

# **Thembalethu**

## **SPW SA's Quarterly Newsletter**



**July 2009** Young people leading development

### **From the Country Director**

It's hard to believe we're already half-way through the year. And an interesting year it is proving to be! SPW SA's Youth Empowerment Programme has now been up-and-running for over three months, with Quarter Three proving both busy and successful.

The last three months have seen SPW SA recruit and train ten Volunteer Peer Educators (VPEs), all of whom are working in the Kwelera area this year. VPEs are now half-way through their six month placement, with some commendable achievements already, as outlined below.

Our three Youth Development Centres (YDCs) based in Kwelera, Tsolo and Libode are doing fantastic work training young people in computer literacy as well as life skills and SRH. Together they have trained and graduated over 140 young people in basic computer literacy this year.

Two events were held in June to commemorate Youth Day. These were organised by VPEs along with local youth, and were attended by a number of key stakeholders. They also included some impressive performances by local youth, including singing, dance and poetry.



**2009 VPEs during Training at Kei Mouth near East London**



**YDC Officer Chippa Hontshana facilitates a life skills workshop at Mhlontlo YDC in OR Tambo**

Other activities and achievements have included the launch of the Women and Youth Support Project and the UNISA Household Food Security Programme, attendance at the 4th South African AIDS Conference, Psycho-Social Support Training, an exciting endeavour by an ex-peer educator, and new partnerships.

Looking ahead to Quarter Four, we have Mid-Term Evaluation, Mid-Term Training, Youth Action Group Training, Women and Heritage Day events and the wind-up of our programme for 2009, culminating in our VPE Debrief at the end of September. We look forward to another busy and exciting quarter and thank you for your generous support!

### **Quarter 3 achievements**

VPEs and YDC Officers achieved some commendable results during Quarter 3:

- **Over 200 workshops facilitated on life skills, SRH, livelihoods and civic participation**
- **850 young people participating in sport and other positive recreation activities**
- **Over 4600 condoms distributed in SPW target communities**
- **170 active Youth Action Group members**
- **750 young people visiting Youth Resource and Youth Development Centres**
- **142 young people graduating in basic computer literacy**

We look forward to reporting more achievements to you in our next newsletter. Until then, may the good work continue!

**For more information, please contact SPW SA:**

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## SPW SA's Youth Empowerment Programme

SPW SA is a youth-led NGO which aims to place young people at the forefront of change and development. Through its Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP), SPW trains young people as Volunteer Peer Educators (VPEs) to be agents of change in rural communities. VPEs facilitate workshops, sport, positive recreation activities and awareness-raising events to enhance young people's knowledge, skills and decision-making in the areas of life skills, sexual and reproductive health, and livelihoods. SPW works primarily in the Eastern Cape of South Africa.

## Recent highlights from SPW SA

### SPW SA takes a lead in the 4th South African AIDS Conference

In April this year four SPW staff members attended the 4th South African AIDS Conference in Durban: 'HIV: Scaling up for Success'. SPW SA Programme Coordinator Pienaar Motabene played a lead role, facilitating Day One of the Pre-Conference Youth Summit. The Summit was aimed at encouraging more effective youth participation both at the main Conference and in HIV/AIDS prevention. The Summit culminated in the drafting of the Youth Lekgotla Declaration, asserting a commitment to support and actively participate in the prevention and mitigation of HIV/AIDS. SPW SA would like to thank the UNFPA for their assistance in enabling our attendance at the Conference.

### Kwelera celebrates Youth Day

On June 16th communities in the Kwelera area came together to commemorate National Youth Day. The event was organised by YDC staff and students, VPEs and Youth Action Group members. The event was attended by over 400 people, including local councilor Mr Blom, Youth Activist and Special Programmes Unit member Mr Juju and Chairperson of Great Kei Youth Council Mr Gunyazile. The event included speeches as well as some impressive poetry, dance and musical acts, and the finals of a sports tournament.



**Kwelera YDC Officer Liberty Mesani tells local youth about YDC services during SPW's June 16 Youth Day Event**

### Tsolo youth graduate in Computer Literacy

On 8th May 55 young people graduated from SPW SA's Youth Development Centre in Tsolo with basic computer literacy skills and in life skills, SRH and civic participation. The course is taught over a three month period, based on the International Computer Drivers License and SPW SA modules.

YDC staff and students planned and organised the event together, raising ZAR9000 to celebrate the students' achievements and further promote the YDC. Over 600 people attended the event in Tsolo Town Hall, including a number of local stakeholders, several of whom delivered motivational speeches asserting the benefits of computer literacy and highlighting the opportunities available to young people, particularly those with computer skills.

In his speech, Mr Nicholas from Asante said "young people have opportunities but are not using them. SPW's Computer Literacy Course is one programme that young people should use to gain experience and expand their knowledge and academic qualifications".

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## July 2009 Young people leading development



### Ex-VPE continues the work of SPW

SPW SA is delighted that ex-VPE Bongiwe Zihange has continued to undertake youth development activities in Ngqeleni, her home community, since being a VPE there in 2007. Bongiwe, 29, runs regular life skills and SRH workshops in schools, organises and encourages youth to get involved in sport and other positive recreation activities, and assists local youth to find livelihood opportunities. She recently acquired assistance to construct a Youth Development Centre for her community (right) where she will run her activities. She hopes to assist local youth to start their own income-generating projects. The Centre will also be a place for young people to come together, share ideas and plan activities and events. She hopes to open the Centre in September. Congratulations Bongiwe!



**Ex-VPE Bongiwe Zihange from Ngqeleni with the Youth Development Centre she is building**

### SPW SA attends Psycho-Social Support workshop

SPW SA was pleased to attend the Introduction to Psycho-Social Support (PSS) workshop hosted by Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF) from 9th-13th March. The aim of the workshop was to bring together NMCF partners in the Eastern Cape to ensure a similar understanding of PSS and to equip partners with the knowledge and skills required to facilitate effective community-based PSS. Topics covered included Definitions and Models of PSS, Bereavement, Working with Families and Communities, Resilience and Self-Reflection. SPW SA hopes to incorporate a stronger PSS component into its programme in the future.

## Looking ahead—what's coming up

### Women & Youth Research & Advocacy Project launched

SPW SA, together with the Mount Ayliff Development Agency (MADA) has been identified by the Eastern Cape NGO Coalition (ECNGOC) to be a lead organisation in their new Women and Youth Research & Advocacy Project. The Project aims to mobilise women and youth to advocate for more effective policy and practice with regards to HIV/AIDS-related issues, and to raise awareness in rural communities about policies, rights and services. SPW SA is coordinating the youth component of the Project. Advocacy and awareness activities will be undertaken by a working group made up of ten youth actively involved in HIV/AIDS-related work, including current and ex-VPEs. The project will be piloted until February and, if successful, will be scaled up.

### New partnership with AUSAID

SPW SA is delighted to announce an exciting new partnership with the Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAID). AUSAID has agreed to fund the enhancement of several of our Youth Development Centres. We're looking forward to achieving great things with AUSAID's support.

### Household Food Security Programme

SPW SA, together with UNISA (University of South Africa), SAIDE (South African Institute for Distance Education) and community development workers, have launched a new Household Food Security Programme. The Programme hopes to contribute to integrated rural development by helping communities to improve their food and nutrition security through a participatory sustainable livelihood approach. The course will be offered in a number of SPW SA target areas, and hopes to involve current and ex-VPEs. Coordinators are currently seeking potential students and tutors. For more information, please contact Artwell at SPW SA.

## International SPW News

### SPW leads DfID's first youth consultation

From February to May 2009, the UK Government's Department for International Development (DfID) conducted a wide-ranging consultation into the development of their new White Paper on International Development, which was launched in July 2009. This is the key framework that will inform DFID's work and priorities over the coming years.

As part of this consultation process, DFID, for the first time, formally and explicitly consulted with young people – as a result of the advocacy of a range of NGOs, including SPW. The consultation itself was led by SPW and the DFID-CSO Youth Working Group (SPW now coordinates this group and is part of the Steering Committee).

The consultation brought 50 young people together for a day long workshop. Young people were aged 14-25 and came from every part of the UK and from all walks of life – most representing and sitting on governance bodies of national and international NGOs. The consultation was opened by Ivan Lewis, Minister for International Development and ended with presentations by DFID staff and young people themselves.

**More information:** If you would like to hear more about the day, please get in touch with SPW's Youth and Advocacy Coordinator, Diarmaid McDonald on [diarmaid.mcdonald@spw.org](mailto:diarmaid.mcdonald@spw.org)

**View interviews** with young people here:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzndaRABZwA>



UK youth take part in DfID's White Paper Youth Consultation Event

### Highlights from SPW Country Programmes around the world

**SPW Uganda** brought together 52 young people in Kampala to take part in a national youth consultation focusing on the country's National Development Plan. They represented Uganda's young people who constitute more than 70% of the country's population. The session gave this crucial demographic the chance to have their voices heard in a planning process that will shape Uganda's development over the coming 5 years. Participants included members of the Ugandan Government, including Abel Rwendeire, Deputy Chair of the National Planning Authority, and the Honorable Alupo Jessica, Minister of State for Youth and Children Affairs.

Working with Nepal's Ministry of Youth and Sports, **SPW Nepal** ran a consultative workshop in Dhading district, bringing together 36 young people from 13 different districts to review the Ministry's recent policy in order to make comments and recommendations about the document and its implementation. The policy will be a milestone in the country's work in addressing the concerns and issues facing Nepal's youth population.