

YES PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT: 1 APRIL 2008 – 31 MARCH 2009

The Youth Employment Skills programme has been successful in training youth between the ages of 18 and 30 from disadvantaged communities in and around Cape Town and then placing many of these youth into employment.

We offer Life Skills as part of the programme. The hard skills comprise Bricklaying, Computer Maintenance and Repair, Tiling and Computer Literacy & Office Management. We offer 5 courses per year each 8 weeks in duration from 0900-1530 Monday to Friday.

Life Skills

The 3 week Life Skills component is the backbone of the programme and comprises three phases; Personal Development, Self Empowerment and Business Skills. As many of these youth come from backgrounds where drug abuse, domestic violence, alcoholism and a general feeling of despair prevails, the youth need the knowledge and skills in order to question their choices and to change their behavior where necessary.

The evaluation results from each group attending Life Skills has been very positive, which serves to reinforce the need for this programme. The feedback from employers regarding the attitude of learners has been very favourable.

Bricklaying

We have noticed an increase in youth coming to us from the street to join this course. Many of these youth are refugees in desperate need of employment. The Don Bosco Hostel has made beds available for some of these youth on an ongoing basis. The shelters in and around Cape Town have also agreed to accommodate these students if necessary. Bricklaying students are encouraged to attend the tiling course but unfortunately many are not able to make use of the opportunity due to financial constraints.

Computer Literacy and Office Management

We have installed Windows 2007 on all computers and updated the training manual. The use of a server has made the marking of exams easier and the control of the internet is now more manageable. This remains a very popular course but we have found that increasingly students struggle to pay the R100 fee for this course and for Computer Maintenance and Repair.

Tiling

The student numbers for this course has steadily increased. Some of the youth attending this course have found tiling subcontract work in their communities. The class has been moved the newly renovated cellar room which means that the YES classes are all in close proximity to one another. Street youth also apply for this course as there is no fee involved. These students are encouraged to also attend the bricklaying course but due to circumstances most cannot.

Computer Maintenance and Repair

This class has also moved a new venue and is easily accessible. We continue to encourage computer literacy and office management students to complete this course to increase their skills base. About half the students make use of this opportunity. It is not that the remaining students do not want to attend the course, they just cannot afford to do so.

Job Placement

2008 Was a successful year with regard to the placement of students into various positions. Trans Logic, a service provider to the Department of Social Services, employed 46 data capturers on an 8 month contract. These youth have now come back to us for reemployment. We have found employment for some of these youth as they now have experience which is required for the positions we have recommend them for. The first 3 months of 2009 has seen fewer jobs being available to our youth compared to the same period last year. Sharon has placed youth from Don Bosco Hostel/Learn to Live Workshop into jobs with I & J as deckhands and Pick 'n Pay as packers.

Employment statistics for 2008 (Groups 1/2008 - 5/2008)

	Females Trained 2008	Males Trained 2008	Females Employed 2008	Males Employed 2008	Total Trained 2008	Total Employed 2008
Total	141	138	151	123	279	274

The total employed for 2008 includes students trained in 2007 but employed in 2008.

Funding

We need to say a huge thank you to all our funders, especially Samsung Real Dreams who, through the International Youth Foundation, have helped to sustain the project during 2009. Without the support and belief in this project by so many of our partners we would not be able to reach out to the youth who really need the intervention.

Video Conferences

Our youth have participated in video conferences which was organized by Maria Perreiter from Missio Munich. The feedback from the 8-10 youth participating in each session was positive. They enjoyed speaking to the German youth, sharing experiences typical of youth. They discussed issues relating to their lives; drugs, HIV/AIDS, music, movies, education, sport, politics etc.

Staff

Job Placement Officer	Sharon Reagon
Administrative Assistant (contract)	Stacey Lewis
Life Skills Facilitator	Edgar Lennitch
Tiling Facilitator	Henry Robinson
Bricklaying Facilitator	Xabangai Magwenzi
Computer Maintenance & Repair Facilitator	Milton Saaiman
Computer Literacy and Office Management Facilitator	Edgar Lennitch
Coordinator	Allison Appleton

Without the commitment, caring, nurturing and often cajoling attitude of staff members this project would not be as successful. It is sometimes enough just to listen, to make the student feel that someone cares what happens to him/her. Students who require professional help in dealing with problems beyond our expertise are referred to the relevant people/institutions who can be of assistance.

Xabangai and Milton completed the Facilitator Training course. All permanent staff members now have this qualification.

Student Stories

Andiswa Cetywayo

Andiswa is a 19 year youth from an extremely poor area in Delft on the Cape Flats. She did not have resources to pay for the course or transport to Cape Town. She also did not have money to buy food. We assisted her financially. She wanted to attend the Computer Literacy and Office Management course but as this course was full she decided she would try Computer Maintenance and Repair. Milton interviewed her and did an assessment to determine whether she would be able to cope with the computer maintenance course – she had never even switched on a computer. She passed the exam and we then again assisted her when she attended the Computer Literacy and Office Management course with fees, travelling expenses and lunch. She passed this course as well and is now employed.

Maria Buti

Maria is a 25 year old young lady from Cite C Khayelitsha, an extremely poor area of the township. She also lives in Nyanga when the need arises. She ran an illegal shabbeen and was assaulted by customers on numerous occasions until she gave up these activities after encouragement and counseling from Eddie. This single mother joined the programme as she was in desperate need of employment in order to feed her family. She completed the Computer Literacy & Office Management course and is now employed in a full-time position.

Musa Ahmed

Musa lived under the bridge near Home Affairs in Cape Town. He joined the bricklaying course and stayed in the Don Bosco Hostel while on the 8 week course. He found employment on a 8 month contract immediately after the course as he could not stay at the hostel for more than two weeks after completion of the course. He arranged for his own accommodation at The Haven Night Shelter but wants to move into his own place as soon as he is able to save enough money to do so.