

# NEWSLETTER

TO OUR FRIENDS

No. 21, Spring & Summer 1998

ABALIMI BEZekhaya  
& THE CAPE FLATS  
TREE PROJECT



Private Bag X12, Observatory 7935 Tel./Fax: (021) 447 1256

## PROGRESS REPORT - 1 AUGUST 1998 - 31 DECEMBER 1998

*"Development is something that happens through and within people. True sustainability will happen only when people resolve to achieve their dreams, out of a reverence and understanding for the economy of all life"*

Dear Friends,

For Christmas 1998 and the New Year of 1999, ABALIMI sends you the following report. We thank you all for your support, your interest and encouragement. Our development work among the grassroots poor can be carried out to completion only with warm goodwill from a wider circle of friends. Please renew your gifts and contributions, or simply keep in touch!

### THE URBAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAMME (UAP)



ADVANCED ECOLOGICAL VEGETABLE PRODUCTION COURSE - SEPT. 1998  
GRADUATES (standing) & TRAINERS (crouching)

This training course was launched in September, after months of preparation, by members of the ABALIMI Fieldwork team, with the help of Fulvio Grandin, a leading permaculture trainer and member of Kommeljie Environmental Action Group (KEAG). The Advanced Ecological Vegetable Production Course is currently offered only in Xhosa and English and is geared towards illiterate and semi-literate grassroots food growers. It is founded on environmental and conservation principles and enables our target group to take a great stride forward in sustainable food production.

The Advanced Ecological Vegetable Production Course represents the core of what we have achieved in the UAP in the last five months. 40 members representing all of ABALIMI's community vegetable growing groups attended this course. As a result, each group has improved their sustainability to an overall average level of 60%. Most ABALIMI groups are between 1-2 years old. It takes a minimum of 3 years for a group to become financially sustainable, to the point where they are able to keep up a yearly cropping cycle at their own expense, produce own seedlings and compost and bulk-buy direct from wholesalers all other inputs such as organic fertiliser. Sustainability also means planting more trees, herbs and flowers to create a diverse, healthy, protected environment with an understanding of the value of indigenous plants.

Ongoing skills and capacity training are the real key to sustainability, along with subsidised start-up inputs and follow-up support. **R250 covers a 90% bursary for one grassroots trainee to attend one training course and provides the trainee with start-up inputs for one season as well as follow-up support.**

**\* MARKET GARDENS & JOB CREATION:** Market gardens are the next step up from sustainable survival gardens. In the end, people want jobs and money in the pocket. From 1999 until 2002, ABALIMI has committed itself to developing market gardens, which can provide hundreds of jobs. As with all our community projects, we will first set up a model. Once that model has proved itself, a programme will be implemented to ensure that the model is widely replicated.

### CAPE FLATS GREENING PROGRAMME (CFGP)

The CFGP has been our main focus during this reporting period. National Arbor Week falls in September each year and this year our community greening activities exploded from August right through to November. Here is a photographic overview:

#### \* FROM DESERT TO GREEN:



Once again, ABALIMI has transformed a number of schools from desert to green educational oases. For example, Impendulo Primary (above), received greening support from TOTAL S.A. in partnership with ABALIMI, resulting in a TOTAL transformation of their school frontage. This school was also the staging point for the Western Cape Provincial Arbor Week Event (see next page).



**\*PROVINCIAL ARBOR WEEK EVENT,**



**Approximately 2 500 trees**

**KHAYELITSHA:**



were distributed to as many people in Macassar, Khayelitsha, from the Impendulo School on 5th September. This event, sponsored by THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY (DWAF), THE GREEN TRUST, TOTAL S.A., SAPPI, PENINSULA BEVERAGES, I.M. SEGAL & CO/PROPRINT, CITY OF TYGERBERG, UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH/COMMUNITY FORESTRY, CAPE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL/ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT, SOUTH PENINSULA NATIONAL PARKS AND LAUGHTONS & CO was a great hit in the Khayelitsha community. There were speeches, plays, choirs, marches and cheerleaders. After the speeches, people patiently queued, registered their names and addresses for follow-up, chose a tree, received a planting demonstration, planting pamphlet & fertiliser and went out to plant their trees at home. ABALIMI, as a member of the Arbor Week Forum Task Team, took on the logistical support management for this event.



**The Arbor Forum**



continues to meet and is currently comprised of DWAF, ABALIMI, KEAG, Khayelitsha Environment and Tourism Forum (KETF), Centre for Conservation Education (WCED), Wildlife and Environment Society S.A. (WESSA), Cape Nature Conservation, TSOGA Environmental Resource Centre, City of Tygerberg, Schools Environment Project (SEP), S.A. National Parks & Masifundisane Cultural Group.



**\* GREENING OF VICTORIA MXENGE SELF-HELP HOUSING DEVELOPMENT, PHILIPPI, NYANGA - AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 1998**



THE GREEN TRUST collaborated with ABALIMI and Victoria Mxenge residents to complete Phase 1 of this important urban environmental transformation project. Greg Laws, co-ordinator of The Green Trust (pictured above), was pressed into tree planting on the open day. The transformation took place in two areas in the new village - the dusty open area in front of the community centre and the barren wasteland between the newly built houses and Lansdowne Road, the main artery from Cape Town. These were changed into a children's green playground and a buffer-zone parkland. Victoria Mxenge is one of the leading models for self-help housing development in South Africa. The women of this village actually built their homes with their own hands! The best "after" shots are still to come, once the trees and newly seeded grass has had a chance to grow.





**\* INDIGENOUS SCHOOL GARDENS:**



The Botanical Society of South Africa (BOTSOC) has assisted ABALIMI to implement indigenous schools gardens at two schools this year and last year - Inchayeelo Primary (September 1997) and Umtha Welanga Primary (left - October 1998), both in Khayelitsha. These gardens take much longer to show a major transformation - indigenous shrubs, groundcovers and trees need at least two or three years to fully establish in these very difficult conditions. ABALIMI is also experimenting with a wide variety of plants at these schools, such as coastal fynbos, which are not supposed to thrive further inland. We are very pleased to report that the gardens at Inchayeelo Primary (planted in 1997) are not only surviving, but thriving. The extensive work done at Umtha Welanga Primary (left) is not clear from the photograph, but what is clear is that Bruce McKenzie, BOTSOC director, is pleased with it. He came out to visit ABALIMI projects in September, along with friends from Old Mutual.

**\* NOLUKHANYO EDUCARE, KHAYELITSHA:**



◀ BEFORE



AFTER ▶

Catholic Welfare & Development (CWD) provided funds to transform this educare centre. The children and parents now have relief from the stinging sand and glaring heat.

**\* INTEGRATED LAND USE DESIGN (ILUD) FOR SCHOOLS:**



ABALIMI is now assisting schools to implement Integrated Land Use Design - ILUD. We have found that, while most schools have many ideas and dreams, they have no "whole school plan". They therefore get lost in ad hoc greening or grounds development which is often wasteful because it does not reflect the needs of the whole school. ILUD involves the whole school community - pupils, teachers and parents, in a one week (minimum) intensive workshop. During this time they together design the school that they would all like to see. They build it up in three dimensions (see photo), taking ecological, environmental and conservation principles and practices into account. ABALIMI then assists them to draw this up professionally, together with a phased implementation strategy and budget. The next step, of course, is to obtain funds to implement the plan. But at least the schools have a basis on which to go forward.



**\* SCHOOLS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT (S.E.E.D.) PROGRAMME:**

**BEFORE**



**BONGALETHU SCHOOL ENTRANCE**

**& DAYS LATER**



The next step on from ILUD is S.E.E.D. For the past 5 months S.E.E.D. has been piloting an innovative environmental education programme at Bongaletu Community School in Philippi, Nyanga. S.E.E.D.'s methodology is based on interactive and participatory principles. The aim of the initial Phases (1 & 2) of the programme is environmental awareness and empowerment, through the classroom into the whole school community. Culture underpins the entire programme, with traditional and original contemporary songs, stories and poetry on environmental themes resounding from the walls of the classrooms. The culmination of the work, based on a whole school community design of the school grounds, is phased implementation of that design by the students, teachers and parents as a cross-curricula classroom learning activity. S.E.E.D. recognises a school as a community resource and the associated community as a school resource, and incorporates strategies in their programme to strengthen this relationship.

The tangible outcomes of the S.E.E.D. programme from Phase 1 & 2 are:

- beautified school grounds which can be used as an "outdoor classroom"
- documentation of piloted environmental education sessions, linked to Curriculum 2005
- a "how to" booklet for Cape Flats conditions - "Greening Solutions: a Guidebook for Schools"
- the production of the following non-commercial resources: a video of aspects of the work; a recording of all original songs, sung by the students; a photographic collage of each stage.



**TEACHERS AND PUPILS AT WORK.**

S.E.E.D. Phase 3 is projected to run from June 1999 until December 1999. At the end of Phase 3, we will have a proven grassroots development methodology and EE curriculum which can be easily transferred into every school on the Cape Flats. The outcome of this will be that schools will be able to transform their whole school grounds as a cross-curricular classroom activity, using available community resources and technologies. By the time Curriculum 2005 becomes fully operative, schools should have Curriculum 2005 compatible EE practice already in place, with functioning outdoor classrooms to prove it! S.E.E.D. Phase 1 & 2 is funded by the GREEN TRUST, OLD MUTUAL, BOTSOC, BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION and the NEW ZEALAND HIGH COMMISSION with support from NOVALIS COLLEGE and ABALIMI.

It still costs only R25.00 to sponsor one tree. This includes the tree, organic fertiliser, training and follow-up.

**OUR SPECIAL THANKS FOR THIS REPORTING PERIOD TO:**

- \* The **GREEN TRUST** for coming forward with special funding for S.E.E.D. Phase 1 & 2.
- \* **OLD MUTUAL** for this newsletter.
- \* **OLD MUTUAL & The Botanical Society of South Africa (BOTSOC)** for S.E.E.D. funding and 1 000 copies of our new field gardening manual "How to start a garden with only a few cents" (available January 1999 from JUTA).
- \* **MAYFORD SEED** who are covering the costs of the artwork for "How to start a garden with only a few cents".
- \* **The British High Commission** for R18 000 for tools and equipment for S.E.E.D.
- \* **Murray & Roberts** for piles and piles of soil for Bongaletu School.
- \* **The Cold Chain** for their ongoing commitment to develop new household vegetable gardens.
- \* **Lee Donlin** for another donation of £1 000, along with his warm support and caring.
- \* **Mrs JM Bener Donker** for R4 000 to support SGAGA.
- \* **Ms Anneke Fermont** for her major contribution with research and funding.
- \* **St Martin In The Fields International Committee** for £500 for training.
- \* **The Archdiocese of Cape Town Lenten Appeal** for R30 000 for our Urban Agriculture Programme.
- \* **All our many Friends, both great and small** for your warm interest, encouragement and gifts, both in kind and cash. If we have not

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