

COPESSA NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2013

“The great and glorious masterpiece of humanity is to know how to live with a purpose.”

Montaigne



Introspecting 4 sustainable solutions

Frustration, self-hate or self-sabotage, was the question we posed in an opinion piece, in our last newsletter. This was prompted by the seemingly wanton destruction of property at our parks and when communities protest.

This was certainly not just an academic question for us, but a quest to understand this emerging phenomenon and its root causes and thus proffer some solutions.

Our point of departure was that a complete buy-in of programmes and projects, from the community offers some level of immunity from vandalism and we believe that the converse to this would be true.

The maxim that, ‘when a student is ready, a teacher will appear,’ is certainly true. COPESSA got a request from Wits Public School of Health to host a group of UNICEF Programme Officers for their practicum in the learning course for Communication for Development (C4D).

“C4D involves understanding people, their beliefs and values, the social and cultural norms that shape their lives. It involves engaging communities and listening to adults and children as they identify problems, propose solutions and act upon them.”

To grapple with the question, COPESSA asked the UNICEF group to look at a broader issue

of increasing and sustaining community engagement.

Our contribution was to facilitate interviews, focus groups with key stakeholders, which included the local councillor’s office, community members involved in the income generating projects COPESSA has created, general community members who use the outdoor gym, COPESSA volunteers and children.

Some of the interesting findings that came out of this exercise are that there is “limited two-way communication between COPESSA and the community; and “child abuse is not a top issues for all community members.”

COPESSA has taken these comments very seriously and has started to introspect with a view to implement the suggested strategy. In the interest of transparency, we will post the full report and our response on our website and hope that the public can hold us accountable.

As we move forward we will incorporate some of the principles of Asset-based Community Development (ABCD) as we sincerely believe that anything less creates dependency and a sense of entitlement. We are also striving to address some of the root causes that have eclipsed child abuse in people’s mind through the establishment of social enterprises.

Walk with us, the journey has just begun!

This issue:

Introspecting 4 sustainable solutions.....1

Women’s Day - prayer meeting2

News in brief.....3

News in brief.....4

Faith or folly5

Philanthropy corner.....6

Contact details.....6



“And so I tell all of of you: what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in heaven, and what you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.” Mat 18:18



“For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them.” Mat 18:20



Women’s Day - Prayer Meeting - by Gopi Maremela

On the 8th of August we hosted a Prayer Meeting in honour of Women’s day. This is after a request to gather and pray, from women in the community. Like most communities in South Africa, Protea Glen has been faced with the scourge of drugs and substance abuse. Young people are exposed to and experiment with drugs such as “Nyaope.” The effects of this are not just seen in the addiction that transpires, but also the impact on the families and the children in the community. The main goals for this event were; to educate, unite as a community and stand in Prayer.

As COPESSA our strength lies in the relationships that we share with different groups within the community. This was no different for this prayer meeting. The programme included Rev. Nondlelo who expanded on the theme of the day found in 2 Chronicles 7:13-16 - “ Whenever I hold back the rain or send locusts to eat up the crops or send an epidemic on my people, if they pray to me and repent and turn away from the evil they have been doing, then I will hear

them in heaven, forgive their sins, and make their land prosperous again.....”

A representative from SANCA shared important information about their services; including rehabilitation for those who are addicted to drugs and support for family members. Advocate Nthate Molatlhegi of SACMTAC shared information about human and women’s rights; domestic violence, protection orders and procedures to follow for conflict resolution.

We would like to thank our various speakers and the different stakeholders including the Office of the Councillor, Teddy Bear Clinic, CPF, Youth Desk, Lufuno Home Based Care, Protea Glen Clinic, Othandweni Children’s Home, Hands of Devine Love, Bread of Life, Isidore Bakanja Catholic Church, Methodist Church of SA, Anglican Church, IMFC, AEC, God Can Ministry and Isaac Seed. The work that we do as a collective to better our communities is not in vain but it does require persistence.

News in brief

In their own words, David & Philipp - *unedited*



It's been almost one year now, since we've arrived in South Africa. Before we came, we were trying to find out about Soweto, about our work. Shacks, poverty, riots, crime everywhere, that's basically what our research in the internet lead us to.

When we finally came to Soweto the expectations didn't last very long, we found beautiful houses and well maintained streets. Even the first impressions showed that Soweto has a lot more to offer than we were told in Germany.

Having to live in Soweto for such a long time offered us an interesting rhythm of it. Especially our arrival in Chiawelo where we lived for the first two month set us on a new basic level of understanding peoples ways of living. Throughout the time we were still looking for a new accommodation closer to our working place, we got deeper into how things are working in Soweto – transport, people dancing on the streets, loud music all the time – things you'll never experience in Germany.

Our neighbours in Chiawelo gave us a warm welcome and accommodated us in their lives – we were invited to every type of events, braais on the weekend, funerals or just coming over for lunch. Although it wasn't our permanent settlement, few month later after looking for a house, where we were supported very well by our friends, we were moving in a beautiful house in Protea Glen. Now the exhausting taxi rides in the morning came to an end; we could then easily walk few minutes to work.

Work was our main objective for coming to South Africa, besides the fun and exploration of the country, we wanted to make a difference and become part of change happening around the world. After those few months we were used to our work, mates and our duties were then clear. We knew what was expected of us and how to do it. Our days at work were fun and brought new experiences most times, although at time we would logically debate on some things. When everything was settled, work was good and we had a new house, we then begin planning our first holiday.

Our exploration of South Africa began with a road-trip to Durban, for which we finally had bought our car.

We spend nine amazing days in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. Christmas and New Year we spent separately, David in Cape Town and Philipp with his family and friends in Soweto.

I Philipp wanted to spend what was left of my holidays with my family. They arrived on the 24. of December and we spent the time exploring South African culture, beautiful landscapes in North West, for example the Pilanesberg National Park or even in Gauteng the Magaliesberg. It was an experience having to share such beauty with them. On the other side I, David had went to see and also explore the mother city (Cape Town) with some other volunteers from Parys. I witnessed the art of nature within the apex of Table Mountain, nature displayed before my eyes throughout the intersection of two oceans Indian and Atlantic. That was one of the most greatest art.

Few weeks after we were in our new home again and I got to spend a bit of time left with Philipp's parents. I got the sense of having a father and mother figure once more, before we knew it, it was work again. It was a new year in a different country which we had to re-plan.

Throughout our work for COPESSA we had been given several jobs. Besides working theoretically, there were many tasks we had to use our bare hands for. Over the whole year it was a good balance between working in the garden and in the office. Working in the garden contained harvesting and watering spinach and other crops and delivering it to Pick n Pay. But, not only the physical work had to be done in the two garden projects, COPESSA set up years ago. We even had to come up with a replanting plan for more than one hundred plots or had to solve other administrative problems like ensuring that enough fertilizer was available or keeping records of sales.

There was also multifaceted work to do in the office. Throughout the year we had several events – Christmas parties, the “Protea Glen Health Awareness Days” and a Women's Prayer Day. We had been involved in the planning and execution of those happenings. Apart from this, we were trying to raise funds where ever we could, not always successfully. But finally we got a donation about 13 computers from Fujitsu Germany, with which we can offer computer lessons for the community soon. Furthermore we installed some hardware to ease the computer-based work. Especially the printserver and the network drive should lower the internet and printing costs.

Our knowledge and personality grew very much in this year and we hope that COPESSA profited from our presence, too. We wish that we left some marks for which we'll be remembered one day.

Thanks to all our good friends, colleagues, brothers and sisters who supported us and helped us if we were struggling to cope. *Philipp Seif & David Kalicki*

David and Philipp, on behalf of COPESSA and our community, we would like to thank you heartily for your contribution and for inching COPESSA closer to her vision, that of creating safe and caring communities for children.

News in brief

Mandela Day By Gopi Maremela

On Mandela Day the children attending the Aftercare Programme at the Hub were treated to scarves and soup courtesy of the Grade 4 learners of Marian College, Linmeyer.

On the 18th of July while praying for Tata's health we decided to honour all that he stands for - service. An afternoon filled with singing, games and laughter was ended off with a distribution of beautiful scarves and warm cups of soup courtesy of these fellow learners from Marist Brothers College.

When I shared with some of the children that I wished I could just pick up the phone and call Tata to wish him a happy birthday, one of them said that I should... If only I really could. That is the kind of man Tata is, he makes us believe that we can really do anything. If our children can grow up believing that they can do anything and be anything they want to be, that is true freedom.

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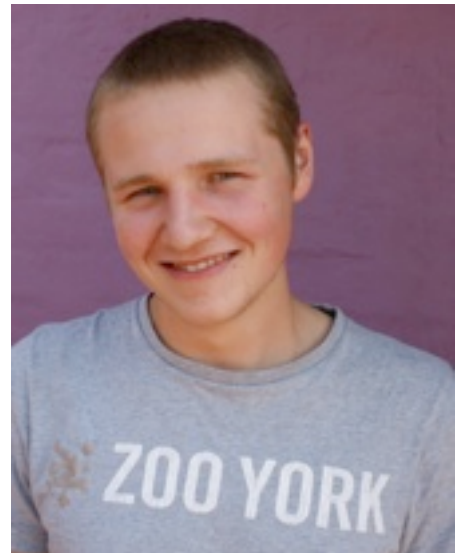


Mrs Kerry Mays, grade 4 educator @ Marian College, with the grade 4s, donning the beanies & gloves, above; Soup donation by Marian College, below



People at COPESSA

In June, we said goodbye to our administrator, Ms Dimakatso Mnguni, who had been with us since Oct 2010. We welcomed Ms Nthabiseng Mashinini, who is a local from Ext. 12, as a new administrator. We also welcome Bennet Vesely (middle) and Ben Roggenbuck (Right), who are the new volunteers from Germany and are replacing Philipp and David. These two will spend a year with us, and we trust it will be memorable. Lastly, we would like to wish Ms Phethile Zitha, our clinical psychologist & her husband, Thapelo Ramere, everything of the best with their first baby.





Incoming-generating projects we hope to turn into social enterprises

Faith or Folly? - an opinion piece

The Social Profit sector, as I choose to call it rather than Non Profit Sector, has in the recent past faced funding crisis. As a result a few big NGOs have closed their doors, robbing many destitute and indigent communities of valuable and accessible services. This funding crisis has been attributed to, *inter alia*, the drying up of Development Aid, especially in the HIV/AIDS Sector, shift of focus to other social ills, and global economic crisis.

To digress a bit, let me first reflect on the choice of terms for this sector. Upfront, this is not my original term, but it resonated with me as it gave me a sense of purpose and self worth. In his book, 'Community - the structure of belonging', Peter Block cites John McKnight who advocates for use of an alternative term, such as Public benefit organisation.

McKnight argues that, "not for profit" means that service and generosity are defined by what it is not. He asks, "what kind of identity and esteem does this establish for the choice for service and care for community?" If you think this is pure semantics or splitting hairs, rise up to his challenge of introducing yourself the next time you meet someone as, "I am not-X" instead of "I am X," and see how you feel.

With terminology choice put to rest, let me go back to my initial train of thoughts. When I heard of the closures, I wondered about our status quo as we are in the same space. Small NGOs like ourselves are certainly not crushed by the flight of Development Aid as this has never been a major source of funding for us. But, it certainly is not business as usual, as this flight is largely borne out of the pernicious global economic melt down, which affects everybody.

The question is, how have we survived until now and how do we plan to survive in the future? Most people in

this sector, including us, will tell you that this is work of faith. Just when you think you cannot go on anymore, some Samaritan will come seemingly out of blue and lift you up. To some this is the stuff of faith and yet to others it is folly.

We have had a fair share of Samaritans, both individuals and corporates. From the corporate side I would like to single out EOH Mthombo (Pty) Ltd who on many occasions has come to our rescue, thank God. There have been other gallant corporates who dared to trust that a small and unknown NGO like us would not vanish with their funds, and we in no way diminish their contribution by not citing them. I hope our output have given them more reason to trust.

As it is not business as usual, we like many other SPOs are looking for other ways to improve our sustainability. The PBO status with the tax exemption implications for donors, the CSI Funding, the subsidies from Social Development and the BBBEE score are certainly helpful but certainly not the whole answer to organisations like ourselves, who give free services to indigent communities. They offer no predictability and forward planning, as they are all to random.

With faith we are investigating the Social Enterprise territory, a space that is proving to be rather tricky to navigate. Although this third sector is well established in other countries, it is an emerging sector in South Africa and is fraught with definitional issues and a multiplicity of rather confusing funding options. We are hoping to find the right vehicle for COPESSA, so that we do not only benefit ourselves but the community we serve, as we create more jobs.

We are inspired by the generosity of those who have already traversed this route, thank you for sharing. "*Intaka yakha ngoboya benye.*"

Philanthropy Corner:

Friends of COPESSA - monthly donations

- Ms Nomsa Makoe - R200 ; Mr Paul Qacha - R500
- Mr Elias Borole - R500; Mr Joshua Motjuwadi - R500
- Drs Mashao & Dzichauya Inc, X-Ray Dept Clinix Holdings Hospital - R3 000

Donations-in-kind - 01 May - 10 September 2013

- **Marian College - Grade 4 Class** - Scarves, hats and gloves. Soup
- **Fujitsu - SA & Germany** - 12 reconditioned laptops and 1 Tablet - Skills development in After School Care Programme
- **Munich Reinsurance** - Office furniture, stationery and children's books for our mini-library

Donations - 01 May - 10 September 2013

- **Rosebank Rotary** - R22 518.70 - Towards veggie tunnel
- **Consol Glass (Pty) Ltd** - R37 000 - Counselling of abuse victims
- **ANONYMOUS** - R20 000 - Used for running costs
- **EOH Mthombo (Pty) Ltd - R300 000** - Running costs
- **Gauteng Dep. of Soc. Dev** - R196 030.92 - Salary subsidies for social workers, psychologists, volunteers
- **Dischem Foundation** - R50 000 - Salaries
- **Mr & Mrs Mfundiso Mahlasela** - R1 650 - Running costs

Donations received on behalf of others:

- **Acorn Foundation** donated a Veggie-tunnel to Divine Hands of Love, a local organisation
- **MunichRe** donated office furniture & stationery to Basa & Faranani Primary Schools

Looking for opportunities to be involved? Here are some ideas.....

- Volunteer some of your time reading, playing, teaching chess; drumming, dance, etc. with the children at our park
 - Sign up for the loyalty programme - MyVillage Card. Visit website: www.702.co.za/shows/ to sign up.
 - Be a monthly or once off donor.
 - If your business produces lots of waste glass, let us put a Glass recycle bin at your premises at no cost to you
- Video Link:

<http://www.702.co.za/shows/>

EVENTS

1. **Community Walk - 30 Nov 2013**
2. **Christmas party 1 (Waterworks Community) - 10 Dec 2013**
3. **Christmas Party 2 (Protea Glen Community) - 13 Dec 2013**

For more enquiries phone Nobs @ 082 552 9449

COPESSA

COPESSA is a registered social profit organisation based in Soweto. Our reason for being is to prevent child abuse. We have pioneered the use of 'Ecological Model' to both understanding the root causes of this scourge and to designing programmes to prevent it, resulting in a holistic approach.

VISION

We aspire to protect children by creating safe, secure and caring communities for children.

MISSION

COPESSA protects children through the following interventions:

- I. Creation of sustainable community development programmes & projects
- II. Counselling and medical assessment of abuse survivors & their families
- III. Training and capacity building of communities and through research

Banking details

Account name

COPESSA

Bank

Nedbank

Branch

Business Central, Gauteng

Branch code

128405

Account number

1284 039 501

International Swift Code

nedszajj

COPESSA in a nutshell - strengthening communities and neighbourhoods

Board of Directors:

Mr E Borole; Mr M. Molefe; Dr Nobs Mwanda (CEO); Mr P. Qacha (Chairperson); Mr J.Motjuwadi; Ms L. Mbongwe

Patron: Dr Sibongile Khumalo