

A Word from the Managing Director

Being a young person in South Africa can't always be easy. Growing up is a journey often burdened with the effects of a seemingly unrelenting epidemic and educational systems still recovering from the country's previous inequalities. Not to mention issues of poverty and unemployment.

Nonetheless, I am proud when I see how brave and inspiring young South Africans are. They bring boundless energy, passion and fresh ideas to the table, and their commitment to advocating for change is critical to building a healthy tomorrow, and this can be seen among the learners participating in our Schools Programme.

Today, 1.3 billion young people live in the developing world. In South Africa alone, nearly 40% of all South Africans are between the ages of 14 and 35. Clearly, young people make up a significant part of our total population and unlike the past, where integration of youth in strategic planning and policy development was sorely lacking, they are in fact, one of our most valued assets. We therefore believe it is important to continue partnering with young South Africans, by providing them with the platform to voice their concerns and share their experiences, as we believe young people can and will initiate change. Many lead by example and initiate positive changes in their own communities, as will be highlighted in our section School Programme Workshops: Under the Microscope.

In addition to the inspirational work arising from our Schools Programme, this issue will highlight how we continue to improve our organisational capacity and work in the areas of Monitoring & Evaluation as well as Communications & Media. We welcome new sponsors Nedbank Foundation, Spring Lights Gas and MANCOSA and share with you our excitement about joining the MySchool/MyVillage reward programme, which will bring us extra funds to continue implementing our programme. We also welcome Sharunda Owens a Fullbright student from the United States, who will be taking a closer look at the great work we are doing with our learners.

Finally, as we celebrate **Youth Day** on 16 June 2010, we are reminded of all the young people we inspire and who inspire us every day, and we hope that as they "speak out...they will make a change" in our communities.

Dr Josianne Roma-Reardon
Managing Director

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A Spotlight on:

MySchool/MyVillage



MySchool/MyVillage/MyPlanet is all about raising funds for schools, charities, animals and the environment. Recently OVSA was successfully added as a beneficiary of the MyVillage campaign, and for all of you who registered with us, remember that every time you swipe your card at any of the MySchool/MyVillage partner stores, you will be helping us raise funds.

OVSA would like to thank all their 'MyVillage' supporters who added us as a beneficiary and a special thank you to the Musgrave Centre Management, who allowed OVSA to recruit applicants at the centre over a period of two days, at no charge. If you are interested in signing up or adding OVSA as a beneficiary please visit our website on www.onevoice.org.za

(P.S. Don't forget to swipe your card at any of the national participating stores below)



Schools Programme Update

Workshop Implementation

Since the last Newsletter, the Schools Programme Department has been very busy with the ongoing implementation of the workshops in all 74 participating schools. Our workshop implementation is divided into two Cycles (i.e. Cycle 1: January to June and Cycle 2: July to December). We see a group of learners in each school for the first cycle to implement nine workshops and in cycle two we see another group of learners in the same school to implement the same workshops, in order to reach more learners with our programme. We started 2010 on a high note, with schools and learners excited to start with the Schools Programme and accompanying materials. After three months learners are clearly enjoying workshop content, especially the games and activities. A learner in the Eastern Cape shared this during the Human Rights workshop: *"I now know that I have rights as a human being. But I also know that I need to be responsible: like if I want shelter, I must take care of it and keep it clean; if I want education, I must learn from what I am being taught; if I want stay healthy, I must take good care of myself"*.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and partnership with Department of Education (DoE)

The relationships and partnerships OVSA has created with the DoE is amazing and is reflected by the support they give us in terms of signing MOUs and allowing OVSA to implement the Schools Programme in schools. To date OVSA has signed a MOU with the DoE from the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape. All MOUs are at provincial level. Also, all 74 participating schools have signed MOUs with OVSA.

Ntonto Vezi
Schools Programme Manager

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

JHHESA M&E Award

We are proud to announce that on 11 May 2010, OVSA was honoured with the M&E Award at the Annual JHHESA Partners meeting that was held in Johannesburg. OVSA was chosen from a select group of JHHESA partners on the basis of the efficiency and diligence of the M&E team.



Outreach for Cycle 1 (January to June 2010)

A total of **5483** learners were reached with the Schools Programme during Cycle 1.

Condom Distribution (January to April 2010)

A total of **30 336** male condoms were distributed.

Learner Assessments

As part of ongoing M&E, learner assessments were developed and are aligned to the Life Orientation curriculum. Learners are required to complete an assessment after the implementation of every third workshop. The purpose of the assessments is to show if learners have gained knowledge relating to workshop content after being exposed to the programme. Each learner who participated in the OVSA Schools Programme will receive a certificate of participation upon completion of all nine workshops.

Kim Johnson
M&E Officer



Schools Programme Workshops Under the Microscope

Advocacy Projects - Workshops 7, 8, 9

The last three workshops in the Schools Programme teach learners about project planning and implementation skills. Learners then identify an area of concern in their community and develop a project that will address this particular problem. Through these projects learners demonstrate advocacy skills at their level. The projects vary school by school depending on what the learners are passionate about.

One of the projects that proved highly successful was implemented at Nomavimbela High School in Umlazi, KwaZulu-Natal. Learners decided to educate the community about HIV and AIDS by going door-to-door. Together with their Facilitator, Delisile Mdabe, learners visited households in the area and shared information on HIV and AIDS and the importance of early testing, so that people may know their status earlier and take action towards managing the disease.

Other Advocacy Projects:

- Donating food and clothing (Eastern Cape)
- Donating clothes to orphanages and old age homes (KwaZulu-Natal)
- Fun walk in honour of disabled learners who have equal human rights like everyone (Eastern Cape)
- Debating projects (Eastern Cape and Western Cape)
- March against child trafficking (Eastern Cape)
- First Aid kits (Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal)
- Drama performances (All provinces)
- Poetry (All provinces)
- Posters (All provinces)
- Murals and signage (KwaZulu-Natal)
- Resource libraries (All provinces)



Educational and creative signage by OVSA Learners from Umlazi Commercial High School, KwaZulu-Natal

Communications Chatter

Annual Report

The Communications and Media Department is proud to announce that in July we will welcome the launch of our first Annual Report! This Annual Report represents one of the most important communication tools we have, and is much more than merely a mandatory document to be distributed to role players and stakeholders. Realistically, it narrates the most complete story of the OVSA journey during the past fiscal year and it provides an honest in-depth look at all our trials and tribulations. But most of all, it should give readers a comprehensive understanding of how we are supporting young people to make healthy decisions for their futures.

Research/Study Partners

Earlier this year, three American graduate students from The School for International Training (South Africa) - a study abroad community health institution - partnered with OVSA. Each term, 'The School for International Training' works with a group of American graduate students who are interested in public and community health issues. As part of their studies, the students are required to learn about the South African context by linking to a local organisation.

The three students who joined OVSA, researched aspects of their individual areas of interest. They accompanied OVSA Facilitators to the classroom to learn first-hand about life in South Africa, including its health and education systems. Their subsequent findings were documented in a study report which was shared with OVSA and contained recommendations based on their observations.

Among the research topics, a Case Study was presented on the Inter-Developmental Communication Practices and Participatory Education implemented by OVSA. Concluding remarks suggested that OVSA's participatory approach has allowed for a focus upon the provision of information and education rather than the elusive statistics related to behavior change. It also suggested that staff as a whole, appear ready to begin taking more responsibility for areas of the programme that currently rest in the hands of management. The report highlighted the importance of 'communication' in supporting OVSA as a whole, concluding: *"delegation of these tasks and responsibilities can only come through consistent communication and a willingness to receive and provide constructive criticism and feedback."*

VIVA COMMUNICATION!

Marlijn van Berne
Communications & Media Manager



OVSA Learners and Facilitator donating clothes to an orphanage and old age home in KwaZulu-Natal

Funder Focus

Sponsor-A-School Campaign

The Sponsor-A-School Campaign was recently developed to meet the financial shortfall which OVSA faced in terms of implementing a full Schools Programme. The campaign invites sponsors to contribute R16 000 towards the running cost of implementing the programme in one school per year. All companies, individuals and interested parties may Sponsor-A-School, and a specific school or region may be nominated by the Sponsor. Sponsors can enjoy the benefits of site-visits to their school or region of choice, display of their organisation's branding at the school and inclusion on the OVSA's website and in our Voice Connection Newsletter. This newly-piloted campaign has elicited the interest of the following sponsors:

The Nedbank Foundation

The Nedbank Foundation is the primary corporate social investment (CSI) arm of the Nedbank Group and is integral to the organisation's achievement of its Deep Green aspiration of 'being highly involved in the community and environment'. Established in 1992, the foundation contributes significantly to community upliftment and development programmes, that are both empowering and sustainable, and encourages others to do the same.



Spring Lights Gas

Spring Lights Gas has achieved recognition as a provider of 'clean' energy in areas beleaguered by public outcry over air pollution. They have successfully marketed and supplied piped gas in the South Durban region to a variety of industrial customers in Mobeni, Merebank, Clairwood, Prospecton and Umbogintwini. At present, Spring Lights Gas is extending throughout KZN, partnering with activist industrials in Pietermaritzburg, Newcastle, Richards Bay, Phoenix and Verulam.



MANCOSA

The Management College of Southern Africa (MANCOSA) is a fully accredited and registered higher education institution that focuses on the design, development and delivery of management programmes. It was established in 1995 as a post-apartheid empowerment institution offering affordable and accessible management education primarily to persons previously denied access to post graduate education.



Fundraising Partnership

Circus Circus - Musgrave

Patrons dining at Circus Circus Musgrave, can now generously donate to OVSA once settling their bill. All funds are used to implement the Schools Programme.



If you would like to donate or sponsor our work, we are continually seeking new sponsors and partners. For more information please contact us on +27 (0)31 202 0555 or visit our website www.onevoice.org.za

Success Story



OVSA learners in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape recently embarked on a clothes collection drive for orphans, as part of the Schools Programme's Learner Projects. The learners identified an issue which is affecting their community and linked the project to National Youth Day. Their theme for the project was **Youth helping Youth**. Both advocacy drives enjoyed success and there was a great sense of humility once the OVSA learners had distributed the clothes to the orphanages in their respective provinces. When asked why did you decided on this advocacy project? a learner said: *"Giving back to the community brings great satisfaction!"*

Ravind Sewpersad
Communications and Media Officer

A poem by an OVSA learner

IT WAS WATCHING YOU...

You were playing Mr. Nice Guy
around your friends
Trying to impress them
but HIV was **watching** you...
Having as many girlfriends as you can
it was getting closer and closer,
Watching you...
Having sex without protection and
never thinking that HIV was really inside you
It was following you where ever you go...
Years later you realised that HIV was inside you
but it was too late to turn back the hands
of time...
Since HIV was **watching** you
it wanted you
Now it is inside you!!!

Special Feature

Fullbright student partners with OVSA



Sharunda Owens is a U.S. Department of State Fulbright student currently in South Africa researching the use of creative approaches in the development of at-risk youth ages 13-19 in South Africa.

Particularly, she is investigating the following areas of intervention: (1) HIV and AIDS; (2) poverty reduction; and (3) literacy. OVSA is an affiliate organisation in Sharunda's research, along with other organisations and entities in South Africa, including Witwatersrand University. She will provide organisations and entities in South Africa affiliated with her research with an Executive Summary of her research findings at the end of her project. Sharunda hopes that this Executive Summary will serve to support affiliate organisations in their programmes, as well as provide organisations with critical feedback in order to maximize their development efforts in South African communities. Sharunda is strongly interested in OVSA because of its innovative approaches through school-based intervention that incorporates life skills, human rights awareness, decision-making, and critical thinking. Sharunda looks forward to spending time with an OVSA facilitator by following an entire cohort of the Schools Programme next semester.

The U.S. Department of State Fulbright programme is an educational and cultural exchange programme that promotes openness, academic integrity, and intellectual freedom. Fulbright encourages its researchers to become actively involved in host communities, and Sharunda is enthusiastic about opportunities to be involved with OVSA and the communities it serves.

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USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

JOHNS HOPKINS
Health and Education in South Africa



Joint Oxfam HIV/AIDS Program (JOHAP)
Managed by Oxfam Australia

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