
Support and supervise youth facilitators
Train school communities, stakeholders and the governing body
Ensure that children are referred and follow up timeously
Make home visits to support the youth facilitators
Liaise with children to ensure that children's rights are implemented and child participation is achieved

The SBST is also fundamental to the success of this project.

How do they develop the capacity to perform these responsibilities?

- Through workshops which are run with the district-based support team
- Development and dissemination of guidelines on caring schools
- Link to school planning and budgeting process

The district-based support team (DBST) is critical in the SBST being able to fulfil this function.

The suggested role of the DBST is:
Train the SBSTs
Network at the level of the district level and provide the SBST with a conducive environment for school level networking
Be sure that guidelines are being implemented
Support and supervise training
Monitor

Communication needs to happen in the school with all educators and other staff about the objectives of the programme, implementation and progress for it to be successful.

Commitment from all is needed.

Schools alone can not provide all the support that children need. We need to increase linkages between schools and community structures. The partners have found that child care forums (CCFs) are crucial for this and recommend that school programmes should be linked to the rollout of CCFs (and vice versa).

The partners recommend that in the future schools should be chosen in clusters so that they can support each other. Ideally the selection of schools should be made at the end of the year before the programme is to begin. Schools should be invited to apply to participate and asked to submit a portfolio of evidence of progress that they have achieved without outside support. Initial meetings with management teams and SBSTs should be conducted at the end of the year so that the programme can begin promptly in the new year.

There are huge differences between the issues that primary and secondary schools face as well as the resources that are available to tackle them. Secondary schools do not have a feeding programme and the SBSTs are much newer. There is also much more pressure on the schools to produce academic results. The issues of

drugs, teenage pregnancy, violence, etc become much more pronounced and require specific intervention. This must be addressed in different approaches and different training for the SBSTs, the youth facilitators and the guidelines that are developed for primary and secondary schools.

Before the programme is begun there should be agreement with the schools about their role in it and the responsibilities of the SBST and the school management team.

### **The Department of Education:**

Leadership for Caring Schools is required from all levels of the DoE. Inclusion of Caring Schools in the business plan of the life skills section is welcome but it must be further integrated across many other sections. Leadership at the district level from the district director to ensure integration is fundamental. To get this leadership we need a sufficient number of schools in any district for the director to pay attention.

Co-ordination and collaboration between the DoE and other departments is also important. There is already collaboration with Social Development but this needs to be strengthened. Collaboration with Agriculture, Water Affairs, Home Affairs, Public Works etc would also be very important for caring in schools.

The role of Local Government in support of education is important and must be clarified.

### **Monitoring and evaluation, documentation:**

The Caring Schools project is trying to effect change at the level of the school – to change the environment (both physical and human) of a school to one that is more conducive for children as well as to one that is more responsive to children.

At the level of the children some things have an impact on large numbers of children eg birth certificates and IDs or an improved feeding scheme, or clothes banks. Others provide support to individual children.

Capturing these processes is complex. Monitoring and evaluation must therefore be a combination of quantitative indicators such as attendance rates, pass rates, completion rates as well as qualitative indicators such as learners' self-reported state of emotional and social wellbeing.

The partners have begun a process to better monitor the impact of the youth facilitators with the HSRC. A detailed baseline study of the schools was done by the University of the Free State.

# Devondale

## A community dealing with change

Atty Sobayeni, Catholic Institute of Education

*This project is a collaboration between the Catholic Institute of Education and Siyabhabha Trust, which also falls under the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference.*

Devondale's is a story of the typical struggle of a poor community trying to pull itself out of dependency and marginalisation towards independence and empowerment.

*Devondale School has become a pilot for a model of holistic school development and collaboration with communities and development agencies.*

Devondale is a remote settlement in North West, on the railway line between Mafikeng and Kimberley. And it is due to accessibility by train that in 1932, a certain Father Paulson, a Catholic priest, bought land and started a mission here, with a school.

When this mission was there, life was good for everybody around. Farm workers' children were getting a good quality education. A borehole maintained by the church gave the people water. Crops grew and cattle thrived.

Soon after the democratic elections in 1994, the population grew to 1 600. There were lots of retrenchments, because the farmers were not prepared to deal with the new labour legislation.

But the change had started back in 1976, when a fire damaged the convent. The mission slowly withdrew. There was no longer employment for the people. There was no more material aid. Then in 2003, the church sold off eight of its farms, so the chances of employment dwindled. Since 2003, the community has had no running water. A tractor brings water twice a day.

People say they come to Devondale to be amongst their people and be buried there.

The women keep the family alive with state pensions and child grants.

We did a workshop with the people of Devondale. Water was the first theme that came out very strongly. The second was housing. In 2005, the area experienced torrential rain storms, destroying the traditional mud houses. The government





declared Devondale a disaster area and tents were provided. But not a single house has been built in Devondale since then.

Fuel is another theme. It's a daily struggle to collect wood and cook food. Transport is a problem. It's a long way to town. If you miss the train, your business has to wait.

There's no employment and drinking has become part of the day.

The mobile clinic comes every Tuesday. Now what is the untold story? HIV and AIDS. You ask these people: is there AIDS around this place? People just say, um, I'm not sure.

Why is the school important in Devondale? The school serves as a meeting point; when the community meets, people from outside, the municipality, all other agencies, they meet at the school. When the mobile clinic comes, they use the classroom for consultations.

The CIE moved into Devondale in 2002, and we did a whole school development and renewal programme involving examinations, the Catholic character of the school and the development of the school's vision and mission statement.

An AIDS policy for the school was developed and the school identified links with community services: how to access social workers, the Health Department, and all those important stakeholders. The school governing board members received training in their roles and responsibilities. In 2006 there was intensive literacy and numeracy intervention in the foundation phase. Six teachers participated in the accredited leadership management course to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Parents got involved, which they never were before. Now they cook for the children, they look after the children, they are there on a day to day basis.

**The purpose of the joint project was** to enable the developing community to bring about meaningful change to lessen the impact of poverty, especially on the children.

**What went well during all this?**

When we went back



to see the progress made, it was on July 18 [Nelson Mandela's birthday]. A big tank came from Johannesburg to be installed to give the people water. One of the participants said, it's because it's the old man's birthday. And on that very day the Department of Education started work on the physical improvement of the school.

And on that day, July 18, some student volunteers arrived from Australia and started to improve the hostel.

#### **Why was there change?**

This comes from one of the workshop participants: "Change happens when an outsider comes to get things done." Other reasons identified were: a growing awareness of rights; development of leadership; resilience and creativity.

#### **What could be done better?**

Participants at the workshop identified the following weaknesses in the project:

- There is a sense that the community is often





passive, waiting for outsiders to do things for them.

- There are people who are trying to bring down those in the community who are showing leadership and initiative.
- Some community members tend to keep information to themselves, blocking full participation and development.
- Disempowerment is made worse by outside service providers, especially the municipality, making promises which are repeatedly broken.
- Too much reliance on one co-ordinator.

More work is needed to empower and develop other leadership.

- A lack of joint planning and reflection around the process of intervention. During the initial process more time could have been spent on getting to know the community in all its complexity – to feel the pulse of the community.

This is the mistake that all funders make: we come in, we give, we go. Sometimes we rush in with ideas to help people, but instead overwhelm them. Had participatory mechanisms been put in place at an earlier stage, people would have taken more ownership of their own development.

#### **CIE learnings:**

- The school has proved to be a useful entry point to the community.
- Before we start we need to spend more time getting to know the dynamics of the community. It also seems to be important to move at the pace of the community and to make fewer promises.
- We need to be clear in our terms of reference and draw up deliverables and measurables.
- Current leaders need to be supported and new leadership mentored.
- Change is about individuals and happens through individuals.

#### **Siyabhabha learning:**

“True development is a process and not a product which can be delivered overnight – the focus

needs to be on the development of people to take ownership themselves, not to repeat the mistakes of the past which left people totally dependent on external sources for their wellbeing. Changing attitudes from welfare to development takes time.”

#### **Community learning:**

“Let us encourage the existing committees to do the work by not waiting for the CIE/ Siyabhabha Trust to come and show us what to do. They have already shown us how to cross the bridge – we must now cross it alone.”





# Dialogue Outputs

*The participants formed groups to discuss issues relating to the Caring Schools concept within the broad themes of the child, the school, the community and the implementing partners (government and other stakeholders). A representative from each group then reported back on the discussion.*

**Lebohang Mokoena:** We need to define the term OVCs, that is orphans and vulnerable children. We do that by firstly meeting with the school community – the school management team – and then hear what they have to say. What does “vulnerable children” mean? And we would hear from the teachers, from the learners, and from the SGB (school governing board), so the SGB in this regard would be representing the parents. So that is what we should do firstly, for us to really hear from the school. And then from there, we’ll go to the community. The community would consist of the different government departments as well as civil society: the faith-based organisations (FBOs), the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) and so on.

And then we unpack the children’s needs: physical, emotional and social. We see what’s common, what’s similar, and then these needs

will be prioritised. After that we do an action plan, what needs to be done. This will work best in a referral system: when you get a problem you refer it to the relevant party.

Somebody from Soul City said that they have this model of four groups or points: child participation, the school as a centre of provision, the referral system and the school-based programmes. So what we need to do is cluster the schools because you might find five or six schools around





one village or one area. And they are all using the same departments or offices and so on. So we need to cluster them.

We said we need to align all the programmes from all the different stakeholders, because you find for example that from the Department of Education there's a programme that's similar to Soul City, which is similar to other stakeholders.



**Annemarie Mostert:** The major point here is that, whenever you want to make the school the caring point or node, you need to remember that it's part of an education system. So if you are not very good in your communication or co-ordination with the provincial level, the district level, the cluster level, the school level, it is not going to be sustainable. And that is extremely important. These action plans must be a negotiated process or else it doesn't work. Once it's been negotiated it must be monitored and costed, and that is why we also did training in financial management. It's extremely important and the whole thing of accountability that goes with ownership which is then captured in the action plans, so that everybody works together, and all the departments know what their roles and responsibilities are in this co-ordinated intervention. This model was part of what we did with Save the Children, but we adapted it to suit the context of the Xhariep district, where we worked with five schools. You know that very big area in Koffiefontein and Jacobsdal, so that is what came out of this.

**Lynette Mudekunye:** The first issue we talked about at our table was actually hearing children's voices. And we talked about working through Soul Buddyz clubs, RADS groups (Radically Different Species), learning or youth forums, which have been set up at the level of a ward, bringing representatives from different schools to talk with each other. We talked about needing lots of different activities for children, and saturating the school with activities for children. And to be able to do that we needed to involve parents and other caregivers. Remember, a lot of our children are not with their parents. Other, broader community members.

We then talked about sustainability of this programme. And one thing that we really talked about with this programme was the absolutely critical need for leadership within the department. And where such a programme belongs. Because it doesn't seem to fit into any particular section and it needs a champion within the department. Otherwise it will flourish and wither like so many other programmes. We could also encourage others to be part of the local government IDP planning process, and we talked about making better linkages with the private sector.

We talked on a similar vein to that on many different aspects of co-ordination. So we talked about co-ordination at a very local level. The people on different forums are the same people! And we meet today for this one and next week for that one instead of bringing them all together, and very often we are doing that so that we can tick a box and say that the meeting happened. Not so that we have actually achieved anything. We talked about rationalisation of the many different programmes within a school. Principals are bombarded with circulars about sport, about school beautification, about health promotion, about safe schools, about caring schools ... And the poor principal sits with a pile of documents and is not quite sure which one to begin with. And they have different committees within a school and you can even get to a school and ask an educator if there's a certain committee and they say, "what's that?". And there is one, and it's very active, but some of the educators at the school don't know about it or what it's doing.

And we talked about co-ordination more at a municipal level and at a district level, and the very critical role that Local Government

needs to play in bringing together not just Education but Social Development, Health, the police, all the other different players, Agriculture, Home Affairs, everybody.

And the last area we talked about was communication. Which flows with all of these other ones as well, but communication within the department from national province to district to cluster to school. Communication at a local level, how we could use community newspapers and radio and things like that so much more effectively. To market what's happening and to get people aware of what's going on.

**Nomasonto Masilo:** We said we need to raise a child who displays ubuntu. And that child should be brought up in a safe environment. And then we also need our children to participate, for instance in Soul Buddyz, RADS, peer education, child care forums, youth forums and all that.

And when the child is admitted to school, the parents should be introduced to the staff or to the specific class educator of that child. If there are some problems that we know of, that parent will talk with that educator. Children should be taught in a safe environment, and there must be a caring environment. We must practise beautification, where we teach children that things must be nice and clean. We must also have nice flowers, *nê*? And then another thing, extramural activities: children

can be motivated and they can end up getting their careers from sports.

Some of the schools that fall under Section 21 find that they have difficulty getting money from the department because the money gets deposited very late. That's going to end up affecting the running of the school, day-to-day school issues.

We also talked about the community: we said that most of the people who are staying around the school are the people you can rely upon; those are the people who are taking care of the school buildings, even after school or on the weekends. So we must involve them. And then the involvement of youth facilitators and parents also plays a role. We also said we need to have "roaming mothers" who will assist the child and families. And we also have a movement for social justice for children.

And then we talked about the co-ordination of services rendered by different government departments. We found that there's duplication. We also said that we find that after the government has provided money, it is very rare that you find impact analysis after the funding – what has been done with that money. And qualitative analysis is rarely done. So we cannot account fully for the funds that were given to different schools or to different people. And decentralisation should be accompanied with capacity building. And there must be a relationship between policy makers and practice.



**Nathaniel Nkopane:** Firstly we thought it would be good if we could expand on the definition of orphans, so our programme could cover as many children as possible. If I can give an example, in the Free State we have 28 000 orphans on the database, but it's more like 48 000 children. We must look at variables that render the child in the same position as an orphan. So we must see whether children are covered, in terms of emotional, psychological, physical, and all other needs. If you look at Education White Paper Six on Special Needs Education, it talks about six aspects defining vulnerability, but that is not what happens on the ground. We should go further than that.

We discussed service providers, and here Health was of the opinion that it's good to work in teams to cover as broad a ground as possible. But the issue now is the issue of posts, manpower. We can look at trying to expand services to be rendered by other professional individuals, with specific training or crash courses that they can undergo.

Talking about communication or collaboration, we had an example of American doctors coming over here to give our children spectacles ... they ended up giving us as well, so it was not only learners who benefited, it was all of us. And they are coming again to evaluate and monitor what happened. What is good which came out of that is that many children were given formal referrals to go to hospital, so that the Health Department can take care of that. Therefore our approach

should be flexible. What is important is to share experiences. Not to say "I succeeded"; you must share experiences so that all of us can benefit from the experience that made you succeed. We also said we must develop strong networking strategies, and one of them was that we must look at strong points in

the community, like roaming mothers, as well as *manyano* [women's church groups]. These are very strong points in our own community that can help us to reach out. It is always perceived that planning is top down. It is very difficult, not easy to follow, not easy to understand, but we learnt from Atty: go with them. It must be easy, step by step, they must own the process, do it at their own pace. In that way the community will own the process and be able to benefit to the maximum. If you have plans that are hanging in the sky, they won't be functional. Therefore we must link it up with what is happening in the communities, then they will mean something and be fruitful.

These are caring schools for children and vulnerable children, but we must also be reminded that we must care for people who care. One lady here said that sometimes you try to help children until you form a wall in front of you. You form a wall and say "I can't take it anymore, I must just leave it". Therefore you must take care of these people who are taking care of our problems. It is also important sometimes to spoil your teachers, take them out, they must go for a massage! And you must budget for that!

### **Closing Summary, Mothomang Diaho:**

This initiative was an opportunity for those concerned with responding to needs of children, specifically in the schools environment, to share lessons with others from business, civil society and government – lessons that could advance policy development and implementation. This is done as part of an ongoing process throughout the country, to continuously reflect on how to further strengthen the response at the school level. It is our wish that these lessons are taken to the next level and considered for the advancement of policy by all those concerned with responding in the best interest of the child.

A lot has obviously been done given the contribution of delegates at this dialogue. A lot more remains to be done and there is no shortage of willing souls to carry the work forward.

It does require much more than coordination, collaboration. It requires a good sense of the numbers of those in need to better quantify the response but also increased capacity of those on the ground to respond adequately.





# Policy Issues

## Burning issues for policy consideration

### *The Policy Issues:*

*The main purpose of the South African policy framework for orphans and other vulnerable children affected by HIV and AIDS is to; firstly, promote an enabling environment for more effective delivery on commitments to orphans and other children made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS at legislative, policy and programmatic level, secondly, encourage flexibility, and effective harmonisation and coordination between various laws and policies and between stakeholders at all levels.*

The Free State Caring School initiative, guided by the Free State Department of Education and supported by the Nelson Mandela Foundation in association with implementing partners such as Save the Children UK, acknowledges the statement made at the national conference held in 2002; **“A Call For Coordinated Action For Children Affected by HIV and AIDS”**. In implementing the initiative the partners were aware of the mandate given to the Department of Social Development to establish the National Action Committee for Children Affected by AIDS (NACCA) as a permanent structure of government departments, civil society, business and development agencies.

The partners grappled with the considerable challenges faced by all others before them in responding to children who in any case come from communities dealing with significant levels of poverty. In responding, in the best interest of the child, the implementing partners had to remain focused on the child and work within the confines of the policy framework as it currently defines these children in need.

### **Definitions:**

The child as defined is any person under the age of 18 years;

- An orphan is recognised as a child who has no surviving parent caring for him or her;
- A vulnerable child is recognised as one whose survival, care, protection or development may be compromised, due to a particular condition, situation or circumstance and which prevents the fulfilment of his her rights.
- A child-headed household is recognised

<b>Definitions of Orphans from Selected African Countries</b> (Policies for Orphans and Vulnerable Children: A Framework for Moving Ahead by Rose Smart: POLICY July 2003)	
Namibia	A child under the age of 18 who has lost a mother, a father or both – or a primary caregiver – due to death, or a child who is in need of care.
Ethiopia	A child less than 18 years of age who has lost both parents, regardless of how they died.
Botswana	A child below 18 years who has lost one (single parents) or two (married couple) biological or adoptive parents.
Uganda	A child below the age of 18 years who has lost one or both parents.
Rwanda	A child who has lost one or both parents.

as one where the parent or primary caregiver is terminally ill or has died; where there is no adult family member available to provide care for the children in that household and one where a child has assumed the role of primary caregiver in respect of a child or children in the household in terms of providing food, clothing and psychological support.

It is within this policy framework that this initiative was implemented. A lot remains to be done and it is lessons learned from initiatives such as this that will further strengthen the policy framework.

# Broadening the definition

**Norma Rudolph**

The notion of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) was introduced to move thinking away from a limited response to orphans, without considering the range of risk factors making children vulnerable in the context of AIDS. This notion was nevertheless still interpreted with the main emphasis on orphans.

As recently as 2006 in the Free State, the Department of Education provided food parcels only for children who could produce the death certificates of both parents. These parcels were discontinued when funding ran out.

**This dialogue group felt that where there are Caring Schools interventions, there is a recognition of the range of barriers to learning and factors that could cause children to drop out of school, including poverty, drugs and gender.**

Systems for identifying and referring children need to be strengthened, taking account of the following issues:

- Attention to the youngest children before they enter school
- Out-of-school children
- Child participation
- Integration of information systems



- Decentralised and locally managed and used information systems
- Improved referral systems

# Training for youth facilitators

**Harriet Speckmeier**

This group suggested that training for youth facilitators should cover:

- Personal development (leadership, self-confidence, building relationships, life skills, communication, listening, resolving conflict, creative problem-solving, setting boundaries, giving and receiving feedback, ethics, confidentiality, etc)
- Peer education (life skills and sexuality)
- Civic education, based on rights (understanding the system of governance, concepts of rights and duty bearers, education rights, children's rights, mapping the local community – understanding the players, home affairs, ward councillor, Integrated Development Plan process, social services, NGO services, etc)
- Sustainable development (community development, networking, facilitating change, building relationships, theories of change, etc)
- Child development and vulnerability (how do children develop and what do they need for healthy development, what are the key factors in the resilience or vulnerability of children, how do you recognise vulnerability and what do you do, how do you support resilience in children, the impact of HIV/AIDS and other factors on children's development, basic counselling and listening skills)
- Specific roles and responsibilities of the position (eg how to do a home visit), ethics and confidentiality, accessing information, linking with key stakeholders, supporting or initiating extramural programmes, feeding schemes, information days, negotiating your role within the school community, knowing your boundaries and limitations (what you should not do), how to link needs to resources, working with children, useful games and ice breakers, expectations about monitoring and evaluation, planning and setting targets, etc.

There is no recognised or accredited course for such a cadre yet but there are other training courses that are available. It was emphasised



that all training should be accredited and given by accredited trainers.

Each school will define the role of youth facilitators, but they may be expected to:

- Support programmes of care within schools, including the provision and production of food for children
- Support the establishment and functioning of the children's group
- Initiate and support extramural activities at the schools such as homework support, sports, music, drama, Soul Buddyz, Scouts and RADS (youth groups)
  - Work with youth clubs around the school
  - Be available to talk to children about issues that concern them
  - Be aware of behaviour that may be indicative of vulnerability and require intervention or referral. This includes bullying, teasing and deliberate sidelining of some children, as well as substance abuse or other forms of abuse. This involves being aware of children's movements through the gate or otherwise in and out of the school yard as well as activities around the toilets.
  - Ensure that children who have not come to school are visited by liaising with the appropriate care structures within or outside the school. Gain a better understanding of their home circumstances and help the school to negotiate for additional support if this is necessary.
  - Refer children, through the SBST, to social workers, Health, the police, Justice or other support networks. Network with these stakeholders and keep a database of contact details.
  - Keep a diary or journal of activities and

support monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

There is a high rate of unemployment among young people in South Africa and youth facilitators provide an avenue for youth development. If 28 000 schools in South Africa were each to employ two to four out-of-school youth in the roles outlined here, we would be creating jobs for unemployed youth.

## Funding

**Nancy Coulson**

The group felt strongly that there is evidence for the value and success of Caring Schools programmes in South Africa. It is therefore essential that long-term funding sources are secured to cover more schools.

In general the group lamented the dependence of this type of programming on donors, who usually fund for short periods. The group stressed that this type of work is not a short-term strategy. The problems associated with short-term funding are that it takes time to bring all the stakeholders together, there are inevitably problems with sustainability, it is difficult to keep staff, there is poor institutionalisation of programmes with district and provincial Department of Education structures, results cannot be shown in a short period, and programming sometimes gets interrupted because of funding delays.

The group proposed that:

- It is timely and necessary to cost out a national strategy for caring schools
  - A long-term, 10-year vision be developed for caring schools
  - Caring schools can be funded by government, donors and private sources
  - A national strategy will guide government, private and donor funds for the future
  - Donors can be held accountable to the national strategy through the treasury. Donor contributions can also then be co-ordinated
  - It will be important to guide this work for the long term by commissioning a substantive baseline that can also frame the development of scenarios for national rollout and guide decisions related to feasibility
  - Government or the Department of Education can develop a monitoring system for caring schools that can be integrated with other initiatives such as Child Care Forums



# Managing a coherent response to learners infected and affected by HIV/AIDS

**Annamarie Mostert**

At national and provincial levels, the Education White Paper Six on Special Needs Education provides a generic framework for the management of learners who are infected and affected by HIV and AIDS and other infectious diseases.

The framework promotes the analysis of information profiles on these learners from a national perspective in order to develop and implement appropriate and timely programmes.

These programmes:

- strengthen information profiles
- establish a system to identify orphans



- co-ordinate support and care programmes for these learners
- put in place referral procedures for educators
- develop teaching guidelines on how to support OVCs

The national Department of Education works closely with provincial education departments and the departments of Social Development and Health in Social Clusters.

Coherence at provincial level takes place in

the Social Clusters, co-ordinated by the heads of the three departments.

At the level of district and municipality, coherence takes place in Child Care Forums, co-ordinated by the district directors of departments. Relevant programmes at this level are aligned to programmes in the national support framework.

Programmes include the development of a support network with representatives of Social Development, Health, Correctional Services, faith-based organisations, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations.

At the micro level, the response involves school management structures: governing bodies, management teams, SBSTs, youth facilitators, carers and professional working groups. Programmes are aligned to national, provincial and district programmes and to the five priorities of the national guidelines for the development of HIV and AIDS policies and action plans. These priorities are: prevention; providing care and support for learners; providing care and support for teachers; protecting the quality of education; and managing a coherent response. Plans include the development of a database for OVCs, a referral system and a service directory.

The sustainability of prevention, care and support programmes is ensured through continuous programme alignment at all levels of the education system and through monitoring and evaluation.

## Linkages and co-ordination

**Lynette Mudekunye**

Connie Kganakga opened our discussion with a concern that people in the field were not aware of the OVC Policy Framework or the National Action Plan for OVC. These are documents that have been developed at national level but it is clear that they are not being disseminated to the ground level. She suggested that we should print 28 000 copies and ensure that they are disseminated to all schools in the country. These should include a summary that clearly shows the role that a school can play in the implementation of the National Action Plan for Orphans and other Children made Vulnerable by HIV and AIDS.

We also discussed the fact that there is



co-ordination between different role players at national level but there is a great need for improved co-ordination at provincial, district and municipal levels for information to flow to these levels. Each of these levels should have a plan of action for OVCs that is in line with the national plan of action but that addresses issues that are raised at that particular level.

**We need to develop a plan for co-ordination at provincial, district and local levels.**

## Community participation

**Masixole Bangeni**

In discussions about ways in which community participation can be enhanced in schooling, we brought the following ideas.

**Youth facilitators are to be integrated into existing community structures for extension of their platform of work and acceptance as role players in community development.**

School governing bodies must be used to invite communities to attend school gatherings, not limited to parents' meetings.

Communities need to be informed, mobilised and sensitised around caring for children and keeping them at school, in particular on pension days, livestock dips, etc. It is important that a community's priorities are understood, before imposing development agendas.

What is it that schools are doing for communities, what is it that communities see in schools, and how can communities benefit from schools?

Schools could be part of the Integrated Development Plan of municipalities and be centres where groups meet.

**People should be made to feel included in decisions rather than having ideas and decisions imposed on them.**

## Roaming mothers

**Fikile Ngcobo**

**"Roaming mothers" are women from the community who must belong to a credible women's group, church or similar local structure.**

These women would visit homes to assist the children in different ways. The group emphasised that such "roaming mothers" must belong to structures which will strictly monitor their engagement with the children.

No individual women should be allowed to assume this role without a credible local structure to supervise them, specifically to ensure that children are not abused in the name of care and support.

The group also emphasised the need for a code of conduct for these mothers.

# Closing Reflections



## **Connie Kganakga, national Department of Social Development:**

Thank you to all of you for being here. I feel very honoured and privileged to be here in the Free State and to see how in the Free State we can work together. Because I'm in a room where we've got members of civil society, we have got government departments: Education, Health, Social Development and Agriculture, so that's encouraging because we are beginning to see how we have to work together in the future. And I also hope that in future we will have more departments that are relevant to the policy framework and guidelines that indicate how all government departments should work together not just on a national level, but at the province and also at the local district and municipality levels.

I'm encouraged that we are beginning to see as our central point the needs of the child. And all of us become peripheral, putting all of our efforts together to make sure that the best interests of the child are attended to.

As a way forward I'm encouraging the Free State government to lead us in this Caring Schools project. And I'm quite confident that with the support of every one of us and members of civil society it will become a shining light of the whole country, that in the future we can ask the province to come and present to Cabinet and to National and say this is where we want to go, this is what we want for our country.

**Johanna de Beer, Department of Social Development:** Sometimes you sit there at National feeling very lonely, and when you come down and listen to what's been happening in communities and in provinces it makes a big difference. And I'm sure we will take some of the ideas back with us. There are a lot of committed people in this room and I think that together we will make a difference to the children's lives.

**Lynn van der Elst, Media in Education**

**Trust:** It's amazing how every time you attend something like this you learn something new, you meet new people, and I think for me what probably was the most positive was how this whole movement of care and support has grown. I think back to those early days at Children's Institute with Lynette and Norma, sitting around a table, a few organisations talking about how to influence government, how to lobby, and today we have CASNET and provinces implementing, in a very systemic way, care and support through



their government departments. It's fantastic how this has grown in such a short period of time.

**Hazel Motsoeneng, Free State Department of Education:**

I feel that it was very worth my while to be here because if I join the principals' bosberaad



tomorrow I will be able to tell them of the issues you talked about.

What I'm taking with me now is the fact that after the dialogue I've learned that we as managers at a provincial level, at senior level, need to give direction to these groups. The schools are frustrated because we don't support them, because we aren't there for them. There's a lot of good work done by the youth facilitators. So I'm thanking you guys, the youth facilitators, thanking all the officials that are participating, the NGOs, and everybody, but my homework is: how do you co-ordinate and do the linkages in order to support them?

**Vuyiswa Mathambo, HSRC:** I am a strong believer in caring communities. And schools to me are communities, because for children

who do not have significant adults they look up to, then the school becomes their family.

Next year the HSRC and its partners will be doing a national audit of child care forums. So I hope that the Free State will be my first stop. I'll be getting in touch with all



those people I bumped into today.

**Annamarie Mostert, Sacred Heart:** I think the major value of the whole day to me was about looking at diversity in managing care for children. For me it's all about not only listening to stories but actually doing the job.

**Nancy Coulson, Health & Development Africa:** I was a bit disappointed that I didn't get to talk to [deputy president] Phumzile [Mlambo-Ngcuka], because I was feeling very fired up! I've really found today that being in a group like this does help to feed your passion, to make a difference, to take things forward. Your work is inspiring and that's important and I think together we will make a difference.

**Joyce Makhathe, Health Department:** I've discovered that we all have a passion for the child and the schools and we all took different routes to this child. And we all worked in our own little compartments. So my dream is that from now on we go as a unified force.

**Maki Tlali, Health Department:** Now we know exactly what we need to do, to integrate our projects with programmes of other departments.

**Motlalepula Tlhanyane, principal, Molibeli:** I'm happy because in order to be an effective leader,

in order to be informed, we need to meet with people of your calibre. I am happy because every stakeholder is represented today. They are going to make my task easier when I get back to school. Because I have now to meet with my colleagues, the principals. And as commandants at our schools it is important to know about the child.

Today, when we leave here, it is a plea to those people who are from different sectors, that this issue of caring for children means that we have to revisit our plans, get to the community; get to the department officials so that at the end of the day, we must speak with



one voice.

**Nomasonto Masilo, SBST, Retshedisitswe Secondary School:** I think I am going to have a strong meeting with my principal and our SMT members so that they can be fully involved in this session. I'm a co-coordinator of the SBST and I'm also going to actively involve the youth facilitators in our school.

Let us love our children and show them the right way to behave, so we can be proud of them.

**Molefe Velembu, youth facilitator:** I am empowered today to be here, listening to the opinion of other stakeholders. And what I like most is that we are all talking the same language: the children. I will take this experience to go out there where I work and implement some of the ideas.

**Dithuso Monare, Department of Social Development:** Whatever strategy may come

out of today's dialogue, we need to be committed to its implementation, when that time comes for us to participate in the implementation of that strategy. That we understand our commitment is critical to the benefit of the children.

**Harriet Speckmeier, Department of Education:** I want to say thank you to the NMF, for the seed funding to have implemented this programme. And a special thank you to Save the Children for leading the programme.

I want to say something about the Free State.

People here

are extremely committed to the children, and committed to the improvement of the lives of the people. I've learnt so much from all of you.

Now I'm going to address all those new NGOs that I've met today. We are looking for more support in our province, please guys, we need you. We have a lot of programmes running, we've got action plans in place.

**Makgotso Mosetlhe, Department of Social Development:** At first I thought this is not my terrain, because I'm trained in legislation. But I realise that your caring schools project is one of the objectives as highlighted in the Children's Act with regards to prevention and intervention. Because when it comes to the caring schools project, that's where we're going to identify children who are being abused or children who are vulnerable. So I was able to contribute to the dialogue. I am also going to make sure that we take the process up.

**Elsabe Esterhuizen, Childline SA:** In the beginning I felt as if I did not have a lot to contribute, because I'm working on the side. But I'm going home realising what schools must do these days. The responsibility of schools, not simply teaching children anymore. Really, I think that my opinion of teachers changed today. And I wish you the best of luck. And I wish that we can join in with co-ordinating focus programmes in schools of the Free State.

**Norma Rudolph, Children's Institute:** The thought that popped into my mind as people started concluding is that old expression, "it takes a village to raise a child". And what I've been really impressed about today is the extent to which in the Free State there is a really strong foundation for collaboration. And the extent to which there's a shared understanding in this group about what needs to happen.

And so what I take with me is an even stronger motivation to do my bit towards ensuring that one day, every single citizen in South Africa understands child wellbeing and makes a commitment to protecting child rights. So that together we can build a child rights







movement for social justice.

From the Children's Institute perspective, just to let people know, we have now concluded our two-year pilot, and we're going into another two years of testing the approach that's being developed and

revising it and strengthening it. And we would welcome participation from all of you and anybody who's interested, because we see our role as helping to build a conceptual framework for caring school communities.

**Nathaniel Nkopane, Department of Education:** Today's activities are a benchmark for how to organise a workshop and how to involve a lot of stakeholders in different roles. We can expand this model, by involving other stakeholders and by reaching more children.

**Naomi Warren, Nelson Mandela Foundation:** We get reports and hear stories about how good the youth facilitators are, and it was such an honour to meet two of you. Congratulations and keep up the good work, you make me very proud to be here.

**Lynette Mudekunya, SCUK:** Usually at the end of the programme we're closing up, we're putting things away and we're saying this is it. And we were complaining earlier about two-year pilots and how they are way too short. And yet, the process that we've been through today means that we go away with renewed energy. There are some of the schools that were part of this that will not continue, because the funding won't be there. But something that began at those schools will continue. And we've got renewed commitment from so many other people who really want to see this happening in different ways, in more schools. Talking about expansion is a very different way of ending a programme.

And I'd really like to thank Naomi and Mothomang for putting us together.

**Lo Ncukana, Department of Agriculture:** I was exposed very badly, because we have not been paying attention to some of these things.

You know in all the strategy planning in the past two weeks or so, you would be lucky if you managed to find the word "child". But I learnt a lot today, and I hope to share that with my colleagues. And my hope is that some day someone will be able to put a plan on the table, because I think it would be much easier for me to sell that plan to my department if it's in black and white.

I'm excited by seeing other stakeholders coming together here but I'm not sure if you were to take away the name of that great man we would still be getting this kind of co-ordination. I work in government and I'm sorry that I'm not convinced that they are better positioned to do the co-ordination that we so need, to get this programme done.

**Lebohang Mokoena, youth facilitator:**

When I started as a youth facilitator I must admit I didn't understand what was going on ... and after going through some training, and when I arrived at school and one child addressed me as his brother, I then realised that I'm there for a purpose.



**Sipho Mqwathi, Department of Education:** How I wish we could have boys and girls here from some of the worst environments and say to them, you see how many people are running around you, just to make sure that your situation changes for the better. We would be saying to them, what we've learnt from this workshop is that we're going to do things





and not talk so much. Doing so much for you that your life is going to be much better than it is today.

**Ntsoaki Sello, Department of Education:** I feel that this Caring Schools programme is something that comes from the heart. I was humbled by the presentations. It is my wish that we will go back to our different communities and workplaces and we remember that we should be a caring society. Let's go back and think about whether we are doing enough to care for those children. I hope that what we have learnt today will stay in our hearts.

**Fikile Ngcobo, NMCF:** Sometimes you sit and think "I know what's happening", but every time you meet people you learn a lot. However,



it concerns me that all of us sitting here, we know what to do, we know how to do it, but we are not getting our act right.

All of us sitting here are activists in some way or another. You may be sitting in government, but the work that you do makes you an activist. And you have an ally in the non-government world, in civil society.

We say the child is the future of this country, and yet it's not made the centre of things to happen today. The child doesn't have to wait for the future to enjoy its life. It has a life now, and that life has to be prepared now. And fortunately there are people sitting in here who are doing this.

And thanks to the youth facilitators. What is the career path of these young people? We need policemen who know the child. We need teachers who know the child. We need social workers who know what's happening on the ground. So I really wish you'd take on those positions because you cannot be youth facilitators forever. You have to grow and lead us.

**Mary Jane Lubinski, Catholic Institute of Education:** I never cease to be amazed and humbled by the commitment of the human spirit.

**Masixole Bangeni, Nelson Mandela Institute for Rural Education:** I leave this place extremely inspired. And special recognition to the youth facilitators. Please, let us recognise that this is the work we are talking about to be part of National Youth Services.

**Lemphotse Hlalele, Department of Education:** I just want to say two words to the NMF, to all of you here and others who are out there: thank you!

**Molly Loate, Nelson Mandela Foundation:** I work at the Foundation, but I've just joined this particular department. So, I'm extremely impressed.

**Richard Frank, Flow Communications:** I'm the sound guy, as you know! From Flow, we're always privileged to work with the NMF, and see dialogues in different places and about different things. And we've learnt a lot and we'll be putting this in a booklet, which will hopefully teach a lot of other people about the good work that everyone here has done.

**Tumi Makgobathe, Flow Communications:** I hope next time you can have something where you actually have the kids talking for themselves.

**Lynette Mudekunya, Save The Children UK:** As I've told the youth facilitators, the road they've travelled has been the hardest. Because they've been pioneers, they've had to create a road where there was none. We didn't have the proper agreement with the SBST or the SMTs. We had to sort of create it as we went along. And we found principals like Ntate Tlhanyane who've been really supportive. We've also had some who haven't been. But we've made it.

NMF, your funding may have ended, but your engagement with this programme hasn't. This is the beginning of a new cycle of engagement on a different level, in a different way. Because until we get to the deputy president, until we get all of these commitments, and not just to talk to her but to put forward a 10-year strategy and agree on how that's going to happen, then we can say it's ended. And then I'll retire!



# Interview

## with Lynette Mudekunya

Save The Children UK

*What happens next; how does the Caring Schools Programme continue now that the pilot has come to an end?*

We're going to keep going in a number of different ways, because there have been so many partners to this project. There are 456 schools that I spoke about which have decided they are going to keep the youth facilitators and will pay for them themselves. World Vision has built in caring schools into their programme in Thaba Nchu so I think they're going to continue at least with those five schools and I think even more. Child Welfare has funding from Social Development already to do it.

In this district we are taking it forward ourselves, Save the Children, and today we have all these applications coming in and we have funding to be able to continue it in 50 schools.

We're also negotiating for funding from a different funder to really invest in the training of the youth facilitators. What I would like to do is register the youth facilitator programme as a national youth service project, which gives it some status within that sector, and then try to get it to move beyond that.

I think it was significant that we had a representative from SADTU (SA Democratic Teachers' Union) here because the unions can be



unhappy about extra people coming in and see it as casualisation of work. We are absolutely clear we do not want the youth facilitators in the classrooms.

So we've got funding at least for another two years for here.

I think it was also important that we had Mrs [Hazel] Motsoeneng there from Province, because she went away thinking this was something she'd like to support and like to take forward. It takes time. And you know 25 schools out of 28 000 in the country is minuscule. We've got to do a whole lot more to be able to say that this is worthwhile for the whole department to think about it.

**Did you feel yesterday that the dialogue was a good way of talking**







**about it and that the right people were there... Was it productive?**

It's definitely a very good starting point, but it's not the end point. We've got a long, long way to go still. Mothomang and I were talking towards the end of the day that we still did not get the national people that we needed to be at this meeting. And she was saying maybe they would think about taking it higher still, and I'm hoping within the dialogue process that the NMF will keep an interest in this, that it's an issue that they would want to keep talking about.

By the way, here in the Free State, Specky has already planned a big provincial dialogue. But actually what we're still going to have to do before then is to come up with the sort of the structure of what has the caring school been for the Free State, and we didn't get that far yesterday; it was a broader discussion yesterday. That big discussion will be "how can we operationalise this in the Free State?". And that will be with district officials from all the different departments.

And then other NGOs; we all play a part, so it's not just the five NGOs which were part of this particular pilot programme. There are more of us who contributed to this.

### **How do you prepare someone to be a youth facilitator?**

What we stressed in the five-day orientation is "have fun with the children". And we talked about setting up children's groups and talking with children, we talked about the impact of stigma and discrimination; one of the most interesting exercises was to put on a little card all the names that children call each other and are called by teachers at school. You fill a whole wall with all the different names. And just what impact does it have on a child when they are labelled like that, and can we do something about reducing that? We talked about protection issues.

I did HIV and AIDS treatment literacy with them. And they came up with the most incredible ideas, and what they're doing is sharing ideas about how you can get information across to kids. I think one of the things we need to get across to them is being a friend is what you really need to be. You don't have to be trained in counselling, you just need to be a friend to a child. It doesn't have to be complicated. It can be quite simple and straightforward, and it will make an enormous difference to a child.

### **And the roaming mothers?**

I'm not sure where the idea came from and I've not heard of it in any of the areas where this programme has been. Maybe it's an older woman who is like a mother to them. I know the one school, Tebang, has made a conscious effort to speak to neighbours to say please just keep an eye out for these kids, have someone who's a bit older come and sleep with them at night so they're not all by themselves, things like that.

The trouble is if you've got a child-headed household it needs to be someone you know is going to come every day, it can't just be someone who comes when she has time. When you're visiting a person who's ill who gets better, that's okay, but when you're visiting a child who needs to be cared for for the next 12 years, that's another story.

For me, schools is one way where you can do it on a more sustained basis because the children are there five days of the week. And at least in a community teachers are paid.



# Interview

## with Connie Kganakga

Chief Director, HIV/AIDS, national Department of Social Development

*What were you expecting from the dialogue?*

To get all to understand the concept of caring for the child: what it means, what's the best way of making sure the child is cared for, so the child can become a better citizen and a leader in their own right and a member of society.

**Why do we need to talk about it?**

We are overwhelmed by challenges. The transition has not been well managed. We have good policies, plans and programmes. The challenge is taking those policies to where they are supposed to be happening, and getting plans to work.

The other problem I see may be a lack of understanding of policies by people who must implement them.

Another problem is one of co-ordination. People don't understand the difference between co-ordination and collaboration.

Co-ordination mustn't threaten people's independence – it must not take away from them. You can work independently but the right hand needs to know what the left hand is doing. If the right foot is doing one thing and the left is doing something else, you go nowhere. That's where collaboration becomes important.

What I've picked up here is that government has failed to communicate. I get a sense that at implementation level, schools are not aware. What is supposed to happen doesn't trickle down to improve the functioning; for example, the care of children is not the sole responsibility of the school – the school is just the host. We have other structures that have been there for a long time. A caring school doesn't replace existing structures. It's just one of the stakeholders. It's not just the Department of Education. There are already structures outside the school. But the school can be used as the point of contact with the child.

Then there can be referral to other services.

Collaboration is important. We don't want to burden facilitators.

**What about the issue of capacity?**

There is capacity. The problem is we're not using it. Perhaps we lack knowledge. We shouldn't confuse warm bodies with capacity. It's unfair to expect teachers to counsel a child – they should refer.

**There was some concern raised about the training of social workers...**

Government has just got funding for this (from the beginning of this year) and has a programme for training auxiliary social workers. There is no reason why students shouldn't complete their studies.

Most issues could be addressed through the policy framework. Schools should understand



the policy framework – perhaps we should print booklets with guidelines for schools. Then people can know what to do and where to go. That can also improve alignment. The roles of departments are clearly outlined. You can see the policy on the Department of Social Development website.

# Interview

## with Fikile Ngcobo

OVC Specialist, Nelson Mandela Children's Fund

*At the beginning of the dialogue, you said that you want children to grow up in a society that treats them with dignity and respect.*

If you look at South Africa as it is, every morning we seem to be opening the newspaper and there's something happening to children. And this is being done by adults. Our South African society seems to have no regard for children. So we need as a society to begin to create a healthy environment for children to grow up in.

Children have more needs than just education and food: there are psychological needs, there are social needs, there are mental and spiritual needs, so for us to create a rounded citizen of this country, from childhood we need to be looking at all those elements. Some children can't get it in the home; first it's poverty, then it's HIV and AIDS. And because of those issues, parents cannot even look after their own children.

So as I said, our vision is to change the way society treats its children. And that means treating them with dignity and respect.

**How do you change the way people treat children?**

You have to begin somewhere. In terms of what we call our liberation, or the constitution, people are hiding behind a whole lot of things; some would say poverty, as if poverty's a new thing. People were poor in the past, but they still did not steal to fend for their children. Today people will steal in the name of children. People will take a child to the road for the child to beg so that that child can eat. I mean, we've lost our dignity as a people. We had a time when there was this moral regeneration and we lost it. I

think that needs to be brought back at that high level of the president or the deputy president. We've all lost those morals.

South Africa is mostly a religious country – a big percentage of the population belongs to



some religious belief. If we as parents would begin to take our responsibility of teaching their children what's good and right. Another thing, children are left to their own devices. Children are looked after by TV. And what comes on TV... our children don't get positive images, all the images they get are negative.

**A lot of the good news that came out of today was about the youth facilitators.**

Young people can be positive if you encourage them, if you show them, if you guide them, if you're there for them. And if the school begins to give them positive role models, positive chores, duties, responsibilities, then they also feel acknowledged and feel they have a role to play in society. And they've got the energy to do the work: we must utilise them!

**Someone was talking about lack of**



**capacity and inappropriate training at universities for what has to be done on the ground.**

Professionals like teachers and social workers are given the theory. And even when they do practical training, it's

haphazard, like six weeks or a month or so. For me, it would be best if they get into the hard core of the work, where they have to take the children through the process of getting their IDs, birth certificates, making sure that children get adequate services, not just children but even adults, where you're dealing with the elderly, people with disabilities and so forth. They should be taken through a longer process of that and it should be equal to the theory that they get.

**Do you think there are good channels of communication to feed that back to, say, the education department, the universities, whoever is training them?**

We need to be doing that. The NMCF earlier in the year had a discussion forum with different stakeholders on foster care. And what came up, we had one of the universities, Wits [University of the Witwatersrand] saying its social work department is closing. And that was a shock to us. How do you close social work when the department says it doesn't have social workers?

So we were thinking, let's get the information from Wits and other universities and then confront the department. So what needs to happen is organisations like the NMF and other organisations have to come and say we need social workers who have been through the mill.

Today you have the situation of HIV and AIDS in the classroom, the situation of poverty, a whole lot of things and if teachers are not aware of this and they're just focusing on the curriculum, and if we feel teachers have to focus on the curriculum, then let's have assistant teachers who would help pick up on these issues. Those could be what the youth facilitators are doing. So maybe at NGOs we're not doing enough to push. Because we need as NGOs or civil society to say to government, these are the gaps we see, let something be done

to narrow these gaps.

**It was also mentioned that perhaps local government could be the co-ordinating agency between all the people involved in caring schools. Is local government the right agency?**

Local government is closest to the people and that is the government that has to deliver on services and deliver on development of the people in their areas. So there needs to be close co-operation, working relationships, with NGOs who are doing the work and know the community and its needs. But taxpayers pay their money for services to be provided and that money goes to government, so government must provide.

**Was there anything else that came out of today that you'd like to comment on?**

The question of what was termed roaming mothers: some people were worried about what if these mothers are the very ones who will abuse, and who will monitor the mothers. But for me those mothers wouldn't be coming up as individuals. Individual people shouldn't be allowed to come into the picture. Those people should come from structures that are already in the community.

**Do those roaming mothers need some formal sort of support, financial or anything?**

Probably training and just encouragement, how do you deal with a child, with a situation like this. Basic counselling, how do you refer, you may not be the right person.

And for me, when I looked at the map in the morning, of just that small area, Thabo Mofutsanyana, schools were there in the greatest of numbers, and schools are a child's second home. So that's the place that has to really be a healthy environment that a child can thrive in. So if schools could be created to be caring and give support to the children, like this programme, I think we can see some change and some involvement of young people as facilitators. And the community needs to plug into this whole thing and help those facilitators with other things. And if you use facilitators, there could be a way of job creation for them. So we have potential teachers, psychologists, nurses, social workers.

The NMF should be pushing the vision of our founder to reality. He himself was an activist and he's still an activist. Things should change for people. The NMF should continue supporting, seeing that this is replicated in other areas.



# Interview

## with Harriet Speckmeier

Provincial co-ordinator for life skills HIV/AIDS education,  
Free State Department of Education

*I thought the dialogue was excellent, but there were areas we still didn't touch. We still didn't do a framework and something needs to be done about that now.*

I'd like to share programmes such as peer education with other provinces. We all have good ideas, but we have to develop a framework for NGOs to follow. For example, what you have to do first is to introduce yourself to the district director, talk to the school governing board, and so on. I'd like to



have a seminar with the people who were at the dialogue and pass the information along to other organisations.

Caring schools is a very good concept and there are lots of lessons we could use to improve it. We need to speak the same language nationally and it would be marvellous if the youth facilitators could be a national project. It would create jobs for out-of-school youth. You could attach it to learnerships and perhaps further education and training colleges could train youth facilitators.

To get to know a community, ask the youth. They are the ones who know things like who is beating his wife. Youth will speak openly among themselves. You have to know what a

community needs before it can help its children.

I started thinking about the school as a node of care four or five years ago, because I knew the school could be the catalyst in a community. The Free State has a poor, weak civil society. It takes time and money to empower organisations. [However] faith-based organisations are one place where people can assist with the emotional and spiritual side of children.

My greatest concern is OVCs and out-of-school youth. Why are they becoming pregnant or infected with HIV? Because they have no focus. In the townships, teachers leave school early; they don't supervise activities in the afternoons. The sports fields are where children are getting bullied and raped. There's nothing for children to do. There's gangsterism and drugs. Sex is an obvious choice. Instead, we could start chess clubs, debating, dance, drama. People complain about crime, but if we don't nurture these children, we're going to have millions of criminals.

I cannot be responsible for 760 000 children's deaths in this province. They must have a focus in their life. [In times past] we were protected by laws banning things. Today, children have to make choices and some are too immature to do so.

RADS (Radically Different Species) is a peer education programme developed by trainer Dr Darleen Edwards-Meyer. It is concerned with abstinence from sex, gangs and crime. The Free State was the first provincial department of education to go ahead with it in schools and we have trained over 6 000 youth. We give them a compass for life and a suitcase of skills. They go back to the schools and train others. Soul Buddyz have 597 clubs and the RADS 360. There are about 80 master trainers, who are in their 20s. The co-ordinators in charge of the trainers are NGOs like Scripture Union, World Vision, Reach and the Red Cross.

# Photographic Essay

## Caring Schools Visit

27 November 2007

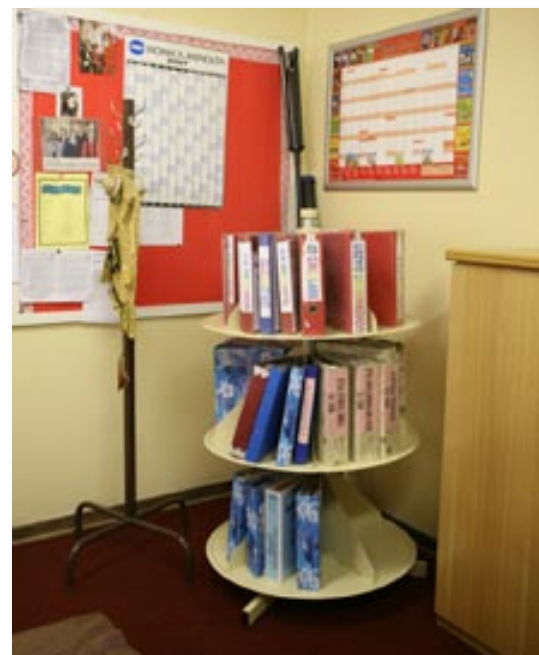
*Molibeli Intermediate Phase School in the Thabo Mofutsanyana district, QwaQwa, won the MEC's R100 000 prize for beautification.*



*This money will be used for netball, basketball and volleyball grounds.*



*Molibeli was one of the province's best-performing schools in 2007. Save the Children found that well-managed schools are able to take on the caring schools component easily and incorporate it into the general running of the school.*







*The school's motto is: Ipokelle le sa tjabile (when the sun is shining, make use of the opportunity).*

*There are 767 children aged 11 to 15 in Grades 4, 5 and 6 at this school. About 180 children are orphaned or vulnerable.*

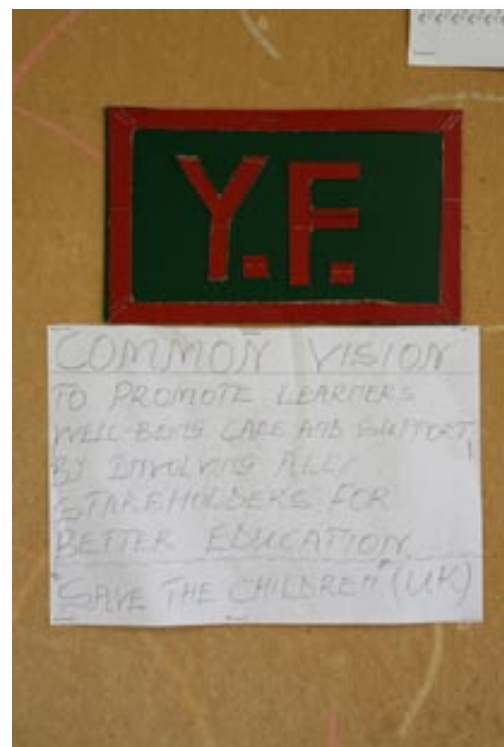




*The school has a feeding scheme. Class leaders take containers of sandwiches to distribute among the children, unsupervised.*



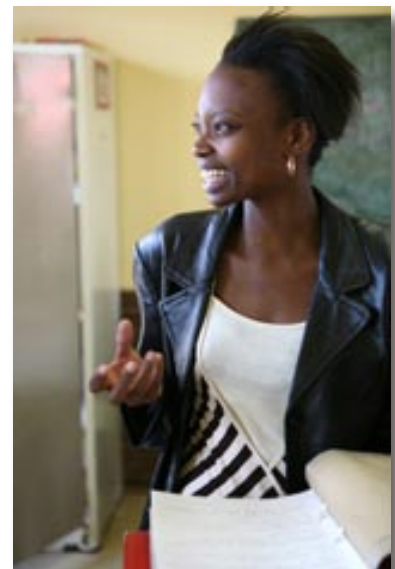
*There's a special room for OVCs – known as The Angels – where they often feel more free to express themselves. The Caring Schools programme gave parents and other members of the community a more focused way to engage with the school, although their role could be clarified further.*



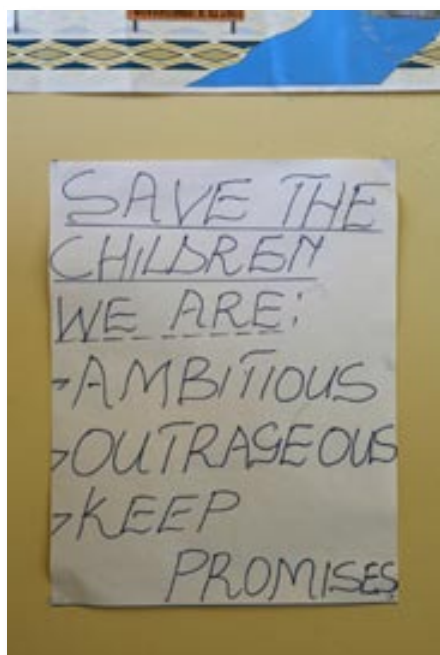
*The school's youth facilitators are based in this room, keeping records and organising activities. The motto of former youth facilitator Mokoena Malefetsane is: "when you do it right, people don't see it".*



*Ntsoebeta Modiehi is a youth facilitator. One of her duties is keeping track of absenteeism and trying to follow up the reasons for it.*



*The Angels are taken on outings sometimes to see how things work and have a variety of experiences. They've been to a water purification plant, a bakery and a restaurant. The youth facilitators have also helped many children to get ID books, which allows them access to grants and other services.*



*Children join the groups of their choice. They can study together, or join the environmental group to keep the school neat and clean, or the debating group. There's even the crimebusters' group, which includes children who have got into trouble for stealing in the past. Some of the Angels counsel others.*



*Computers were donated to Molibeli and will soon be in use.*



*Principal Motlalepula Tlhanyane is full of energy and plans for the school. He wants to use one block of classrooms for adult education.*



*Effective and creative teaching and learning is one aspect of what makes up a Caring School. This is Molibeli's library.*



*The Caring Schools programme has a vision of safe, healthy, attractive and appealing schools where the physical needs of children are met.*



*Caring Schools are also concerned with the social and emotional wellbeing of children and encourage a range of recreational activities.*





*Tebang Intermediate School in QwaQwa offers grades 7 to 9.*

*There are 45 children for every teacher at this school. Enrolment is falling and as a result teacher numbers are being cut.*



*The girls' soccer team is doing well and the school is a good place to be, even in the holidays.*



*The enrolment is 706, of which 313 children are orphaned or vulnerable. Mrs Matshidiso Camilla Phatsoane is the principal.*



*Maanankoe Secondary School (right) was one of the original schools in the Caring Schools project. It has 300 learners in Grades 10 to 12, and two youth facilitators. Secondary schools have their own problems, such as teenage pregnancies and drugs, and the Caring Schools pilot has found that youth facilitators are not always as effective at this level. Some of Maanankoe's problems begin at the Grade 7-9 feeder school next door, though.*



# Partnerships For Success

Naomi Warren

Nelson Mandela Foundation

*The Caring Schools project demonstrated the possibilities that exist when proactive and structured partnerships are in place. Engaging more than one stakeholder in the implementation process strengthens the impact and also broadens the reach, which is often forgotten when programmes are designed in offices and implemented in the real world. The success of this stage of the Caring Schools project can be accredited to the lively partnership between the Free State Department of Education, implementing NGO Save the Children UK and the Nelson Mandela Foundation as the management agent.*

As this project was in the pilot stage, the learnings will assist in informing and strengthening future activities or similar projects. These learnings are detailed elsewhere in the booklet – as too are the strengths and weaknesses of this project. The multi-stakeholder dialogue convened to mark the end



of NMF's funding of the project and the end of the pilot stage has helped to strengthen the next step towards sustainability. Like engaged partnerships, multi-stakeholder dialogue is often one of the best ways to learn from each other and reinforce project goals and objective.

At the heart of this partnership were the needs of the orphaned or vulnerable child, and at the dialogue each individual present believed in the positive impact the project had made. The partnership going forward will be at different levels, but we all left the dialogue understanding and ready to promote caring schools in all our areas of influence.

It was a great honour to have worked with the FSDoE and SCUK. The partnership should set an example for future project implementation – listening and learning from each other.





# About

## Save the Children UK

*South Africa has significant natural resources and a stable political democracy. But it is also the world's fourth most unequal country, with an increasing gap between rich and poor. People in one third of all households go hungry some of the time and one in every five children is not attending school. Of South Africa's 19 million children, 14 million are poor.*

The HIV epidemic in South Africa is growing at one of the fastest rates in the world. Around one in every five people is HIV positive, and one in every six children has lost a parent to HIV

and AIDS by the age of 14. By 2010, 16% of all South African's children will be orphaned.

South Africa has excellent child welfare and protection policies, including a means-tested child support grant for children up to 14 years old. However, these policies are not always put into practice at the local level, and the social welfare,

education and health systems urgently need to improve. These sectors are being particularly hard hit by AIDS deaths, as well as by the "brain drain" of professionals who are switching to work in the private sector or moving away from the country.

### **SAVE THE CHILDREN IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Save the Children UK first started working in South Africa in 1986. At that time, we focused

on reducing the effects of harsh apartheid policies on South Africa's non-white population by financially supporting a number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in healthcare and social welfare. In 1997, we opened an office in Pretoria, and began to research and analyse the impact of HIV and AIDS on children.

Today, we help local communities and national and local government to care for and protect the most vulnerable children affected by HIV and AIDS and poverty. We work to ensure that children's rights are made central to all policy and practice, and that vulnerable children are listened to. We work closely with the government, especially the Department of Social Development, at the national, provincial, and local levels. Our work is currently based in the Free State and Limpopo provinces, two of the poorest areas of the country. We have offices in Pretoria, Gauteng province and Phudatijhaba, Free State province.

### **KEY AREAS OF WORK**

#### **Protection**

#### **Orphans and vulnerable children**

Save the Children UK works to provide comprehensive and compassionate care for orphans and vulnerable children in one district of the Free State province and one in Limpopo province. In Limpopo, our partner organisation works directly with children. By March 2008, our work will have benefited 127 800 children, including young people aged under 18 who have lost one or both parents, and children who live in a household headed by a child or grandparent, or where an adult is sick. We will also target children who live in families that are not their own, and children who are sick, disabled, abused, neglected, alone or destitute.

In the Free State and Limpopo we support local Community Childcare Forums made up of volunteers drawn from the neighbourhood who visit households and identify children in need of help. The Childcare Forums have so far worked with almost 14 000 vulnerable children who are





visited in their homes by forum members and receive other forms of support like food parcels, seeds for vegetable gardens and clothing. Many forums also run after-school clubs and playgroups that provide support for orphans and vulnerable children who may be living with sick parents or on their own. As a result of our lobbying, some local authorities have also begun to pay Community Childcare Forum members in their area, but this is not yet consistent across the district.

We have provided 72 Community Childcare Forums in Thabo Mofutsanyana district, Free State, and 10 Forums in Thulamela district, Limpopo, with training in children's rights and how to claim service entitlements, including the child support grant and school fee exemptions for poor children. We have also provided training in how to obtain birth certificates for children who lack relevant documentation. As many as one third of the children we work with do not have birth certificates, which means that they are unable to receive the child support grant they are entitled to. The Community Childcare Forums are working to help the children acquire their certificates and Save the Children UK is liaising closely with the Department for Home Affairs to speed up the process.

We are currently developing further modules for the forum workers' second training phase. When they have completed the course, participants will receive a certificate showing what they have learned. We hope that this course will become nationally accredited in future. We have also trained 800 people to care for HIV-affected adults at home, and are planning to extend this initiative within the next year to caring for HIV-affected children.

Schools can play an important role in improving vulnerable children's lives. We are working with five other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) across the Free State province to help schools create a caring environment for grieving children. We have trained 60 teachers so far and are also setting up children's committees within the schools. Through these committees, children will be consulted and involved in planning how to change their schools to meet their needs. The Department of Education in the Free State has also agreed to pilot the use of youth facilitators in schools, with the possibility of making this initiative part of a national job creation scheme in future. These facilitators will help students with their problems, both emotional and

practical, and will know what further help the children are entitled to. They will also follow up on children who drop out of school and find ways to help them return. Some 30 NGOs meet regularly to share their experiences of working to make schools centres of care. These meetings are part of the National Caring Schools Network (called CASNET), which is facilitated by Save the Children UK.

We are also encouraging other municipal authorities to replicate our approach to caring for vulnerable children. Representatives from Kwa Zulu Natal and Eastern Cape provinces have visited the Free State to see how the Community Childcare Forums worked, and have subsequently set up forums in their own areas. On a national level, Save the Children UK has played a large part in developing the National Orphans and Vulnerable Children Policy Framework with the Department of Social Development. This document pulls together all the existing policies relevant to orphans and vulnerable children in South Africa, for which the new Children's Bill will provide the overarching legislative framework.

In addition to this work, we provide financial support to St Nicholas Hospice in Bloemfontein, Free State, to run community crèches in poor townships and to care for and treat critically ill children living with AIDS. In Johannesburg, we provide some financial support to the Ekupholeni Mental Health Centre, which works with children and young people who are dealing with the effects of violence in their lives. We also support Heartbeat, another South African NGO, which provides community support for vulnerable children living in the Johannesburg area.

### **CONTACTS**

Save the Children UK is planning to do more work across Southern Africa to raise governments' awareness of the plight of increasing numbers of undocumented children who arrive in South Africa, often alone, seeking to earn a living and hoping for an education.

### **SAVE THE CHILDREN UK**

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**Save the Children**  
UK

# About Nelson Mandela Foundation



## **NELSON MANDELA CENTRE OF MEMORY AND DIALOGUE**

The Nelson Mandela Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation established in 1999 to support its Founder's ongoing engagement in worthy causes on his retirement as President of South Africa. The Foundation is registered as a trust, with its board of trustees comprising prominent South Africans selected by the Founder. The Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory and Dialogue was inaugurated by Nelson Mandela on 21 September 2004, and endorsed as the core work of the Foundation in 2006. The Nelson Mandela Foundation, through its Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory and Dialogue, contributes to the making of a just society by promoting the vision and work of its Founder and convening dialogue around critical social issues.

## **DIALOGUE FOR JUSTICE**

The Centre of Memory and Dialogue aims to develop and sustain dialogue around Mr Mandela's legacy. It is committed to utilising the history, experience, values, vision and leadership of its Founder to provide a non-partisan platform for public discourse on critical social issues. Achieving community participation in decision-making, even at policy levels, is prioritised.

The Centre aims to perpetuate and re-invigorate the culture of engagement using the examples set by Mr Mandela of inclusive and open dialogue that South Africa is famous for.

Drawing on the rich traditions of transformative dialogue, problem-solving and social renewal that made possible South Africa's remarkable transition, the Centre:

- Aims to facilitate greater understanding and awareness about the problems faced by people, particularly in South Africa and Africa, and the

possible solutions available to them

- Utilises comprehensive methodologies to promote dialogue between stakeholders
- Convenes result-oriented stakeholder dialogue on key social issues identified through continuous engagement with partners

## **MEMORY FOR JUSTICE**

Memory resources documenting the life and times of Nelson Mandela are to be found in an extraordinary range of locations, both within South Africa and internationally. The Centre of Memory and Dialogue provides a unique facility which:

- Locates, documents and ensures the preservation of these scattered resources
- Collects and curates Mr Mandela's personal archive
- Promotes public access to these resources and fosters dialogue around them
- Ensures that all initiatives in the name of Nelson Mandela are true to his legacy

Memory is not an end in itself. Its significance lies in its use. The Centre of Memory and Dialogue seeks to reach both global audiences and those systemically disadvantaged within South Africa by:

- Undertaking outreach programmes, including travelling exhibitions, books, comic series, and internships
- Ensuring web-based access to information through its web portal
- Supporting digitization initiatives designed to broaden access to resources
- Facilitating research by individuals and institutions

We believe that the vehicle for sharing memory effectively, for growing it, and for engaging it in the promotion of justice, is dialogue. We actively open our memory work – on the life and times of Nelson Mandela, the events and the people he influenced or was influenced by – to debate and discussion, and we draw on this memory work in convening dialogue on critical social issues that present a threat to justice in society.

# Participants

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