



Ons Plek Projects

providing hope instead of street life

P O Box 3506 Cape Town 8000

Tel: 021 465-4829 ~ Fax: 021 461-0530

email: onsplek@new.co.za ~ website: www.onsplek.org.za

NPO No. 009-578 ~ Affiliated to Cape Town Child Welfare Society



2012 Christmas Party



2013 NEWSLETTER

~ Ons Plek Projects ~

We invite you to visit all our Projects, meet the staff members and the children

Director: PAM JACKSON

Unit Manager Siviwe: YUMNA VAN DER SCHYFF

Our assessment centre intake shelter ONS PLEK and our OFFICES are situated at 4 Albertus Street, Cape Town
Tel: 021 465-4829/72 ~ Fax: 021 461-0530.
email: onsplek@new.co.za ~ website: www.onsplek.org.za

Our second-stage shelter SIVIWE is situated at 7 York Road, Woodstock, Cape Town. Tel: 021 448-6529.

Our Community Development Programs:

UKONDLA 1 is situated at City Council Community Hall, Browns Farm, Philippi, Cape Town.

UKONDLA 2 is situated on the premises of Sizakuyenza Safe House, cnr Eisleben and Phumelele Roads, Philippi, Cape Town.

UKONDLA 3 is situated on the corner of Eisleben and Phumelele Roads, Philippi, Cape Town.

Sello Maake begged ...

In the words of Sello Maake "*Aph'amadoda Madoda*", "we need Real Men, where are the men, we need real men to stand up and join us in this struggle for our survival"

On Valentine's Day, 14th February 2013, a day dedicated to love, romance, hearts and chocolates, I joined the One Billion Rising initiative, dancing, to "*raise my voice*" against the atrocities of abuse and violence suffered by children and women around the world and more especially in my beloved country, South Africa. On that very morning, our shocked conversations centred around the shooting and senseless killing of Reeva Steenkamp by the well-known Oscar Pistorius.

The girls at Ons Plek were taking to the steps as if they had danced it all their lives, there was a seriousness about the task at hand which was infectious as preparation for the dance took 6, one-hour sessions, of practising the choreographed steps to "Break the Chain" with Joy "our choreographer" who became just as excited and honoured to be part of such an important social issue.

There was an air of excitement and anticipation as we prepared to walk to the College of Cape Town where we as a "flash mob" would finally make our voices heard. We wore masks that day, not because we did not want to be recognised. We were standing up for the countless, nameless, women and children who face abuse every day and whose names never appear in the newspapers, on television or on the social media networks, the women and children whose faces are their masks hiding their hurt behind false bravados and smiles, because they do not want the world to see their pain. I was finally taking a public stand!

As those who could and those who couldn't just swayed along, missing steps, moves and turns we continued to dance to the song, "*Break the Chain*" which resonated through the arcade attracting a multitude of young and old, we brought the message across that we will no longer be silent.

The experience left me breathless and I will forever be changed by it. I will no longer remain passive but will be an advocate to breaking the silence to these heinous crimes. Thank you Ons Plek Projects for being the conduit through which I could also make my small contribution!

**Will the Real Men
PLEASE STAND UP!!**

Charline Thomas

Administrative Assistant, Ons Plek



*Photographs taken at the
One Billion Rising
initiative*



Pam Jackson
DIRECTOR

One Step at a Time ...



The tragic rape of Anene echoes the rape of so many girls who cross our doorway. Something must be done about attitudes not only towards women but also towards boys and girls and babies whose bodies are regarded as someone else's playground. The views expressed below do not necessarily reflect ours in all aspects but they do make a good start to reflect on. Carol Bower's article does not solve the very complex issue of rape but it does make a small contribution towards that by debunking some myths around proposed solutions often put forward.

This quote from Sister Chan Khong encapsulates what we so often feel facing the seemingly increasing challenges, not only those financial challenges but also the challenges which face every business. That of staying efficient in a sea of bureaucracy and still doing one's work. And of course, the scourge of rape.

"Sometimes I feel overwhelmed. But I try to work one day at a time. If we just worry about the big picture, we are powerless. So my secret is to start right away doing whatever little work I can do. I try to give joy to one person in the morning, and remove the suffering of one person in the afternoon. That's enough.

When you see you can do that, you continue, and you give two

little joys, and you remove two little sufferings, then three, and then four. If you and your friends do not despise the small work, a million people will remove a lot of suffering. That is the secret. Start right now."

Sister Chan Khong (1938)

Vietnamese pioneer of socially engaged Buddhism



Published in the Cape Times:

Proposed solutions to the rape crisis are simply wrong *by Carol Bower*

THERE are so many things to say about the rape, mutilation and murder of Anene Booysen that I scarcely know where to begin or what to focus on. But that Anene Booysen suffered this fate surprises me not one whit. Hurts, sickens and angers, yes, but surprises, no.

Also not surprising is the reaction from officials and from ordinary people. Every now and then, for reasons that remain unclear to me, public attention and approbation and horror focus on one story. This time around, it's that of Anene Booysen. Perhaps you remember Baby Tshepang? She survived, she was only 9 months old at the time. Or what about Valencia Farmer? She didn't, she was only 15.

I also know that Anene Booysen was not the only girl or young woman raped and murdered that night. She's just

the one everyone is focusing on. The same could be said of the nights on which Baby Tshepang and Valencia Farmer were raped. I have been working in violence against women and children since 1976 — and despite a New South Africa, its constitution and its (mostly) proactive and protective laws, the situation on the ground has hardly shifted in that time. In fact, it's worse.

So, this is what I will deal with in this plethora of options: the public reaction. In general, this has focused on three issues:

1. Bring back the death penalty

The death penalty never was a deterrent, and almost certainly led to rape victims also becoming murder victims — what was there to lose, after all? It was applied almost exclusively to situations where black men raped white women — even though the incidence of white male on black female rape was many, many times higher. No one has the right to take the life of another human being, and killing them for it sends a weird message. It's a bit like "If you hit your brother again, I'm going to smack you!" Capital punishment may take one rapist out, but given the low rate of reporting and the biasedness of our courts, to say nothing of the inefficiencies in the system, most of them will still be out there. And, mostly, they look and act just as everyone else does.

So, I can't see that as the solution.

2. Chemical castration

This notion perpetuates the idea that rape is a crime of sex and lust. It is not — it is the exercise of power and control. Rape can be perpetrated (and has been!) with bottle necks, vegetables, pipes, gun barrels, broomsticks... How can raping a young baby or an elderly woman have anything to do with sex and lust? How is that different from the rape of a young girl in a bar late at night?

Chemical castration will do nothing to address the complex mess that underlies our shocking rape and sexual violence statistics. South Africa is arguably one of the most violent of all societies outside of war zones. This is true across all forms of violence: intimate partner, family, interpersonal and community.

So, I can't see that as the solution.

3. A national campaign headed by President Jacob Zuma is needed

Somebody needs to say this: how can this man, with any

credibility, do any such thing?

* He has been charged with rape, though he was acquitted.
* He is an extremely conservative and patriarchal man, whose unprepared comments often stand in stark contrast to his "official" views. For example, as recently as August last year, on the occasion of his daughter's marriage, he stated: *"I was also happy because I wouldn't want to stay with daughters who are not getting married. Because that in itself is a problem in society. I know that people today think being single is nice. It's actually not right. That's a distortion. You've got to have kids. Kids are important to a woman because they actually give an extra training to a woman, to be a mother."*

Mind you, he is not alone in this cognitive dissonance. Witness the statement of Western Cape MEC Albert Fritz after Anene Booysen's death, in which he exhorted young people *"to please ensure they don't get into situations at 3am in the morning, where they place*

themselves in danger". So, it was her fault, after all.

* Jacob Zuma has been married six times (or is it seven now?) and has four wives. He has several mistresses, not all of whom he subsequently marries.
* He has in excess of 20 children.

I ask again — how can this man, with any credibility, lead a national campaign against rape?

So, I can't see that as the solution.

We need a solution that does not rely on knee-jerk responses to individual cases, with the public making the same suggestions every three to five years when one particular case grabs their attention. But that's the subject of another rant.



Bower is the former executive director of Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, Rapcan, and currently runs children's rights group Linali Consulting. ❖

We acknowledge with much joy our Major Donors

- * CENTRAL METHODIST MISSION (in the form of a very reasonable rental)
- * CITY OF CAPE TOWN
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OUR BANKING DETAILS:

Bank: FIRST NATIONAL BANK
Branch: ADDERLEY STREET
Branch Code: 201-409
Account No: 620-529-16908
In name of: ONS PLEK PROJECTS
Swift Code: FIRNZAJJ 461

Monies being deposited from overseas (telegraphic transfer) must please make use of the swift code.

PLEASE NOTE:

First National Bank has advised that cheques will not be accepted if the full name i.e. **Ons Plek Projects** is not reflected on the cheque ... and we would be so sorry to have to return any cheques!

HAVE YOU MOVED?

Please advise us of your change of address if you have moved home or office ... it's so disappointing when the 'thank you' letters that the girls have written, or our newsletters, are returned to us!

We dedicate this page to all our generous donors ... thank you!

This list includes financial and other contributions received from July 2012 to March 2013

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- B. BDO Auditors-Riana Olivier, Bevan Trust (Rundle Rev & Mrs A), Blue Daisy.
- C. C M Barry & Co., C.I.E.E., Cape Town Sewing Centre, Carter Family Charitable Trust, CCID Social Develop, Child Welfare Society CT, Christ Embassy, College of Cape Town (Mr Laubscher & Merrell Fleischer), Cowell Cottle Comm Cold Storage P/L, CPUT.
- D. Dept Social Development (Zayile Africa), District Six Museum, Donald Filtration Systems, Dress For Glory (Australia), Drifters Adv Tours/ Drifters C.T. Inn, Durbanville Children's Home (Consular Corps Ball).
- E. Educo P/L, Edward Daniel Charitable Trust, El Shaddai Christian School, Everbest Art Jewellers.
- G. German School – Klub Interact Deutsche Schule, Global (Raymond Williams USA), Good Hope Butchery, Good Hope Seminary High School, Group Five.
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- I. Innovative Thinkers, Intombi (Irene & Jens), Investment Wise P/L, Iziko Museum.
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- N. Nolan's Tyres.
- O. Oberauer P F t/as Fine Time, Orbis Security Solutions P/L (Securitas), OTI Africa P/L..
- P. Pine Needles, Pride Shelter Trust.
- Q. Quaker Service Cape Town.
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Bellville EWA, Brackenfell WA, Central Methodist Mission, Salt River, Sea Point.

UNABLE TO TRACE:

- Field K, Van der Westhuizen Mrs.

My internship at Ons Plek was one of the best experiences of my life!

The first weeks I was excited, overwhelmed and sometimes confused. An exciting new country, new faces, a different culture and the children's stories — that's a lot to deal with! But there was always somebody to listen to me if I had any questions or problems and I felt very welcomed. I noticed that at Ons Plek they are not only interested in you as a worker but as a person and although there's so much work to do there's always time to share problems and laugh together. I learned to work in a team and to settle differences together when there was a need for it.

Working with the girls in town and with the children in Philippi was a big challenge for me. As I'm looking back I see how insecure I was in the beginning, how relationships grew over the months as I got to know the children, how I enjoyed work more and more and how much I learned in terms of approaching the children, doing group work, planning activities and getting a bigger picture of what our work is about. Of course there were also difficulties like for example the language barrier.

The Director Pam and my supervisor Yumna always offered their advice and support for which I am very grateful. It's the staff's passion and energy that make Ons Plek's work special. I greatly appreciate all the time they invested in me and I hope I could give something back.

I also couldn't help but falling in love with South Africa. Like many foreigners I had heard a lot about crime in South Africa, but if you keep rules like not walking alone in the dark and in certain areas you should be fine. The breathtaking nature, the relaxed atmosphere and the amazing people I met here make my time in Cape Town worthy not to be missed.

My time at Ons Plek was a great enrichment for my studies and also for my personal growth. I will miss the children and my colleagues a lot. Thank you for everything! Keep up the good work you are doing and be blessed!

Lilia Hübert

*Social Work Internship at Ons Plek
from August 2011 – February 2012*



Reflecting on my Internship at Ons Plek

I must admit, that I'm really impressed by Ons Plek Projects and about the way the different project in general are being run. My University College back in Denmark, are sending people to a huge variety of countries, and therefore really tries to prepare us students beforehand for some of the many different cultural differences and difficulties we might experience wherever we go.

Concerning Ons Plek Projects, its my impression, that the organization is professionally run and predominantly very well-organized. I mainly conclude this on behalf of the vast amount of paperwork, documentation

and administration work, which I see being done regularly, as well as the frequent amount of different-purposed meetings, extend of teamwork and exchange of knowledge. That being said nothing is perfect ...

Thinking about it, I can probably only come up with less than a handful of experiences that have been so different and strange to me, that I couldn't imagine it happening within a similar organization in Denmark. The point is that I see more resemblance than difference in the work, methods, ethics and organizational culture at Ons Plek Projects compared to what personal experience I have with

similar organizations in Denmark. This was something I definitely didn't expect. Even though I was told good and positive stories about the quality of social work and social developing projects in South Africa, as well as recommended to do my internship here by educator and former intern, I was and still am impressed at how things are run and the immense personal enthusiasm and passion I meet and feel everyday walking through the doors at Ons Plek and Siviwe. Amazing!

Carstens Nielsen

Internship — Social Education at Ons Plek August 2012 - January 2013

Home Visits

In the last issue of *Ons Plek Girls Report Newsletter 2012*, I wrote about school visits and the challenges thereof. This time around I will write about home visits and the challenges of this task.

Home visits are an integral part in our Prevention Program of Ukondla. This is part of *Ons Plek's* social responsibility to the community of Philippi.

A home visit can be carried out if a parent is applying to have their child attend the program, not every child can be admitted to the program. Staff will visit a child's home to find out more about him/her, if they are found to be vulnerable then they qualify to be in the program, ie. a background where both parents are away most of the time and the child is always left alone at risk of roaming the streets; a family background where the child is neglected because parents are always fighting with each other.

Another home visit that can be done, is when a child has been admitted to the program and staff just want to strengthen their relationship with parents. If a child is ill or one of the parents is ill, or there's been a death in the

house, staff also do a home visit to show their moral support to the family.

If there is a dispute in the family that seems to be affecting the child, like constant fights between parents, staff can pay a visit to try and help parents through counselling them or referring them to seek professional advice at another organization, which can help them resolve their issues.

A home visit could be made if a child's health is viewed by staff to be of detriment to other children. Parents can be advised to take the child to a clinic or hospital for treatment. Parents can at certain times be accompanied to the hospital or clinic by a member of staff when a child is sick, and they do not know how to go about it.

Challenges of Home Visits:

With the incidents of gangsterism so rampant in the Townships these days, staff have been caught up in the cross fire, not just on one occasion but in a number of times, when the rival groups of different gangsters are fighting each other. This means the lives of the staff are at a risk of danger when carrying out this noble cause.

Some parents work till late and staff have to forego their family time to go and do a home visit during late hours at week-ends or week-days. The small taxis that are commonly used to get to most areas in Philippi also put staff lives in danger as most of them are not roadworthy. Some of the drivers are so rowdy they start fights over their rivalry taxi drivers, thereby putting staff lives in danger.

Some homes, mostly shacks are not accessible as they do not have addresses and therefore make it difficult to locate them. There are times when members of staff have been warned not to be seen in some places as it may prove to be unsafe due to a lot of crime in the area.

Sometimes a visit turns out to be a failure as there is very little information from a parent who won't co-operate with staff. Despite the aforesaid, home visits are an essential part of our job. At Ukondla they provide staff with the information needed to help the children attending the program.

Assah Gavu

Ukondla Co-Ordinator

Turnips!

What a thrill to harvest huge turnips like these from our own vegetable garden at Ukondla!



OUR WISH LIST ...



FINANCIAL DONATIONS FOR:

- Transport costs (bus/train ticket) for girls to get to and from school
- Transport costs for girls to get to educational outings/camps
- Medical expenses for the girls eg. eye tests
- Ukondla photocopy costs of educational exercises (*cheaper than buying books for each child, we only need certain pages from each book depending on child's abilities*)
- Mini oven or 3 hot plates (electrical, gas or gel) for Ukondla (once off); kettles, irons

TOILETRIES:

Roll-on deodorant; body spray; body lotion; shampoo and conditioner; bath soap; toilet paper; Vaseline; hair straightener (**must be mild**); toothpaste; shoe polish (black); shoe brush; Nitagon lice shampoo (clinics no longer supply this); nappies (flannel)

SCHOOL CLOTHES:

School tracksuits; grey pants/skirts; white shirts; jerseys (school colours)

UNDERWEAR (*Brand New Please!*):

Panties/bras for girls aged 5-18 yrs; briefs for boys aged 2-5 yrs; socks for winter

STATIONERY:

Photocopy paper (white); Flip files; A4 colour project paper; A4 hard cover books (288 & 192 p); Project board; Pritt sticks (large); Ponal wood glue; examination pads.

School Stationery:

Pritt (40g); pencil bags; pens (black, blue, red); homework diaries; Scientific calculators; Oxford dictionaries (English ONLY)

OTHER:

- Globes (energy-saving)
- Saucepans; plastic cups and plates; forks and spoons
- DVD Player; CD Player; kiddies/teen DVDs
- Power-point projector
(please contact us first regarding this item)
- First Aid Kits containing Panado; cough syrup; flue packs

UKONDLA 1, 2 & 3:

Weekly grocery needs — catering for approx. 60 children

Bread (x15 loaves per day)
Peanut butter (x3 big jars or x6 small jars)
Jam (x6 tins)
2 minute noodles (x30)
Cup a soup (x15 boxes of 4 sachets each)
Margarine (x6 bricks)
Pilchards (x9 tins only when there are donations)



Other needs: Balls; ropes; puzzles; board games; tennis rackets; playing cards; dominoes; flash cards; memory games; clay; beads; wire; material off-cuts; needles; paint; paint brushes; stencils; glitter; stars; crêpe paper; balloons.

- We need someone to install fiberglass insulation in the ceilings at Ukondla.

From District 6 to Australia and back again

Where the District 6 museum now stands used to be the Methodist Church. I used to live at 102 Barrack Street just behind the church. But going to St Mark's Primary meant I would attend St Mark's Church. When I turned 12 we moved to Constitution Street, just past Trafs. It was with the 1976 school protest that I became involved with the church. I wanted to run a community centre. I approached Father John. Father John told me about two other persons, Bianca and Brian, and the three of us set out to run what was to become known as the Carpenter's House, in the hall upstairs. It became a place where teenagers of District 6 could get together and get to know each other. It was also a place where would invite other groups notably from Kensington and Gugulethu. Late in 1976 I heard that the Apartheid police were looking for me and I left for London.

A year later I returned, and I rejoined the Carpenter's House group. Unfortunately the police caught up with me and I spent some time as a "guest" of Caledon Square — right opposite the church.

With the help of the church and family, I was released 16 days later, with some severe restrictions. Unable to participate in any community activity, I decided to migrate to Australia. But wanted to take my then girlfriend, Lorraine with me, as my wife.

So again I went to Father John and asked if he could marry us fairly quickly. His earliest free night was 14th Sept. On 14th September 1979, on a windy Friday night Lorraine and I got married in the church. Three months later we were in Australia.

I'm not sure when the church became the museum, but it is very appropriate. Right opposite the

notorious Caledon Square, the church proudly displayed in badge of honour, a plaque opposing apartheid and supporting democracy. Many times the plaque was spray-painted by apartheid supporters, and every time it was cleaned — the bronze shining brightly in those dark days of apartheid.

I'm not sure when Ons Plek was formed or how it got to be there, but it too, is the right place to be. That site has a history of looking after the vulnerable — and winning.

Today I work for an international aid agency in Australia, called Union Aid Abroad — APHEDA. We have a partnership with Ons Plek where ex-South Africans and the Australian community donate some funds — it's not much — but Ons Plek with its ties to my past will always be a special agency I keep close to my heart. It's like sending donations home.

Karel Solomons