

PROGRESS REPORT – 1 JANUARY - 30 JUNE 2001

(Note: we have also included some items from July which could not wait until December!)

Dear Friends

“...the simple truth (is) that development happens through personalities.” – Michael Hippler of Misereor, July 2001.

This is a true statement. The converse, however, also holds good – personalities can be, and most often are, the main hindrance to development.

The fact is that people are the very object and meaning of development, whether you are planting cabbages, conserving flora and fauna or building houses.

Together, we are in the process of creating “a new meaning” in our lives and in the natural and built world. This new meaning is not yet explicit, yet you may, if you are open to seeing between the lines, discover it as you continue to read ...



INTSHAYELELO is blooming three years down the line!! This 100% indigenous school garden was established at Intschayelelo Primary School together with The Botanical Society in 1998. It was the first school garden which planted a wide spectrum of Fynbos species from different floral types within the Cape Floral Kingdom. Over the last few years the garden has served as an experimental model to see which species grow well in the schools on the Cape Flats.

URBAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAMME



Market Day at SCAGA!!

The Siyazama Community Allotment Garden Association continues to sell their produce to the local community. The group is developing a regular market day where locals buy fresh organic produce and support the beginnings of their market garden. This group and three or four other gardening groups also sell their excess produce to the Oude Moulén Farm organic market in Observatory, Cape Town.

Six Community Gardening Groups visit KIRSTENBOSCH Gardens On 2 May, 45 women from 6 of our community groups set off in the Kirstenbosch bus in very high spirits! For most of the women this was their first visit to our National Botanical Gardens. The day was spent sharing experiences, information, stories, problems, laughter and food in the breathtaking surroundings of the Kirstenbosch gardens. The outing was a great opportunity for the women to gather together to relax, while at the same time learn from each other. Many of the group members commented on how encouraged and challenged they felt by what was discussed. The day also included a walk around the botanical gardens and a short overview on the gardens and their importance. Our very special thanks to the Cape Horticultural Society for sponsoring a day that will be remembered by all, for a long time to come.





← International experts on Urban Agriculture come to see our work

From 15-18 January 2001, the Sub-Regional Experts Consultation on Urban Agriculture was held at Stellenbosch University. The conference was sponsored by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Rob Small gave a presentation to the group of international delegates and conducted them on a tour of our leading projects. Reports from the conference are available on request.

DRUM DRIP IRRIGATION in action →

Thembinkosi Ndobeni, Abalimi field support worker, fills up the drum in the demonstration garden at the Khayelitsha Garden Centre. Abalimi has also set up pilot drum-drip systems at the SCAGA garden and ten more will be installed at various community garden projects by the end of the year. This system is ideal for our conditions as it:

- Reduces water loss through wind and evaporation
- Is simple to operate and repair
- Is relatively inexpensive
- Applies water directly to the plants so there is little wastage



Abalimi is still looking for ways to reduce the cost of this system but the results, so far, have been very pleasing. Three demo units were donated by NETA FIM and the N/O Fund provided funds for the other 10.

The pilot NUTRITION COURSE is born. →

A nutrition student from the University of Cape Town (U.C.T.) demonstrates how to make butternut soup – a cheap, easy and nutritional recipe! For some time Abalimi has been wanting to find a way to improve and increase our focus on nutrition within our Urban Agriculture Programme. To this end we have begun to develop a partnership with Ingrid Schloss and the students from U.C.T. Nutrition Dept. Through this partnership we are aiming to develop a basic household nutrition training module, appropriate for women from the township communities.



So far two preliminary workshops have been held: The first one was facilitated by the UCT nutrition students on basic nutrition and the importance of having a balanced diet, followed by a cooking demonstration. The second was facilitated by the Abalimi field staff, to demonstrate to the UCT students what and how families in the townships are eating. This was followed by a discussion between the students and community members on how and what people like to eat and some of the problems facing women trying to feed their families on minimal income. Abalimi is very excited about this partnership and hope it will help us to better assist our core target group – the poor, the unemployed and especially the women.

CAPE FLATS GREENING PROGRAMME

The ILITHA LOMSO INDIGENOUS GREEN STREETS MOTHERS GROUP forge ahead.



↑ Mrs. Baliso and daughter in her newly planted garden.

Nosisa Merile, Abalimi fieldworker & horticulturalist, →
“bagging over” cuttings with group members. Khayelitsha youth are taking initiative! It was thanks to a local Environmental Youth Group, Ilitha Lomso, that Abalimi was provided with the perfect opportunity to pilot our long-awaited Basic Horticulture Course as part of the emerging Green Streets program.



The Youth Group approached Abalimi to assist mothers in their community who were interested in establishing gardens in their homes. The pilot mothers group consisted of 9 women who came to the garden centre to learn how to propagate indigenous plants.

Over a number of weeks the group learned how to make cuttings, sow seed, divide plants and transplant young seedlings (‘bagging over’). In return for all the plants propagated by the group, for Abalimi’s stock, the women were given bigger plants and assisted to establish their own gardens. During the establishment of the gardens they learnt some of the fundamental principals of design and layout and how to care for their gardens. It is a pleasure to walk down their streets, which are being transformed by the gardens!

The women have now formed a garden group called Chumisa, involving other women in the area and they have many hopes for the future.

↓ S.E.E.D Schools Environmental Education & Development - Phase II LAUNCH 16 July 2001

The S.E.E.D Project is officially back on the scene. After nearly three years on the bench, a new team has stepped forward to carry on with the work that began in 1998/99. This autonomous project of Abalimi held its official Phase II launch to coincide with the first day of its Permaculture/OBE Educator training course launch. Matseliso Semmelink of the Western Cape Education Department opened proceedings with a talk in which she made clear the need for a project like S.E.E.D and stressed the importance of working together. S.E.E.D was overwhelmed by the response of 18 participants representing 10 different schools and educational institutions. They not only gave up a week of their holidays, but braved the worst that Cape Town winter has to offer, to make it to the Centre for Creative Education (C.C.E.) in Philippi. The aim of the training was to enable educators to start up Permaculture process at their own schools and find ways to integrate this into teaching practice. S.E.E.D Phase II has recently obtained further support from Board of Executors (BoE) which allows for more materials development workshops and two schools to start up practical projects. S.E.E.D thanks The Green Trust-W.W.F for allowing a 3-year deferment of Phase II start-up funding and Abalimi for all of their support.



Back row left to right: *Matseliso Semmelink (WCED), Leigh Brown (S.E.E.D), Audrey Bam (Principal of Impendulo Primary), Nomangesi Mzamo (C.C.E)*
Front from left to right: *Rhian Berning (S.E.E.D), Matilda Mngxekeza (Sakumlandela Primary) and Nombulelo Majezi (Principal of C.C.E.)*



↑ A SCHOOL CARETAKER'S COURSE is launched.

Caretakers have a very important role to play in school greening. The enthusiasm and positive response we received after running our first caretaker's course was exciting and encouraging. The one-day workshop dealt with types of grass, feeding lawns, trees and shrubs with organic substances and mulching. It was run in Xhosa for caretakers from 15 schools. The caretakers said: "We really enjoyed a course held especially for us, as we are often marginalized – the teachers are always going to workshops and don't always pass the information on to us", "we are the ones that at the end of the day who are caring for the school grounds but we don't always have the information and know-how." The caretakers were very eager to learn new skills and enjoyed having the opportunity to meet together with caretakers from other schools to share common problems. Many requested that we hold more workshops and Abalimi is busy working on developing a series of these one-day topic specific workshops. We look forward to working further with them again in the future.

← The Wynberg Women's Probus Group at the S.C.A.G.A garden on an Open Day Visit, 3 April 2001.

We always enjoy our Open Day visits and it is important for our friends and sponsors to get out to the projects in the townships to see first hand what we are doing. It is also a very good opportunity for the field staff and members of our various groups and projects to meet all of you. Thank you all for your kind donations, interest and good wishes.

TEAM NEWS

ABALIMI SAYS GOODBYE, WITH OUR SINCERE THANKS AND BEST WISHES TO:

Roland Welte, who served Abalimi as accountant and administrator for over ten years! Thank you Roland for your dedication and efficiency!

Marc Stonestreet, who has been working with Abalimi for the past six months as temporary assistant to the director. Marc has made an enormous contribution to the organisation by helping to set up our database and operating systems. Marc really has become part of the Abalimi family and will be greatly missed!

OUR WARMEST WELCOME TO :

Tracy Saunders, who joined our team in May, to replace Roland as accountant/administrator. Tracy has a lot of experience in working with NGOs and her contributions are already being felt and appreciated!

Liziwe Stofile, who is joining the fieldwork team as a trainee in the spring. Her special focus will be urban agriculture. She is already a familiar face at Abalimi and we look forward to working with her.

Samantha Ralston, who joined us as a voluntary assistant to the director, thank you Samantha!

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Christina Kaba, Woman of the Year and our very own Green Queen. Christina won the Award in the Community Affairs category on 1 August 2001. This award is sponsored by Shopright-Checkers and SABC 3.

Rob Small who was awarded the Paul Harris Fellowship by the Rotary Foundation, through the Waterfront Rotary Club. This is the highest honour that Rotary can give and Rob, taken completely by surprise, is still trying to absorb it all.

Both Christina and Rob are the longest serving co-workers on the team and the last remaining pioneers of ABALIMI.





← Landy Wright, field programme co-ordinator and Sindiswe Mahusa, fieldworker, marvelling at the wonderful new computer (one of three) donated by the JDI Foundation and The Synchronicity Foundation. These computers will give us a major boost in systems and data management efficiency. The old dinosaurs we have been nursing can now be put to rest.



← The Bishops School African Languages Society presented a donation of R1 750 to us in May, after an Abalimi slide presentation. They are pictured here with Abalimi co-workers in the demonstration garden at the Khayelitsha Garden Centre. In the centre, Jannie de Villiers of Bishops hands over the cheque to Rob Small, before the group went on a projects tour. We hope that they will

come out again to make sure that their money is “put in the ground” at a School Greening Project, while they chat in Xhosa and make friends with pupils from the chosen school.

NOTE: You will see that we have created a new box on our donation form, which gives you the opportunity to state if you would like to be specifically mentioned as a donor. If there is anyone who has given in the past who has been missed, please let us know and we will include your name in upcoming newsletters etc.

↓ THANK YOU ↑

FOR DONATIONS (R1 000 and over) AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THIS REPORTING PERIOD:

- Our many Friends - individuals, clubs, trusts, small business, social and church groups who are not named - for lack of space or because they do not wish to be - your ongoing interest and donations in kind and cash, continue to be a source of great encouragement and inspiration to us.
- Misereor our founder funder and ongoing partner. Your recent gift of a beautiful original cloth painting has brought a living Presence into our lives.
- The Green Trust-WWE our senior greening funding partner, who understand “people first” conservation in service of the Cape Floral Kingdom.
- OLD MUTUAL who know that people and the environment are the best investment. This newsletter is the proof.
- The Cold Chain who keep on helping us to create vegetable gardens.
- The De Beers Fund who came forward with a second grant, this time for development of our Organisation Building program.
- Jan and Martin Dawkins from the UK who donated R1 000 after a visit to the projects.
- The Rotary Club of Paarden Eiland who held their “Christmas in July” function on our behalf and raised R8 000 towards a new delivery vehicle.
- St. Ola’s Trust for another major boost for greening and food growing.
- The Buxton Garden Club for a marvellous donation of R1 400.
- The Waterfront Rotary Club for a donation of R1 000.
- The City of Cape Town Grants-in-Aid (Health) for food growing resources to the Nyanga area.
- Jambo International Centre for their regular annual donation.
- Martin Lusty of Scotland, a true activist and friend.
- Dr B. Brom for a generous donation of R1 000.
- The Diana Stuttaford Charities Trust for their unfailing yearly contributions.
- Delheim Wines for R1 000 for a school greening project.
- AusAID for major resource support to survival food growers townshipwide.
- Catholic Welfare & Development (CWD) for proceeds from their December 2000. “Greening Appeal” which are to be used for community garden groups. ABALIMI is an independent affiliate family member of CWD.

NOTICEBOARD

Shopping list:

Thank you so much for your donations in response to our last “shopping list” – our training room is really beginning to take shape! We are still hoping to attract the following:

- A large working urn for community workshops
- A large blackboard or whiteboard for training and planning
- A flower press – for a proposed indigenous herbarium at the Khayelitsha Garden Centre.
- A volunteer with strong arms and back plus LDV, to collect and deliver donations-in-kind – from plant cuttings to concrete slabs. We will cover your vehicle km cost.

Announcements:

- Annual General Meeting 2001: This will be held at the Manyanani Peace Park on Sunday 30 September at 3 p.m. Further details can be provided on request. If you would like to come, please RSVP to Samantha at 447 1256.
- Project Tours: We will only be able to have one more Open Day tour this year, on Thursday 11 October, from 9.30 a.m. – 3.00 p.m. The Open Day is designed for individual friends who are not part of a group/club. Groups and clubs are invited to arrange with us their own “custom-designed tour” separately. There is no charge, but donations are always welcome. In either case, please call Rob or Samantha at 447 1256 to make arrangements.
- Website Launch: Visit our new website, donated and hosted by Peddytech. Craig Pederson, the owner, is a member of the Paarden Eiland Rotary Club, and offered to set it up and run it for us after we gave a slide show presentation to the club earlier this year. It should be active by the time you read this newsletter! This newsletter plus the last one will be available “on-site”. The address is: www.peddytech.com/abalimi