
**Celebrating
25 Years of Growing
South Africa's Women**

1985-2010

WLTP: Women's Leadership and Training Programme

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ISBN 978-0-620-47993-6

Printed by: Shumani Printers (2010), Environmentally friendly paper (Triple Green)

Production & design: W Cochrane, L Yarnell - LEKAimages (wendy@lekaimages.co.za)



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WLTP

REMINISCENCES

1984-2010

Birthdays should be **cheerfully celebrated.**

Birthdays are a wonderful **occasion to back-pedal**

and look proudly back at the good work already accomplished.

But birthdays should also be the starting point to new horizons –

Always for the betterment of the poor for whom you so dedicatedly care.

Let us continue to strive hand in hand for the improvement of the living conditions of the poor - especially for all those women and mothers who devotedly care for their families, knowing that they play a key role in our projects and in the civil society.

In close cooperation and friendship with all the WLTP staff we are strongly motivated to **continue the fight for a more just world and the preservation of our natural resources - our mother earth !**

In friendship

The Misereor South African desk

WLTP funding partner since 1988

A MESSAGE FROM COPENHAGEN



Samkelesiwe Mhlanga

SA Ambassador to Denmark
Former member of the KZN Grail group and Emthonjeni staff

As I sit at my new desk in the South African Embassy in Copenhagen and think about my experience in WLTP, I remember the old saying “Train a woman and you have trained a nation”. How true that is for WLTP. Women who drank from “umbele ka WLTP” (the WLTP breast) pass on to their children what they learnt, consciously or unconsciously, by running “mini-workshops” for them. Those children in turn share this with other children. When they get married they breast-feed their own children with development and development reaches everyone.

WLTP has achieved so much in this one generation of twenty-five years. All around us is evidence of barriers in a woman’s path to development. Young married women encountering problems in married life often conclude that the suffering they are undergoing, including an abusive husband, is part and parcel of married life. In its gender training, WLTP performs surgery on women’s eyes, removing the “cultural cataract” that prevents them from examining their culture and identifying the life-giving (positive) and life-threatening (negative) things.

All of us know hundreds of women who managed against all odds. WLTP was the catalyst providing pointers, courage and empowerment for many such women. WLTP has helped women recognise their God-given strength and to build sisterhood among women. If each of us sees her own reflection in the next woman, we cannot but love that woman and practise ubuntu with her and the rest of humanity. We often doubt ourselves and being uninformed feeds that self-doubt. Imagine a women’s conference in October 2009 on Climate Change. You have no clue what people are talking about so excitedly. Had you been listening to the news, you would have known that there was COP 15 coming up in Denmark and you would have felt confident to join in the discussion. I want to emphasise to young people the importance of current affairs. It puts you in a position to know something about everything that is going on. But not only for young people - each of us should learn something new everyday, for life.

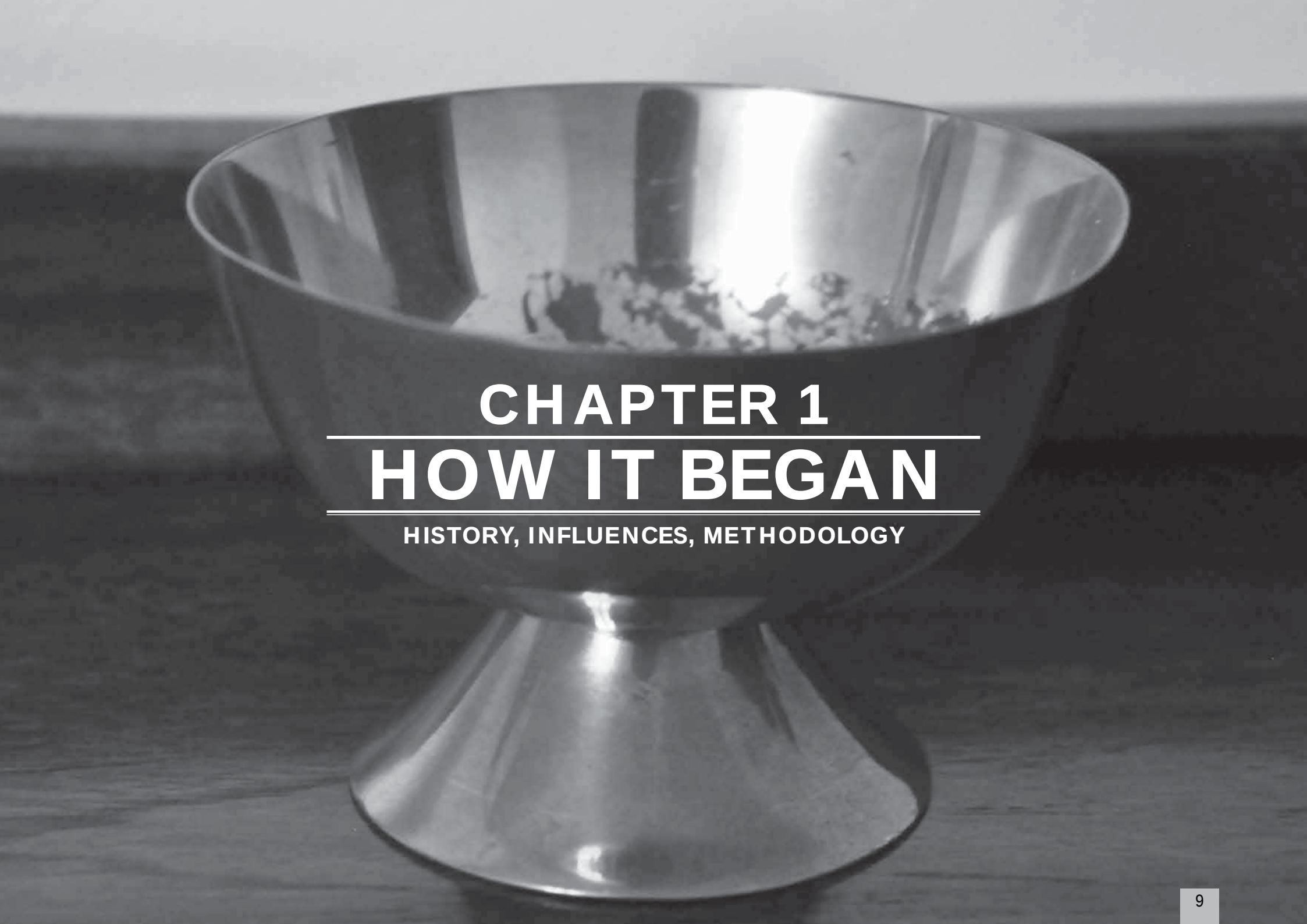
At my last Emthonjeni workshop, I was struck by the “grown up” teenage and very young women participants. To say nothing of the three teenagers

who came to the Climate Change COP 15 in Copenhagen! Their report-back was an amazing picture of the nurturing they have received from Emthonjeni and of course the rich and receptive soil they themselves are. Those young women will have better quality lives, and will be agents of change in their communities.

The exposure that the Grail has given me taught me more than universities or jobs I have had. Today I am in Denmark, match-making the South African and Danish societies. I will, naturally, bring a development perspective to that role, thanks to the Grail, WLTP and Emthonjeni.

WLTP is 25. To those who suckled from her, I say “Aluta Continua, the Struggle Continues!” To those who are still to be born to WLTP, I say “You will choose the best mother”. Let us celebrate your long, long life and wish you many more years to come.

If you train one woman you have trained a nation!



CHAPTER 1

HOW IT BEGAN

HISTORY, INFLUENCES, METHODOLOGY

HOW IT BEGAN

THE DREAM, INFLUENCES, & METHODOLOGY

WLTP began as a dream - Grail member Emilia Charbonneau's real dream. It was during the process leading up to the International General Assembly (IGA) of the Grail in 1984. Grail members around the world were meeting in small groups discussing questions related to the IGA theme, 'Commitment to tomorrow'. At breakfast after a group discussion, Emilia related the dream she had had the previous night:



Emilia Charbonneau

"I was standing on the bank of a river. On the opposite bank were women holding out their hands to me. With tears rolling down their cheeks, they were imploring me to come and work with them."

During the 25 years of working with girls and women, we have heard the women crying during and outside workshops. The programmes we developed were how we responded to them.

"The Grail was started around 1921 by a Dutch priest who felt that women's contribution was not freely available in the world to the degree it should be. He wanted to start something with women where they would be educated, have a spiritual foundation, be committed, but remain a part of ordinary life so that they could contribute in both the church and the world. The Grail was one of three movements he started. They would bring women's contribution to the fore through training, encouragement, support and programmes. The Grail spread around Europe, USA and Australia before the 2nd World War, and later to Africa and other continents. It started as educational programmes, but eventually evolved into projects."

Emilia



Sheila Mothopeng-Masote

"Most women have never been exposed to thinking about the 'corrosive effect' of the issues that cause pain. "I am alone in this misery. No one else has had this. Nobody knows the trouble I'm in. How dare you think you know my pain?"

RESULT. I bottle up and nurse my situation and guard it with my life.

*WLTP Workshops rekindle my initial fear that it is WRONG! "Why do I know that I have God-given superpower in me as a woman, yet I am not equipped to avoid all the abuse... It is my fault". Facing up to the reasons in real life? why? but why? but why? AND what can we do? How?... **The tears bottled up over the years just overflow.**"*



Marilyn Aitken

WLTP co-founder, with two young friends, Yenziwe and Phiwa in a forest near Dargle.

"Emilia's dream had a profound effect on me and I began to wonder how we could implement it.

At that time most Grail members were employed in one way or another in their professions or in the church or other NGOs. I asked myself why, when I belonged to a women's movement, I was working almost exclusively with men in my Justice and Peace job in the SA Catholic Bishops' Conference.

The idea of a Grail project for women began to take shape and I left for Europe and the IGA in July of 1984, with a Draft Proposal for a Feasibility Study for a women's leadership project. En route to the Netherlands, I visited my friend, Mildred Nevile in London. She was the General Secretary of the Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR). I showed her the proposal and she made some suggestions to improve it, including adding a line item to the budget for 'Exigencies'. I had to look the word up in a dictionary! Next stop was the Netherlands and the offices of Cebemo in Oegstgeest. There I stayed with another friend, Sr Dymphna Vanwesenbeeck, the Cebemo project officer for South Africa. Dymphna was very sympathetic and secured funding for the feasibility study."

Marilyn began the 6 month Feasibility Study in September 1984, doing research in the Johannesburg townships, in Durban, Cape Town and Zimbabwe. A workshop with young women held at the Holy Family Conference Centre in Victory Park in January 1985 formed part of the survey. That workshop was staffed by Grail members who are now Emthonjeni staff members: Julia Khanyile, Thoko Makhanya and Marilyn Aitken. Aneene Dawber also facilitated. Emilia came to hear Helen Joseph, the Apartheid Struggle veteran, talk about the historic Women's March of 1956 that we commemorate every Women's Day on 9th August. Helen and three other women led the march. We sang the song with Helen: "Igama lamakhosikazi malibongwe!" (We praise you and remember what you stood for)

Zodwa Mabaso, who played a pivotal role in the development of WLTP, did not attend the first workshop. Why? She was in Detention in solitary confinement with her husband, Peter, for 5 months, for visiting a friend, Sipho Binda, an ANC man in exile in Botswana. WLTP came into existence during the culminating years of the Liberation Struggle against Apartheid, at the height of political repression, between 1985 and 1989.

After 4 months of the Feasibility Study, it was clear **very little was being done to develop women's leadership in South Africa**. There were a number of very good women's projects in Zimbabwe, but in South Africa, church and civil society organisations, youth and political groups were dominated by men and boys, with the exception of women's sodalities and the Black Sash. The Grail National Committee agreed to the establishment of the Women's Leadership and Training Project (WLTP) and approved of the Management Committee that included Jane Ngobese, a present staff member, and Emilia. Marilyn obtained permission from the SACBC to work part-time.

On 1 March 1985, WLTP was born with further funding from Cebemo. Marilyn was the only staff member. The project grew organically. Other Grail members co-facilitated workshops and the network of contacts in the Grail and in the Catholic Church helped recruit participants. As soon as Zodwa was released from detention, she began co-facilitating workshops and joined the staff fulltime late in 1985. She left in 1997 to join the Department of Labour. Today she is their Executive Manager of Employment Services.



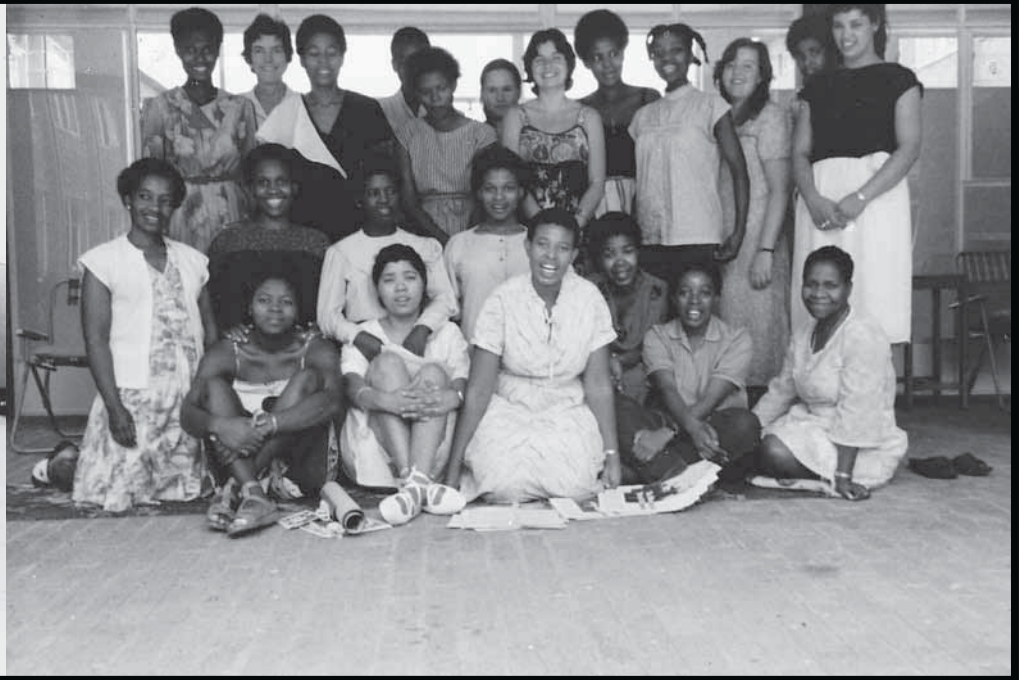
"In those days black people, and women particularly, were oppressed. People could not work just anywhere in the country – they could not speak their minds or the truth. It was difficult at that time to make people aware of their situation. As soon as you started gathering people together it was considered wrong or controversial or against the law.

For me what was important was that we were living out the Grail vision. It was important to us to bring the issues of social justice to the communities, to conscientise women and ensure that they also took their place in society. We were sharing with them, first of all, what you as a person can do to help yourself. And how you can begin to recognise the gifts that you have been given. And then to see what is possible around you - the needs of the people around you – and do things to help those people to help themselves. We were helping them to speak up and say what South Africa should be for all the people of the country." **Zodwa Mabaso**, WLTP co-founder.

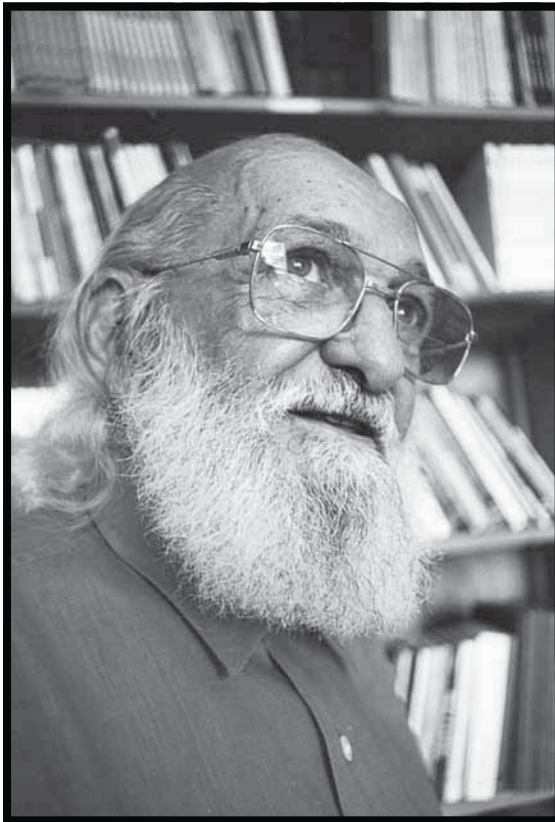


First WLTP workshop, Jan 1985
L to R: Nomvuyo Mbere, Helen Joseph, Aneene Dawber, Vuyiswa Radebe, Marilyn Aitken, Julia Khanyile, Emilia Charbonneau, Thoko Makhanya

First WLTP workshop, Jan 1985



THE INFLUENCE OF PAULO FREIRE, BRAZILIAN EDUCATIONIST

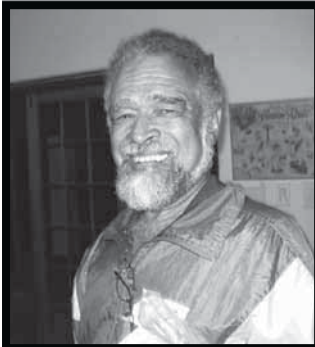


Paulo Freire

Both Zodwa and Marilyn were deeply influenced by Paulo Freire's approach to development. His philosophy and practical methodology, called '**conscientisation**', had been successfully applied in Kenya by Grail members Anne Hope & Sally Timmel, with Enda Byrne – who had initiated the DELTA programme (Development Education and Leadership Teams in Action) in 1975.



Anne Hope



Filip Fanchette

"We put the main elements of the DELTA programme together after some initial work with Steve Biko and the SASO students in South Africa. We started with Paulo Freire's methodology. In the 'Movement for Basic Education in Brazil' he had shown how poor people, who had very little formal education, could be enabled to discuss their problems, find the causes and work out what they could do about them.

We found that when we started with the themes on which people had very strong feelings, and used 'Codes', that is pictures, plays, games and poems showing familiar experiences of their problems, many groups which had been very lethargic, suddenly came to life and became active in trying to transform their situations. This was so exciting that very soon there was a huge demand for workshops.

"We needed to train many facilitators with understanding of group dynamics, so we used many of the group skills I had learnt in CELT (Christian Education and Leadership Training) in the 60's in South Africa. As the trainers helped the groups to keep searching for the root causes of their problems we found they needed more political and economic analysis.

Father Filip Fanchette (of the Ecumenical Institute for the Development of Peoples in Paris) helped us to develop many useful frameworks for doing this, such as the 'Dynamic Model of Society' from Antonio Gramsci, and 'The Wheel of Fundamental Human Needs' of Manfred MaxNeef. The whole programme was based on the Christian belief that when Christ says "Behold I make all things new", it is a promise that if we co-operate with God's great work of love, it will be possible to transform every aspect of life, starting with ourselves and our own personal relationships, then all the institutions through which we work, the wider political, economic and social structures of our society, and our relationship with the environment.

Father Donal Dorr helped us constantly over the years to develop a sound spiritual and theological basis for all the work." **Anne Hope**



Sally Timmel

"We have found that Freire's methods are also very helpful in getting a group to understand the political structures in their district or country, to recognise their human rights and responsibilities, and to start lobbying their representatives and officials to ensure that they get their Fair Share of the Resources available.

The methods have been used in dealing with many different issues, including gender relationships, environmental problems and health issues. They build the people's confidence that they "can" read their own reality and write their own history, or in other words understand the causes of their problems and shape the future of their communities."

CODES

We use a stimulus called ‘Codes’ to get people thinking; Sometimes people act them out. People get engaged & then we question. What do you see happening? Why does it happen? Does it happen in your lives, why? What are we going to do about it? And that is the most important thing.

From 1980 onwards, Zodwa and Marilyn attended many training workshops run in Lesotho and the Transkei by Anne, Enda and Sally together with various Kenyan trainers: Dominic Mwasaru, Stephen Kionda, Leah Wambui, Joseph Dondo, Sr Josephine Cassandra and Josphat Mulyungi.

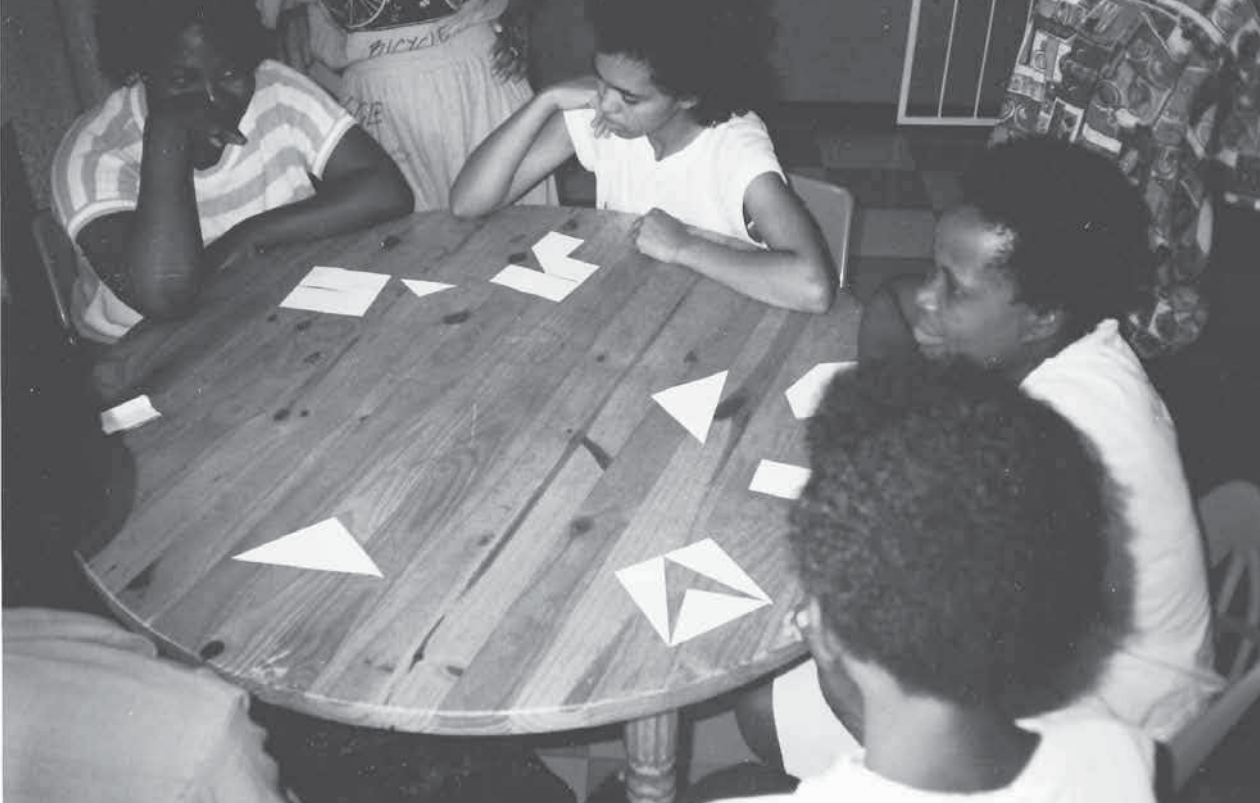
They became steeped in the method, doing surveys constantly and seeing “codes” everywhere.

“During a workshop in 1998 we realised that the 12 women’s centre workers had imbibed the Paulo Freire approach very well when they used it at WLTP’s expense.

They presented a “code” using the generative theme of not being paid regularly, followed by a very good analysis. We can still see that “code”. Evah Mnisi went to the bank to withdraw money and found nothing. Sibongile Mtungwa was the Mashonisa (money lender) terrorizing the people who owed her money.

I saw a “code” during a party at the end of a workshop in 1994. There were participants from all over the country. The Gauteng group performed a play showing the unsophisticated rural person coming to the city. It was poking fun at rural life and there was much laughter at rural people’s expense. I wanted to jump up and lead the analysis: What do you see happening here? Why does this happen? Have you ever experienced what you saw in this play? Why? Why? Why? I had to restrain myself.” Marilyn Aitken

“We use role play to stimulate people- and make sure that they talk about real issues. We don’t give the participants the problems- they come up with the problems themselves and work out ways to solve the problems.” Audrey Mboweni

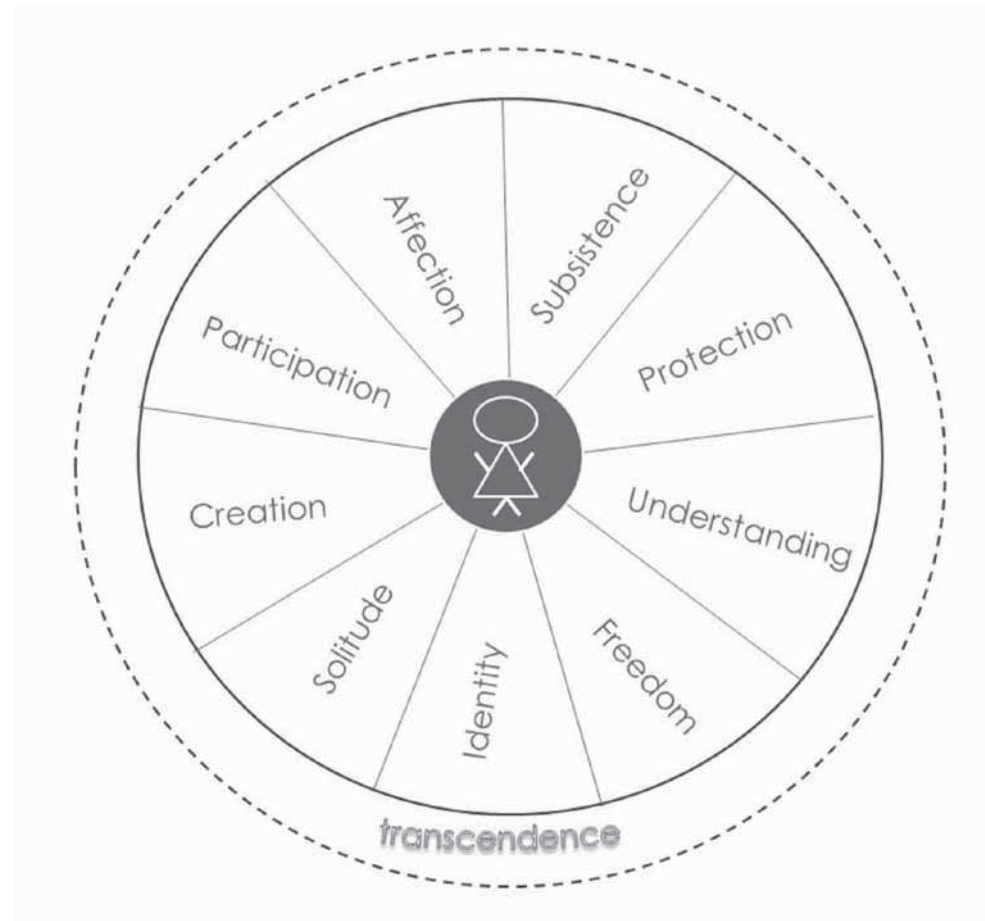


Top left: Co-operation Squares 'Code'
Used as a workshop tool to spark a discussion
on improving working relationships

Top right: River Code acted by Nonhlanhla
Mbanjwa, Nokwazi Nzimande and Gugu Made

Bottom left: Photo- language. 'Codes' used
here to analyse what 'transformative social
development' means

THE METHODOLOGY EVOLVES

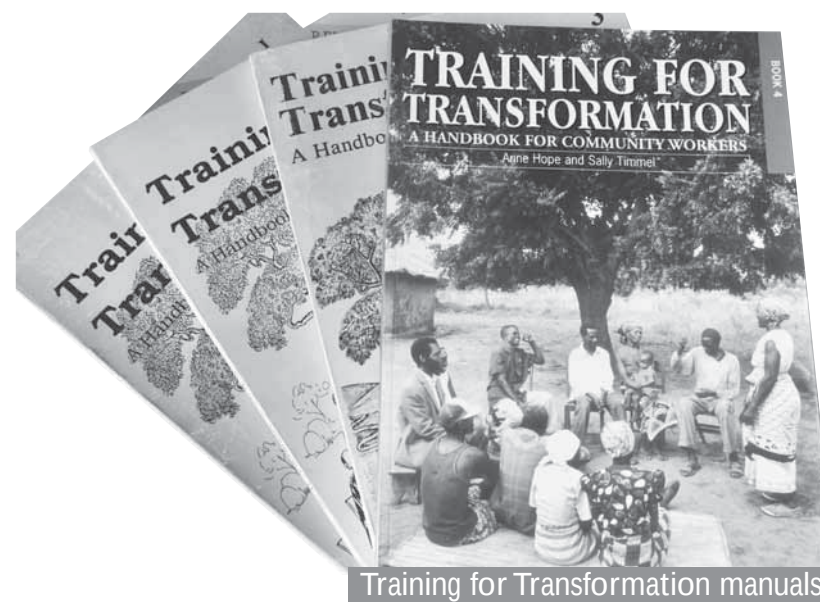


'The Wheel of Fundamental Human Needs'

Originally created by Manfred MaxNeef. Adapted by WLTP

"At school teachers can't teach everything- they can't tell you how to take care of yourselves & give you values. We pose the questions so that the participants can come up with things themselves. That helps them to feel involved and they own their decisions- they feel great about that." **Setha Gcume**

TRAINING FOR TRANSFORMATION



Training for Transformation manuals

For a number of years, Zodwa served on the board of ADEN (African Development Education Network), a continental-wide development from DELTA Kenya. WLTP's relationship with Training for Transformation (TFT), the South African version of DELTA, continues to this day.

WLTP staff members, Phindi Qwabe, Audrey Mboweni, Sibongile Mtungwa, Zanele Mkhwanazi, Nqobile Masuku, Musa Mntungwa, Sphelele Mtshengu and Jane Ngobese have

all participated in year-long courses with residential phases at the Grail Centre in Kleinmond, Western Cape. Sibongile Mtungwa continued her TFT studies by obtaining a degree from the TFT partner, Development Studies College in Dublin.

Other staff members have attended shorter courses and Think Tanks over the years. TFT played a major role in building WLTP/ Emthonjeni's capacity to do good development work.

"It is most interesting and marvelous how much work WLTP has done over the years. DELTA is very proud of you as a 'daughter'. I like the way you have drawn in so many people in the process. Congratulations on the great work you have done in the last 25 years."

Anne Hope

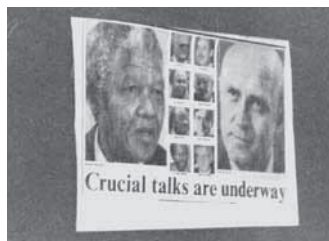


CHAPTER 2

WORKSHOPS, PROJECTS AND MEMORIES



1985-1994
The Early Years:
First Workshops & Projects



1993-1994
The Birth of Democracy
Empowering SA Women
in a Time of Great Change



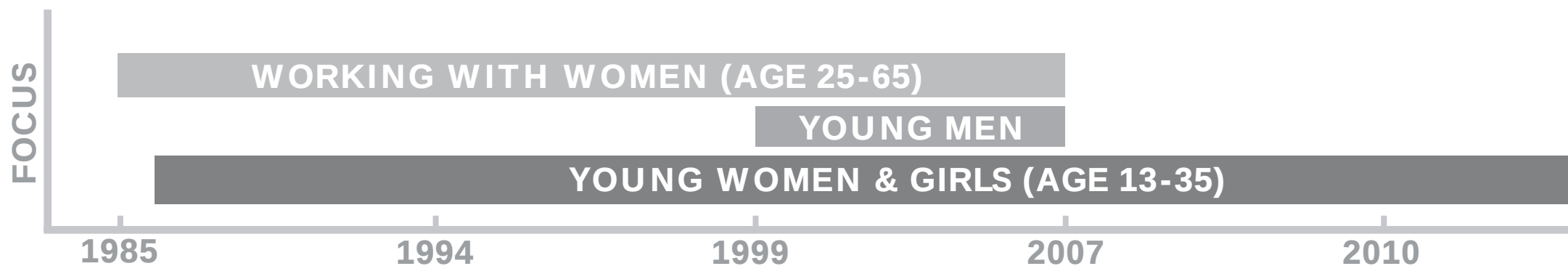
1995-1999
The Expansive Years:
Young Women's Centres
Spread Across SA



2000-2010
Tackling Critical Issues in a Changing South Africa



2007-2010 & Beyond
Emthonjeni
'At the Wellspring' programme



1985-1994

THE EARLY YEARS

FIRST WORKSHOPS & PROJECTS



Rural Women's Movement, Driefontein, September 1992.
Agriculture workshop, Lydia Kompe (Co-ordinator- later MP)
in the centre

WLTP came into existence during the culminating years of the Liberation Struggle against Apartheid, at the height of political repression, between 1985 and 1989. Some of the political events of those years had a direct bearing on our programme with many projects and workshops to help women deal with issues arising from racial and patriarchal repression.

WORKSHOPS WITH WOMEN (AGED 25-65)

During the first years WLTP ran leadership workshops with women in the Johannesburg area and in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. Khanyisile Mbatha and Fr Anton Graf introduced us to women in the Eastern Transvaal, the area now called Mpumalanga and parts of Southern Limpopo.

Many projects and programmes followed...



Pietermaritzburg workshop,
Red Acres. Tertiary students from
Johannesburg and Durban,
Loek Goemans (top R),
Jane Ngobese (bott R). (Dec 1985)



Women's workshop, Ave Maria Centre, Limpopo,
(May 1992)

THE WOMEN OF ST ANNE LYDENBERG

There was a certain amount of overlap with Marilyn's other half-time job in the beginning (Head of Justice and Peace). She passed on to WLTP a request for justice and peace workshops for the Women of St Anne in the Diocese of Witbank. The Women of St Anne are a pious Catholic women's sodality and the aim was to help the members analyse the political situation and understand that the political struggle was a struggle for justice. It was therefore right that Christians should be involved. Women of St Anne arrive for meetings in their purple uniforms in their hundreds which is quite a challenge for facilitators who want to run a participative workshop. Zodwa and Marilyn were equal to the challenge, although at times the women tried to resist moving into small discussion groups.

Nhlanhla Mabaso and **Hlula Msimang**, the sons of Grail members assisted in the workshops. The boys were at school in Soweto, and were already (unbeknown to us) involved in the ANC underground resistance. These boys succeeded in helping the Women of St Anne identify with their sons, who especially in Sekhukhuneland, were in direct confrontation with the Apartheid Security Forces. St Anne's Women were seen singing and dancing Freedom Songs as energizers after Nhlanhla and Hlula's inputs.

Aggie Modise, a high school teacher in Tembisa, a huge township near Johannesburg airport, joined WLTP and ran workshops during school holidays. In 1991 she, Zodwa, Marilyn and Emilia, ran refresher courses for St Anne's Women in the Pretoria Archdiocese.

"Soon after these workshops, Zodwa and I, with the help of the CIIR, Kathy Bond Stewart, a Grail member in Harare, and her husband John, and the Grail in Sydney and Melbourne, organised for Nhlanhla and Hlula to go into exile in Australia. Nhlanhla is now the Director of Computer and Network Services at Wits University and Hlula is the Head of Police in the Ekurhuleni Metro after a stint in the SA delegation at the UN in New York" **Marilyn Aitken**

Top: Women of St Anne with Emilia and Aggie facilitating

Bottom Left: Nhlanhla Mabaso

Bottom Right: Hlula Msimang (centre)

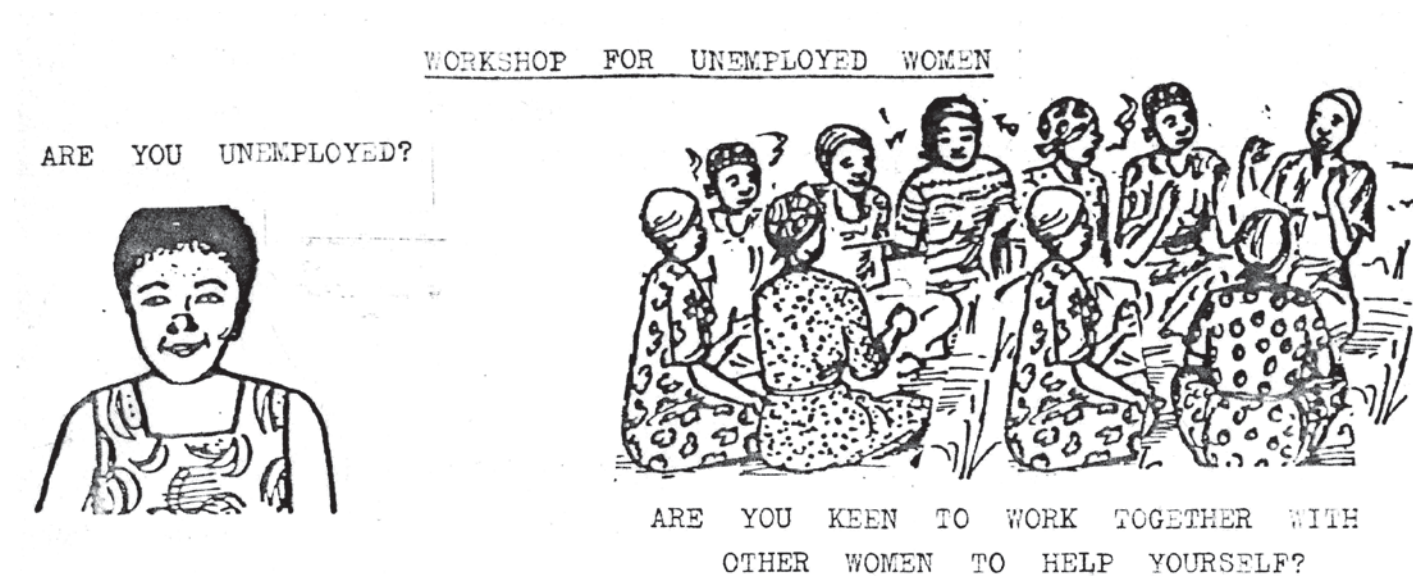


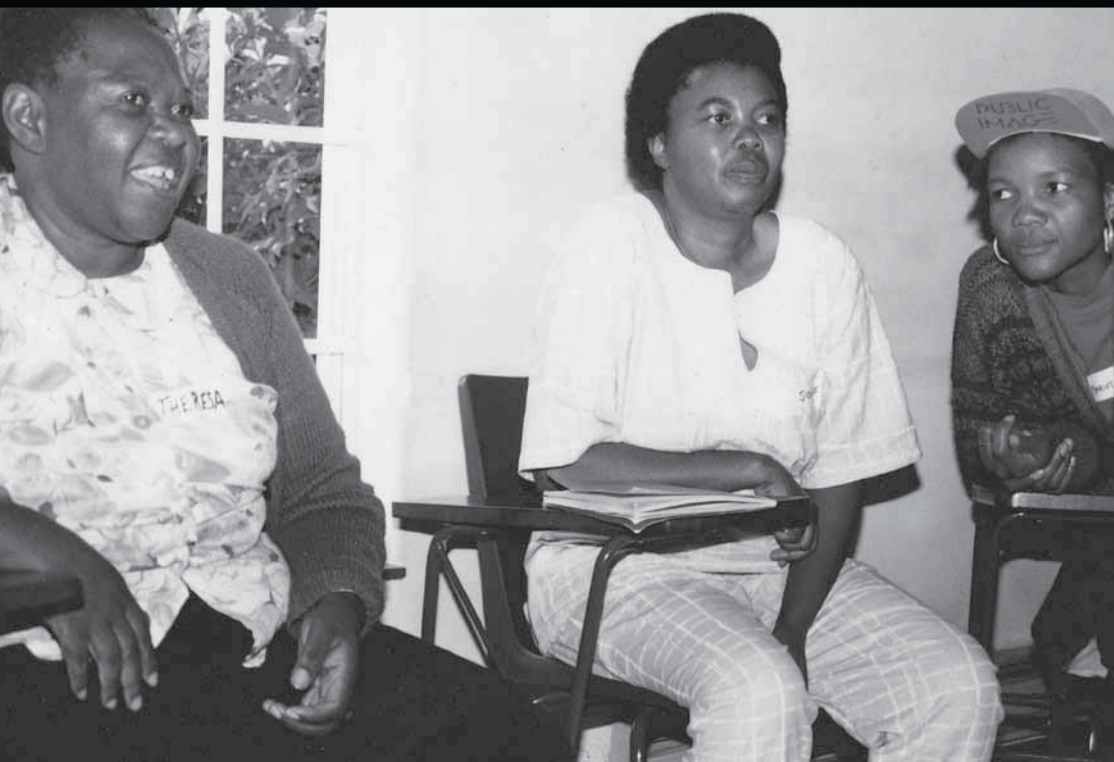
WORKSHOPS FOR UNEMPLOYED WOMEN

The Cry:

"We have been walking the streets for months unsuccessfully looking for work"

Zodwa and Marilyn organised a workshop for women from the Diocese of Klerksdorp, Gauteng townships and from Mpumalanga. Topics included "Your experience of Unemployment", "An analysis of Unemployment", the film "My Brilliant Career", "Learning to Write Proposals" and "Planning". The participants left with plans to do a survey of needs and to try to match these needs with their own skills and possibilities. There was at least one success story when Molly Sekonyela and two other participants established a successful Early Childhood Development (ECD) centre in the Catholic Church in Thokoza.





Top left: Unemployment Workshop, (1986)
Khanyisile Mbatha (RIP) (left) working with
silkscreen

Top right: Unemployed Womens Workshops
Limpopo, Audrey Mboweni (right)

Bottom left: 1994
L to R - Theresa Molefe, Sibongile Molepo,
Nokuthula Nzimande

These workshops sparked WLTP's first projects

WOZ'OBONA

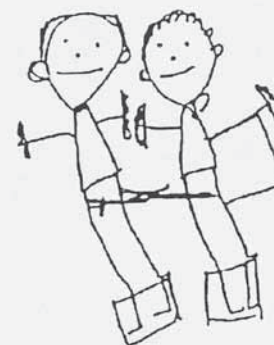
Dorothy Molatlhegi came to the Grail Centre at Loch Avenue, Johannesburg, one day with her grandson Monwegi, aged about three. Marilyn took him with her to do some gardening. After a while he became bored and began throwing stones at her. That incident led to the birth of a new project. Marilyn told her friend Norma Rudolph about the stone throwing. Norma, was looking for partner organisations to implement her dream to help communities organize around the needs of their young children.

The result was that in 1987 Marilyn, Norma and Sheila Drew established the Woz'obona Early Childhood Community Service Group. WLTP administered the first funds Woz'obona received from Kinderpostzegels in the Netherlands and Marilyn served on the Management Committee for a number of years once it became an independent NGO. Woz'obona combined a Montessori approach for children with a Freirian approach to adult education in order to help community groups understand and meet the needs of young children.

The first centre, in Thokoza, called Thuto ke Lesedi enrolled Monwegi as a founder pupil. It moved from the Catholic Church to its own building in 1990 and is still operating with 98 pupils and Grade R! Nomonde Matiso started a Woz'obona satellite training group in Mthatha with its first centre in Tsolo. Satellite groups were also started in Jane Furse, in Venda, Bele Bele, Matatiele, and on Sheridan near Bethlehem.

Woz'obona is still operating in Sekhukhune.

WOZ'OBONA Early Childhood Community Service Group



.. all you've wanted to know

Needs of Young Children

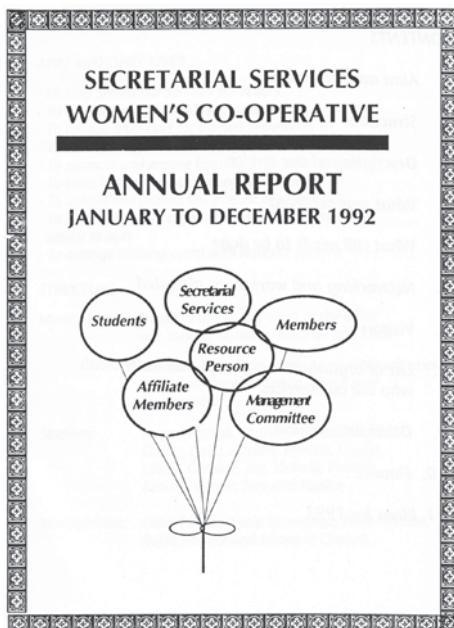
Woz'obona helps communities to understand the basic needs of young children; good food, shelter, water, stimulation, love and respect. We believe communities need to work together to meet the needs of young children adequately.

SECRETARIAL SERVICES, SOWETO

In 1988, Zodwa initiated the first WLTP employment project, bringing together a group of ten young women who had just completed a secretarial course. They formed a Cooperative to help serve communities in Soweto. With the help and supervision of WLTP staff members, mainly Zodwa and Sheila, they ran the project successfully for ten years, learning to budget and plan, do fundraising, and to generate and share profits. They attended many workshops that WLTP organised for women.

The Secretarial Services team included: Thuli Audrey Dlamini, Sheila Dikeledi Phakwane, Thabile Goale, Mvumi Madiba (RIP), Nocawe Ngcwabe, Mantwa Mgulwa, Bojosi Modise, Layeza Mtsamayi, Dibuseng Evelyn Motloun, Nomthimba Nkosi, Busisiwe Sibanda, Helen Diatile.

“As a member of the Secretarial Services Cooperative, I and the other members accumulated the best experience. When we closed the Co-op, most of us found employment in good companies like Telkom, not just as secretaries but in managerial positions. It was all worth it and I salute the WLTP mentors for their commitment and the energy they put into the Co-op.” **Bojosi Modise Buthelezi**



Left to Right: Dibuseng Evelyn Motloun, Nomthimba Nkosi and Thuli Audrey Dlamini



Mvumi Madiba (standing), Nomthimba Nkosi (seated)

MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS' WORKSHOPS GAUTENG AND MAFIKENG

The tears:

"I want to sit and talk to my mother about my life and get advice about the questions I have but whenever I try, she says she is too busy or she wants to watch her Soapies."

"My mother chased me out of her house and I haven't seen her for many years."

"I can't talk to my daughter because she is much better educated than I am. She knows so much more than I do."

"I am made to do housework and cook while my brothers are at workshops or playing football. My mother really spoils my brothers."



Virginia Moloi and Nomonde Matiso

We ran a series of workshops where mothers sat together and talked about what they liked and didn't like about their daughters. At the same time daughters sat and discussed what they liked and didn't like about their mothers. Both groups then came together in plenary sessions to discuss the presentations from the other group.

The dialogue built understanding between mothers and daughters and improved the relationships that are so important in building girls' self-esteem and identity.

A workshop was also facilitated at Reichenau in 2006.



“The Mothers and Daughters workshops have always been my best.

I saw the mothers clearly as the adult daughters...still clinging to the unfinished search for whys? TEARS! CONFUSION! ANGER! DISGUST at their challenging and outspoken daughters. “This WLTP is misleading our children, spoiling them!!!” Change was difficult and not readily accepted in the beginning. During the transformation process I realise as a participant that the responsibility is on my shoulders to help others. Scary! I become rebellious inside towards me and outward to the issues, culture, man, father and above all submissive women and my mother. The biggest fear for the girls that brought tears and frustration was the disbelief that ‘I took a stand!’ But where am I going to from the workshop... Same environment - abuse, family that has not had this 2 day experience with me and WLTP. I know this is what we all experienced. I only wish we had had therapists at the end or a systematic counselling for all of us.

One of my highlights was the prayerful and assuring support from Emilia, Aggie, Ann, Marilyn and Ines during my preparation to testify at the Truth and Reconciliation hearings in 1999. I became the first (on record) to speak out at the TRC on how the system affected the children of political prisoners and the exiled. I presented the Girl Child’s ordeal in the abusive environment and homes affected by the dehumanising isolation and torment, incarcerating the fathers and breaking families in defence of white supremacy during Apartheid. I spoke out representing myself and my mother whom I had seen deteriorate over the years, breaking down and turning into a bitter grass widow, and my serious abuser. Wow! I still get goose pimples at the memory of the uproar against me as a woman talking ill of my mother and family, political party. What really matters to me is I became outspoken and broke the silence. I represented a million women including my victim mother. At the end my mother and I made peace and became friends.

Our work with young women and women in general gained me more esteem and value. I grew to be a strong extrovert and challenging leader among my leader peers. My spirituality grew so abundantly that I now know the value of forgiveness and building on the pain of the past towards the promised beauty and healing of the Faithful.

Bravo WLTP and all of us ‘girls’. Forward to the women!! Thank you my Grail sisters at WLTP. Long live WLTP!!!“ ***Sheila Mothopeng- Masote***

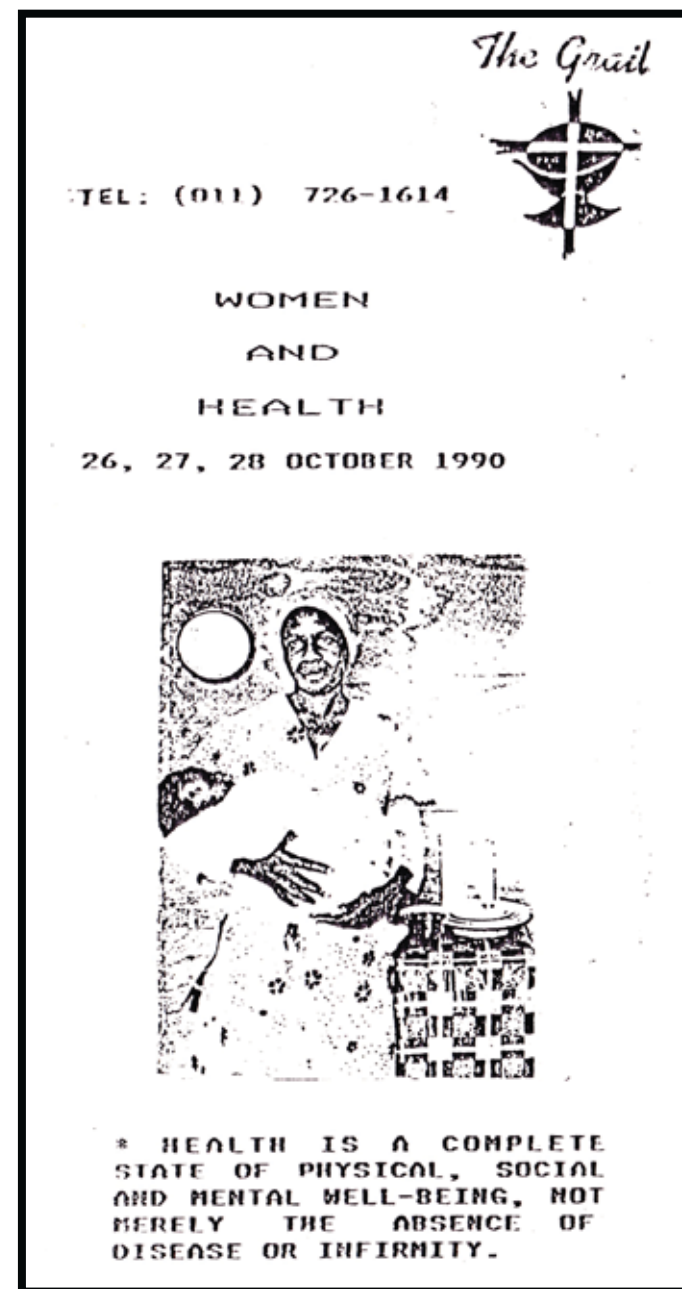
WOMEN AND HEALTH

The venue we had hired had problems with their boilers and arranged for us to go to a Jewish Retirement Hotel in Berea, Johannesburg. We arrived en masse and had to walk past the residents' lounge to our rooms. Later we shared their dining room. Nothing like this had ever happened. All but one of the 25 participants were people of colour and our workshop was the talk of the day. A few residents sneaked in to the meeting room to observe what was happening. And a lot was happening. **Dr Mary Hlalele**, our faithful Board member for more than 14 years, was doing some very interesting sessions educating about heart disease and other health topics. One of the residents who was "attending" asked Marilyn to explain why we were having the workshop. She offered to come and help because she was a doctor and said there was another highly qualified medical specialist in residence. She was amazed when Marilyn pointed out our highly qualified doctor. We never introduced Mary as a doctor in our workshops. We wanted to empower women to relate to medical personnel with self-confidence. Some participants did not realise that Mary was a doctor as she presented medical facts so simply that lay people could relate to them.

Mary is a disciple too of Paulo Freire and uses his approach in rural medicine.



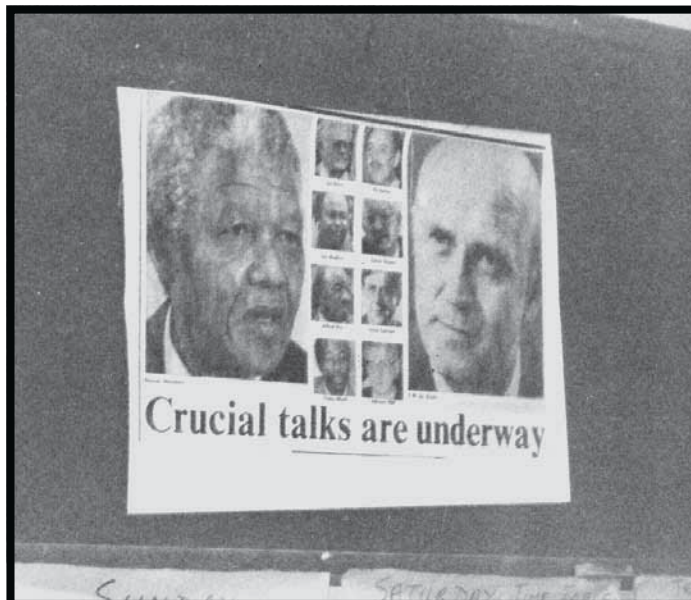
Mary Hlalele (centre)



1993-1994

THE BIRTH OF DEMOCRACY:

EMPOWERING SOUTH AFRICA'S WOMEN IN
A TIME OF GREAT CHANGE



'Crucial talks' code, 1991
- No women included



Beauty Mkhize, the cook at Lumko
Conference Centre, votes

WOMEN AND POLITICS

The tears:

"I am afraid to talk to my children because I don't understand this politics they are involved in"

There was a sizeable contingent of participants from the ANC Women's League in Bushbuckridge, north of Nelspruit. For our Code we used a large poster of the front page picture of a recent Weekly Mail (now the Mail and Guardian) newspaper. The picture was entitled "CRUCIAL TALKS ARE UNDERWAY". In the analysis of the Code, the participants could see that there were people of different races, but it took a long time for them to see that there was not one woman amongst the 12 men. We were shocked at the lack of gender awareness.

A highlight of that workshop was the mock election we held. We invited all the workers at the Lumko Conference Centre to come and "vote".



Voter Education- mock election



Workshop speaker makes a point during a mock political rally

WOMEN AND ECONOMICS WORKSHOP

We dealt with the South African Budget and “Centre and Periphery” economics amongst other topics.

One exciting thing about the workshop was that Zanele Mbeki attended with Nomhle Gcabashe. Both were recently back from exile. Nomhle is Jane Ngobese’s niece and is a financial expert. We were honoured to have such high profile and highly-skilled participants. Zanele started a women’s empowerment project when she became the First Lady of South Africa. Nomhle was very interested to know where we found the participants. She founded Women’s Investment Portfolio Holdings, was later the CEO of Blue IQ and is presently the CEO of Stone Investments.



Economics workshop 1994
Zanele Mbeki (centre)

1986-ONWARDS

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN (AGE 13-35)

*WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP
TRAINING PROJECT*

*Leadership Training Course
For young women from 4th to
16th July 1993.*



*Young women let's get together
to develop one another and in
turn develop the nation.*

One of the political events that had a direct bearing on our programme was the nation-wide schools boycott that began in September 1986 during the State of Emergency. The boycott continued for several months. In October, Lindi Mabaso and her two friends, Mandundu Masilo and Lillian Letele, came to Zodwa with a request to run a workshop for them....

The tears:

"I was gang-raped on my way home from school."

"A close family relative raped me and my family blamed me."

"Our friends are drinking, using drugs, being abused by boys and getting pregnant."

"All the township schools, including ours have closed and we are not able to write exams. We will have to repeat our grades in 1987 and lose a year of schooling."

"I have passed Matric, but I cannot gain entry to tertiary studies because the standard of education in our rural areas is very bad. Our English teachers can't speak English themselves."

Lindi had been attending workshops since she was a baby. She played “Workshops” while her peers were playing “Housie-Housie” and “Dolls”. Marilyn once stumbled in on one of Lindi’s games to see her, aged 5, “saying mass” for her friends. She was already aspiring to be a leader.

The first workshop with girls from Thokoza and Soweto at Koinonia in Johannesburg took place in December 1986. Dorothy Molatlhegi and Molly Sekonyela, organised the Thokoza girls. Three young women, Nomvuyo Mbere from Thokoza, Vuyiswa Radebe, from Soweto and Mabusi Ndimande from KwaMashu assisted Zodwa and Marilyn. Nkuli Mabaso, Lindi’s sister, aged 5, was the youngest participant. The workshop was a catalyst for WLTP’s work helping us to focus on the needs of teenage girls. For a number of years after that, workshops for teenage girls during the school holidays became regular events.

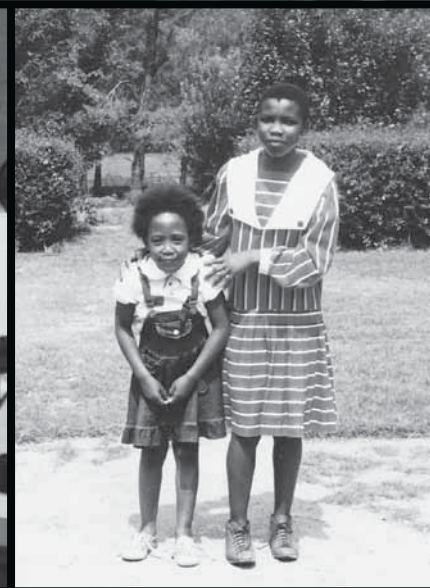
At that time Fr Cas Paulsen who was based in Mthatha, introduced Nomonde Matiso to the Grail. We invited Nomonde’s daughter Nomaza and her friend Rosalia Tshingana to attend workshops. Thus was born WLTP’s work in the Eastern Cape. After 1994, we invited prominent women politicians, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi and Mary Metcalfe, as well as the SAPS drug squad to workshops. The work begun in 1986 is the blueprint for the Emthonjeni work today.

“So we ran this workshop, and then realised that this was just the tip of the ice-berg. They got very excited, probably because they had never been taken seriously before that.” **Marilyn Aitken**



Nkuli Mabaso

“I’ve been to varsity and school, and to this day, I don’t know of a place that offers the kind of material that is taught at these workshops. It’s this imparting from the wise, you are nurtured from a young age and exposed to who you are, how you fit into society & what you can be. Your eyes are opened.” **Nkuli Mabaso**



Box 14
Richmond 3780.
19-1-93.

Dear Marilyn,

I hope you had some pleasant days in Natal.

From your ladies you have heard that the course was a success. I was very happy about them: very spirited, careful preparations, kindness and patience with our girls. From the 12 from Richmond, 4 emerged as leaders-in-future. They will run a weekend course for about 40-50 teen-age girls, as a remote preparation for Confirmation, to be repeated several times.

Also Tracey, the coloured girl, will take part before she goes back to University. She speaks fluently Zulu.

It remains for me to express my sincerest thanks for your generosity; for sending your 4 ladies and paying for the whole course.

With blessings,
Yours in Christ, Fr. S. Muller
My photos did not come out well, sorry. Greetings from Virginia

Top left: Sheila Masote leading Tai-chi-cha

Bottom left: Minister of Social Development Geraldine Frazer-Moleketi speaks to young women 1994

Bottom right: Nkuli and Nomaza-Girls' Workshop

Above: A letter of appreciation from Fr Eberhardt Muller



Top left: Kathy Bond-Stewart and Zodwa (1993) making a point during the process for “Who am I?”

Top right: Training Workshop, St Peters, Rosettenville with Mary Metcalfe (1994); Jabulile Sibeko (third from R), Lenkie Khanyile (second from right)

Bottom left: Talk about drugs by the SAPS (1994)

Bottom right: Young girls from Thokoza working with clay: Martha Raisa, Violet Ngwenya, Mamoya Mbele

‘GROWING TO BE’ – THE FIRST MANUAL

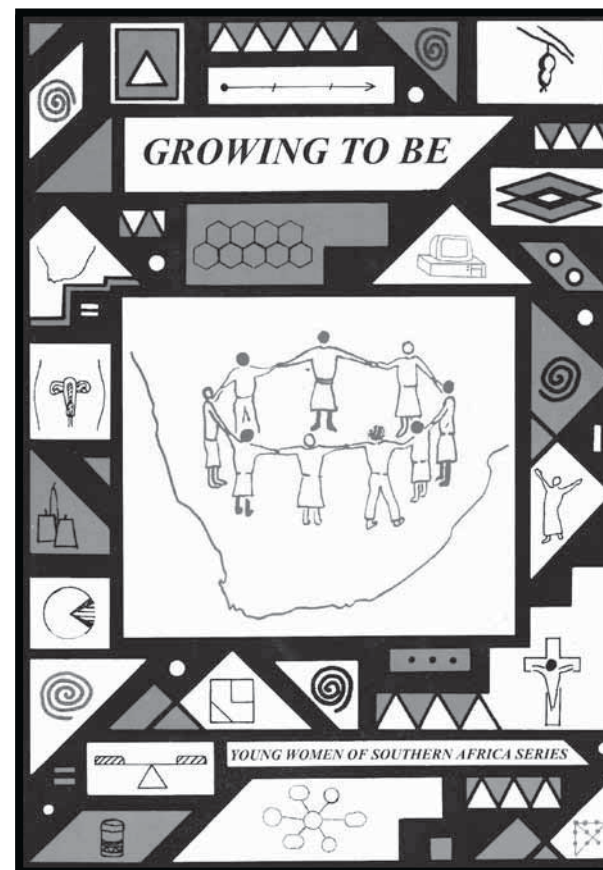
In 1988, Mary Ryan (Ralphs) produced a manual called “Growing to Be”, working with Lindi, Mandundu and Lillian and their school friends, Benedicta Tlhomola, Cordelia Mkhwanazi, Innocentia Mabaso, Thoko Zungu, Maaki Sekgobela, Sthembile Masondo & Portia Makwane.

The manual was disseminated widely through our contacts and gave WLTP a public face for the first time. Someone objected to the cover design of “Growing to Be” stating authoritatively that the symbols were “New Age” and even satanic! All the symbols came from illustrations in the book!

In 1993, Judy Figland and Emilia, from their Home and Family Life offices in Mariannhill, sold a copy to Fr Eberhardt Muller, the parish priest of Richmond KZN.

This started a chain of events that ultimately resulted in the WLTP of today. Marilyn, Shirley Nyamende and Pat Mathe responded to Fr Eberhardt’s invitation to run a workshop for girls using his very basic parish training facilities. There we met and trained Ningi Ndwalane, Nokwazi Nzimande and Nonhlanhla Mbanjwa. Fr Eberhardt recommended WLTP to Fr Stanislaus Dziuba, now Bishop of Umzimkulu. Fr Stan, recently arrived in Centocow from Poland, was very keen to train the girls in his parish.

In 1994, he invited 25 girls to a workshop. These girls included **Sibongile Mtungwa**, whom he recruited at the Mzimkulu River collecting water.





Above: 'Mary Ryan at launch of 'Growing to Be''

Right: 'Growing to Be' manual launch – 1988 St Matthew's High School, Soweto (Left to Right)

Standing: Maaki Sekgobela, Thoko Zungu, Sthembile Masondo, Liziwe Nabe, Lindi Mabaso, Innocentia Mabaso, Mandundu Masilo, Benedicta Tlhomola
Kneeling: Lillian Lethle, Portia Makwane

"As I write in 2010, I have a picture in my mind of this group of girls and our meetings in their different homes, and sometimes in mine in Roodepoort. I still feel an ache when I remember Lindi Mabaso and how she was taken from us so young – she was hugely promising as a leader and her death left a great hole in all our lives.

Literary theorists speak about texts travelling, and how they acquire new sets of meanings as they encounter different contexts and readers along the way, doing their own work often unintended by the writer. I must admit I had not tracked the 'travels' of Growing to Be over the years, but since moving to Cape Town in 2002, have had cause to take it off my bookshelf and to pester Emilia at the Grail in Johannesburg for a small stock.

I have shared the book with pastoral counsellors that I have trained at the University of the Western Cape, with women at the retreats we run at the Women's Table, a project that I started in 2006, and now more recently with mentors working with groups of young girls in Lwandle/Nomzamo and other communities in the Helderberg region.

I am grateful for the opportunity WLTP gave to me to be part of its development, and am so pleased that its journey has taken it into such diverse and unimagined places."

Mary Ryan



“I grew up in a community that was not exposed to many things. My mother was a domestic worker working hard for my education. When Mom Aggie approached me to join in 1988, I was doing Grade 10. I became active and we formed the Growing Girls’ Group in Tembisa. We talked about study skills, sexuality, recycling and HIV and AIDS. These issues opened our eyes and we empowered ourselves to help the community. Our behaviour changed and our problem-solving skills improved. My mother was so proud of me that she wanted me to be with the girls all the time.

When we finished school, most of us went to tertiary institutions. I got a bursary to do teacher training. I had been inspired by our facilitators. We were now experiencing a new life away from home. I remember the day we called a meeting to rename ourselves “Young Women in Progress” and demand our independence from WLTP. It was fun!! I also remember preparing for the opening of the new WLTP offices at 2 Loch Avenue and the launching of the book Nokukhanya.

WLTP had many effects on my life:

Career. It was easy to study at College with other students. I have used the skills I learned in my career as an educator – Training educators in the New Curriculum, Project Management and Governance.

Community Involvement. It was very exciting to work with Sr Hanna Remke from Germany on Nature Conservation and to network with people from Kenya.

Political Involvement. In 1997 Tony Leon heard about the good work I was doing and recruited me into the DA as the Youth Organiser for Tembisa (Editor’s Note: Tembisa is a huge township near OR Tambo Airport. It is the third-largest in the country). I did this work for 4 years, but when I was promoted to my present job, it was too difficult to be identified as a politician, so I resigned.

In 2003 I was promoted to District Learning Area Facilitator (formerly called Inspector). My current job is in training, facilitation and development of material (Learning Teaching and Support Materials) for educators and ensuring that they are empowered in the subjects they teach. I can imagine the work that has to be done with our teachers in the schools following the announcement by the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, of a new approach to education and the threatening industrial action. All the skills I acquired in WLTP will be of importance as long as I work for the Dept of Education.

I was blessed with a daughter, Aphiwe, in 2004. She is my family, my friend and a soulmate. I am looking forward to the celebration in August. It will serve as a debriefing session for me and I will be revived to work for WLTP again.”

Shirley Nyamende, Education Specialist, Ekurhuleni N. District

GENDER WORKSHOPS

After reading “Growing to Be”, Anna Litzey, a British volunteer at St Gregory College, Frere, near Estcourt, invited WLTP to do gender work to try to empower the subdued, submissive girls who were unable to communicate with the boys. Aggie, Marilyn and Zodwa did two workshops involving Mandundu and Lilian as facilitators.

Anna wrote, “The workshop positively influenced the students’ behaviour. Would you be interested to return to provide a few select students with further training in the methodology and content of WLTP workshops so that they can run their own workshops at St Gregory and local schools under my supervision. It is important to break down the strong dichotomy between students and teachers; recipients and providers.

The method gives students and recipients a feeling of self-worth and competence.”



St Gregory College Gender Workshop
Reconciliation ritual – washing hands - 1991

FIRST INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLER

“Operation One Day’s Work” in Norway funded us from 1993 to 1995. We received exciting news. They wanted a girl from WLTP to go to Norway and help educate their main fundraisers, scholars.

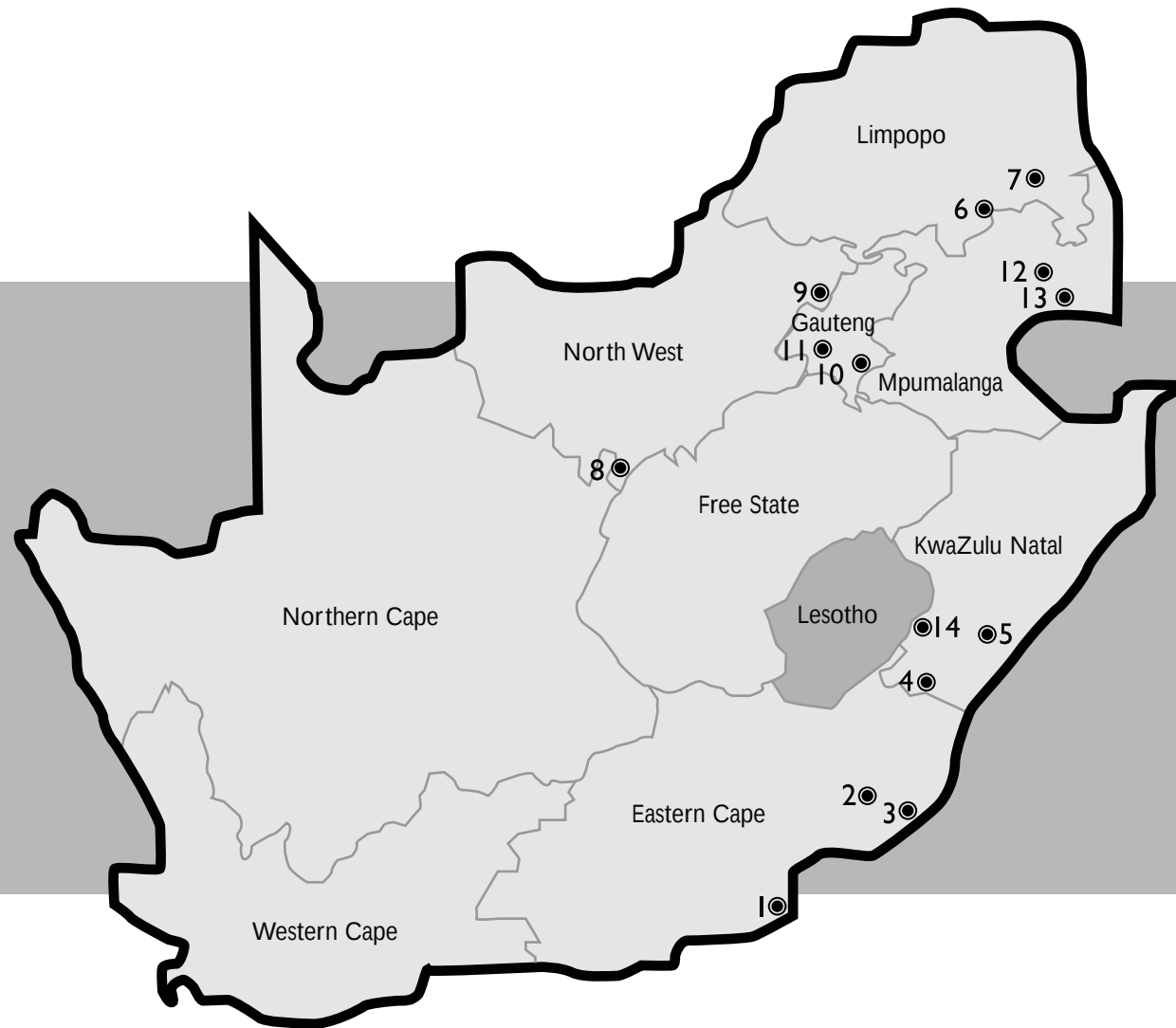
Jabulile Sibeko from Tembisa was chosen. She was 16 years old and in Grade 11. She flew to Oslo in 1994 and spent two weeks in Norway travelling with Ingrid and Grait (her guides and interpreters) to Telemark and places in rural areas, talking to 2 or 3 classes a day. She told the students about South Africa and life in Tembisa.

“I got to understand their education system and experienced many different ways of doing things. It was a privilege for me to go to Norway at such a young age.” **Jabulile Sibeko**

1995-1999

THE EXPANSIVE YEARS

YOUNG WOMEN'S CENTRES SPREAD ACROSS SOUTH AFRICA



From the late 1980's WLTP began to expand beyond Johannesburg. The girls were growing up and leaving school and in 1994 Sr Elsie Moyo, a pastoral worker in the Mpumalanga Province, asked us to train young women to work with her. It was time to begin a new phase of the project.

WLTP embarked on a programme of phased training of young women trainers that resulted in Young Women's Centres being established in 14 places:

Tsholomnqa ❶ and Umtata ❷/ Port St John's ❸ in the Eastern Cape, **Centocow ❹** and **Richmond ❺** in KwaZulu Natal, **Schoonoord** (Sekhukhuneland) **❻** and **Burgersdorp ❼** (near Tzaneen) in Limpopo, **Christiana ❽** and **Mothotlung** and **Oukasie in Brits ❾**, North West, **Thokoza ❿** and **Kliptown ⓫** in Gauteng, **Masoyi ⓬** in the Nelspruit area and **Schoemansdal ⓭** in Lebombo. **Reichenau Mission ⓮**

YOUNG WOMEN'S CENTRES

Field visits to Masoyi and Schoemansdal had an added bonus. The shortest route between the two centres was from Numbi Gate through the Kruger National Park to Malelane Gate, enjoying animal sightings en route. Mandundu had her first taste of the KNP on a field trip with Marilyn.

The young women gave their organisations names: Creative Young Women, Young Women in Action, Centocow Leadership Training Group, Young Women with Purpose, Mahlasedi Young Women, the Young Women's Education Group. WLTP paid the Centre Workers and gave a small budget to each centre for administration and programmes. Some centres raised their own funds to pay for other programmes and activities. Winnie Foxton, the SCIAF field worker, once described the centres as "fragile", but they survived. The groups chose Management Committees who travelled to Johannesburg periodically for WLTP training. On one of these occasions Gladys Khanyile, from Centocow was badly injured in a car accident when Bongani Khuboni, the young driver of the car, who was taking her to Pietermaritzburg to catch the bus, had a blackout and drove into a truck, killing himself. Gladys had attended the first girls' workshop in 1994 and continued to work with the CLTG when she returned to work after 3 months.

The centres continued for a number of years. Seven centres are still involved in the communities albeit in different ways; some have incorporated young men and one centre has become an AIDS Drop-In centre.

WLTP responded to other requests too. Ashley Ngoetjane from Mothotlung in Brits attended a WLTP workshop. She went home and started a group in her home township and then in Oukasie, the township next door. There was later a big celebration to welcome the two well-furnished containers donated by Transnet for these two groups.

Maxwell, an ANC activist in Christiana read a review of the Careers Book, "Careers for the New South Africa" compiled by Marilyn in 1988 and asked WLTP to go to Christiana to work with young women there. That was how the second centre in North West Province began. Maxwell became a very supportive member of the centre's management committee.

Centocow Young Women's Centre - opposite page

Top Left: Centocow workers Gugu, Thoko, Bongi and Sibongile - Trip to Lesotho (1999)

Top Middle: Launch of Centocow Centre August 96
(L to R) Fr Ignatius, Chief Zondi, Marilyn, Jane Ngobese
(Guest speaker), Mr Nhleko Principal of Centocow HS

Top Right: First workshop (front row) Father Stanley Dziuba
(now Bishop) in centre, Gladys Khanyile (back right)

Middle Left: My cup is overflowing (1994)

Centre: Centocow office

Remainder: Centocow centre launch (Aug 96)





Top left: Christiana Centre workers, Tshidi and Kgakgamatso

Top centre: Anna 'Jokes' Majoko reporting back from her group, Brits centre. (Anna is now an advocate)

Top right: Richmond 1992. Shirley Nyamende (L), Tracey Hulley (third from left), Ningi Ndwane (R)

Bottom left: Umtata group, 1993 Left-Right Nokubonga (front), Nomaza, Kolosa, Pumla and Rosalia

Bottom centre: Burgersdorp site for the centre

Bottom right: Burgersdorp centre workers Dolly Mhlari, Jamela Mushwana, Loster Baloyi, Audrey Mboweni

Excerpts from 'Africa Woman' Magazine, October 2002

Never too young to make a difference by Florence Machia, Kenya

Once a shy and rebellious girl, 24 year old **Sarah Langa** is changing the lives of the people of Kliptown, a squatter camp in the neighbourhood of South Africa's famous Soweto township. When she was 18, Langa enrolled in the WLTP. The head of the project at the time, Leonorah Khanyile, described her as "not focused". How things have changed! Langa has made it her business to do something about the poverty that afflicts her people and improve the circumstances especially of young women. Freedom Charter Square is very close to the area where Langa works. The Freedom Charter states 'All people shall have the right to be decently housed... slums shall be demolished and new suburbs built where all have transport, roads, lighting and playing fields'. Langa says, "In this community people do not want to stand up for their rights. Women still feel that this is where they belong. The girls are often sent by their parents to have sex with older men so that they can get money."

"When the Kliptown project folded for lack of funds, I was selected to coordinate all the girls who went through the training, and form a network." She later joined the Soweto Kliptown Youth Group management committee. She now manages 7 programmes in Kliptown that involve girls, the aged, women and young men. We found Langa surrounded by girls between the ages of 8 and 17. She has a passion for them. "It takes time to change the mindset of an individual and the earlier you start the better." She mobilises the girls to help with community development projects. The girls have formed income-generating projects selling paraffin and vegetables. "When I see a girl pull herself out of this place I am happy that I helped".

She is the recently-elected chairperson of the Kliptown branch of the SA National Civic Association. "I will now be dealing directly with Government in the town planning meetings which also allocate budgets. During my leadership training I learned how to manage funds."

Khanyile, now the Deputy-Director of Education at the British Council SA says "Sarah has been able to stand up for women issues and grab opportunities if she is not given them".

In 2002, Sarah won the Clinton Democracy Fellowship. Together with 11 other South Africans, she travelled to the USA for 3 months. She had discussions with Bill and Hillary Clinton and saw the City Year Programme in action. Now in 2010, Sarah coordinates the Vaal area for the South African City Year Programme, a National Youth Service NGO that was started in 2005 on the initiative of Nelson Mandela.



Sarah Langa (right)

“Human development theorists argue that although each child’s development may begin as a sped-up version of the norm, precocious capacity joins with other personal and environmental factors to yield a unique, highly beneficial configuration’ (Berk, 2003). Having made this quotation I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge WLTP for providing me with the environment to learn and grow. My involvement with Women’s Leadership and Training Programme (WLTP) dates back to the early ‘90s, when I was still a primary school learner. I had pestered my mother and WLTP staff from the age of 8 to attend a workshop. Three years later they finally allowed me to attend, although I was much younger than the other girls. I participated in life skills and leadership training programmes that were offered. I continued to thrive under the leadership of WLTP until the time that I had to go to a tertiary institution to further my studies.

I am what I am today because of the important role that WLTP played in my life. From age 11, I was equipped with the skills that every young girl needs to cope with the demands of growing up, such as being able to define who I was, knowledge of how to form and manage relationships with other people, communication and listening skills, understanding of my sexuality and so on.

As an adolescent I got to learn about management skills (conflict management, anger management, time management and financial management), facilitation and presentation skills, coordination of projects and workshops.

I can write a book about the wealth that WLTP brought into my life because the list of what I acquired is endless. When I was doing my tertiary education WLTP trained and provided me with the necessary skills for employment. Once I completed my studies I did not struggle to get a job and the adjustment to the working environment was very smooth. I am a senior social worker at the Steve Biko Academic Hospital in Pretoria and have 9 years experience in social work in health care. Until this day I am still enjoying the products of the valuable contributions that WLTP made in my life. Now that this year is another turnover for the organization I would like to wish WLTP a very happy 25 years birthday, and many more years to come. WLTP continue building future women leaders for our country”.

Mampho Madzivhandila

(Molly Sekonyela’s daughter - see Woz’Obona)

“Audrey Mboweni recruited me when I was 16 years old to join the organisation named Young Women’s Education Group in 1993. I involved myself in the organisation because I liked their activities and I learned lots of things that my mother wasn’t able to teach me. I started knowing myself, believing in me, knowing how to handle other people’s behaviour, learning about my 4 windows (physical, spiritual, sexual and emotional). I am a young woman and I can stand up for myself. I can understand and get involved in politics.

I wish WLTP could grow and come back again to educate the young people in rural areas about the life of today as there are a lot of different sicknesses, in the same way that we once had a Growing Girls’ Group in our area because of WLTP.”

Dolly Mhlarhi (Young Women’s Education Group- Limpopo)



Mandundu Masilo

"We are vocal these days because we started there. They made sure that we learned to contribute wherever we are. I can't not be involved in many things. My life is hectic, but it can't be all about me. I feel that this is a big cake & so many people can share in it."



Zonke Mgangala,
Eastern Cape

Zonke is a volunteer doing domestic violence counselling for the Masimanyane Women's Support Centre in East London.

"I joined WLTP in 1994 when a college friend introduced me. I gained a lot within a short space of time. I completed college and had to stay at home. WLTP was a gift to me as it gave me something to do. WLTP changed the way I think, the way I do and perceive things. I even changed my career focus from accountancy and computers to community development. WLTP made me value the WOMAN I am and strengthened me to stand up to any challenge. I learned to respect and value other women and to always be there for those who are down, sharing my strength with them and changing their attitudes. I am now recognised in my community and my presence is felt in different kinds of gatherings. I am able to stand on my own and do the things I wish to do. I have no fear of unknown things. I now know that I have to try something in my life and not accept defeat. WLTP opened doors in my life that I thought were impossible. In the past I used to think that work meant being employed by someone, but now I have started my own company supplying stationery and toiletries to Government Departments and institutions."

I wish WLTP lifelong sustainability for the sake of the unborn women, the survivors of women abuse and disadvantaged women, as I believe she has the strength to develop such women in the same way she did for me. WLTP is the university for South African women, giving them careers that will enable them to sustain their lives, which is why I would like WLTP to have offices in every province. If she empowered and changed my attitudes, why will she not be able to do that for other women? Organisations like WLTP deserve to live for the benefit of South Africa's disadvantaged women."

WORK WITH YOUNG MEN

In 1998, during a Field Visit to Centocow, Audrey Mboweni and Marilyn found 24 girls waiting for them at the CLTG office as well as 14 boys who had gate crashed! They were led by **Thabiso Zulu**. Audrey took the boys outside. They told her that they wanted WLTP to work with them too. WLTP helped them establish the Centocow Youth Multipurpose Organisation. CYMO members attended the many workshops run by WLTP from 2000 to 2006.

In 1999, Thabiso became embroiled in the violence wracking KZN at that time and CLTG asked Marilyn to move him so that he would be safe from the Inkatha Freedom Party. That was how Thabiso came to write Matric at the Holy Family High School in Elandskop. WLTP employed young men as HIV/ Aids Workers (HACs) in 1999 and later in other programmes until 2006.

In 2004, the Inhlabamkhosi Project trained and employed 20 Young Men's Life Skills Trainers with the primary aim of tackling substance abuse and ubusoka (having many lovers) amongst boys and young men.



Sibongile and Thabiso Zulu Dec 1999
Cobham Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park near Himeville

"When I finished my Matric in 2000, I was offered the opportunity to work for WLTP. At that time I was influenced by my friends to smoke dagga and abuse alcohol. I also had many girlfriends. After attending various programmes on youth upliftment, I became aware of the 'False Satisfiers' I was using to meet my needs. PRH courses assisted me to know who I am and what I had to do in order to grow. I decided to leave my bad friends and change my lifestyle and bad behaviour. I decided to stick to one of my girlfriends only.

When I first came to WLTP, I had this male mindset that women should not be in leadership positions. Working in a women's organisation taught me that women are powerful and can do things better than men. I learned to respect women and admire them a lot. I also did a lot of environmental education and became a small "Green".

I had my first HIV test before I got married and was glad to find out that I was Negative. I married my lovely wife, Khulu, 5 years ago and we have had 3 daughters. I am working for the Sisonke District Municipality operating the Water Treatment Plant in KwaSani Municipality." **Sphelele Mtshengu**

2000-2010

TACKLING CRITICAL ISSUES

IN A CHANGING SOUTH AFRICA



Alcohol education workshop

Between 2000- 2006 the organization began to focus increasingly on HIV and AIDS, Environmental Education, and Culture and Heritage mainly with adult women and men. The work became all consuming, leaving time for only a few workshops for teenage girls in this period.

With the launch of the Emthonjeni programme in 2007, the organization evolved its work to address other challenges confronting young women and girls in this fledgling democracy. Here are some memories from those workshops, projects and meetings.

1993-2003

HIV AND AIDS

The Tears:

“There are no marriages because of unemployment and no money for ilobolo.”

“We got HIV from the men we loved and trusted.”

“We are abused verbally and physically by our partners.”

WLTP had addressed the problem of HIV and AIDS from as far back as 1988 during the girls’ workshops. As the AIDS crisis escalated in KwaZulu Natal (KZN), we focused on the epidemic from 1999-2003.

The first project started in Southern KZN, where we, led by Thoko Makanya with her background in health education, employed and trained eight HIV and AIDS workers with funding from the local Dept of Health. They worked in KwaSani, Richmond and Centocow. The training was so effective that the Department requested that WLTP also train their HIV /AIDs Communicators, which we did in the Pietermaritzburg area (Northdale Hospital), at intervals for one year.

In 2000, our HIV /AIDS workers travelled to Durban together with some young Zulu dancers and performed outside the UN HIV and AIDS Conference where they attracted appreciative audiences. They also visited the exhibitions. Thoko attended the Conference. She had previously gained considerable expertise during an AIDS exposure trip to Canada in 1991.

In KZN, certain Zulu cultural practices impact negatively on young women and deny their human rights. WLTP trainees produced pamphlets outlining the dangers of *ukusoma* (thigh sex), and *ukuhlolwa* (virginity testing of girls and young women in a public spectacle). They also educated men about the problems of *ubusoka* (young men’s culture of having multiple sexual partners at the same time to boost their egos and status), and *ukuthwalwa* (abduction of girls and young women for marriage).

Thoko and Marilyn trained a team of trainers in KZN and raised funds to establish HIV and AIDS and Gender Projects in the Women’s Centres in Tsholomnqa and Port St John’s, Burgersdorp and Sekhukhuneland, and Masoyi. One of the young women from Port St John’s was Anele Mda, who became WLTP’s first MP in April 2009.

Pictures – opposite page

Top left: Aids training of centre workers from Schoonoord & Burgersdorp, Limpopo (2003); with Vodacom Project Officer in centre, Miemie Sebulela (far left), Zanele Mkhwanazi (2nd left)

Top right: HIV training of trainers Tsholomnqa, E Cape; Zonke Mgangala (far right), Thoko Makhanya (front r), Langalakhe Made (front, 2nd left)

Bottom left: Port St John’s, Aids training (2002); Nkuselo Mngeni (Back row middle), Sibongiseni Shezi (seated middle), Anele Mda (front row lying)

Bottom right: Inhlazuka Field visit (2000); Anton v Dyk, Thinabantu Shange and Bongiswa Maphamela (R) - with HIV volunteers



“No words can express my experience in WLTP beginning in Port St John’s in 2001 when I didn’t know where to go. After the first workshop I left with a big change in terms of social issues. We all said voluntarily that we would have only one partner and use all precautions. We played a big role in our societies helping those affected and infected with HIV to live positively. We also helped orphans get their Foster Care grants. When Anele Mda and I were interviewed by Eastern Cape Radio (‘Umhlobo Wenene’) about Creative Young Women, people were fascinated by the good message we gave. We also met with prominent leaders and that was a good exposure for me. I learned many things in WLTP like caring for the environment, drug abuse, human rights, understanding different cultures. I learned a lot on the hike from Msikaba to Mbotyi and saw wonderful nature. When I tell other people, they long to go there. Today people respect us and want us to be part of everything they do. Some want to elect some of us as ward councillors. I am called an Educator because of you, and all my learners understand me and listen to my advice. I wish the organisation all the best and to grow up bigger as we are still facing many challenges in life.” **Nkuselo Mngeni**

"It was in the early 90's that I first heard of this organization WLTP and luckily for me it was not too long before I became part of the Progressive Women forcefully driving change. I was young, very young and very loud but I remained very inquisitive. I still remember my first training workshop. More than knowledge, that was the biggest gain, I was fascinated by the extent of the art of an organization that was able to make strangers meet under one roof to deal with matters like gender issues and society in general. I met women of high esteem but who kept their feet very firmly on the ground. I met women who were already on their success path and some who were an embodiment of success, yet they hardly showed that or claimed it. I got inspired and my own journey began.

I am delighted to convey a birthday message to the organization from whose foundation I have been refined and groomed as a young woman. I am delighted that out of the rural girl in me, the hand of WLTP granted this country a woman's voice of reason, a leader in me to break the silence of the patriarchal society we live in. I am delighted that where my name is called, opposite it is WLTP the proud foundation I am built on. When I stretch my wings to fly, often when obstacles appear, I look back and remember many of WLTP's teachings, "A woman is Capable" and I get refuelled knowing I will overcome.

As this year marks the 25th Anniversary of WLTP may just 25 of us former and current WLTP activists adopt one woman with potential who is surrounded by circumstances that stop the potential from showing, just to ensure the light from the sun that WLTP began 25 years ago will NEVER cease to impact on the lives of many women who are living under dark shadows where life has no meaning. Women's struggles are far from over. March on WLTP march on!"



Anele Mda

Anele is currently the leader of the Congress of the People (COPE) Youth Movement.

LANGUAGE CHALLENGES IN HIV AND AIDS TRAINING

Working with so many different language groups was a real eye-opener. In Limpopo, training was done in English with Tshivenda, Xitsonga and Sepedi translations of the more difficult concepts.



Thoko Makhanya

"I discovered in the Eastern Cape that the isiXhosa and isiMpondo I thought I knew was very minimal. I had to have an interpreter from English to those languages and vice versa. It was interesting and educative. At the request of the participants I did one session in isiZulu. The faces looked blank and at the end of the input I asked whether they had understood. They all shook their heads. One answered: 'We were enjoying listening to you speaking isiZulu.' It was hilarious!"

HIV AND AIDS FIELD VISITS

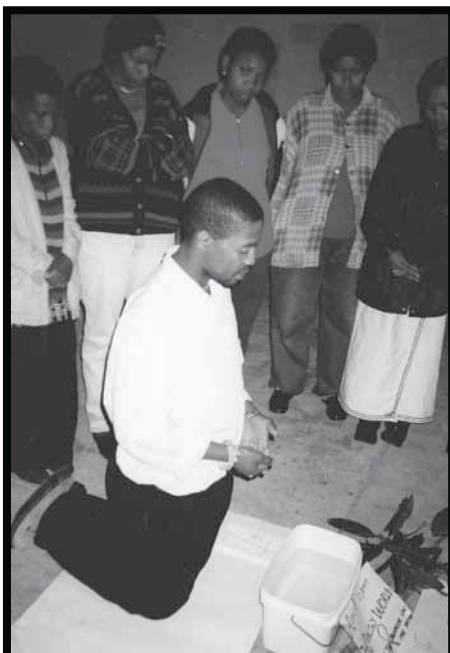
All the volunteers received a small allowance of R150. After one training workshop in Port St John's the trainers, Thoko, Thinabantu Shange, Sthembile Made and Nceba Vimbani, accompanied two of the volunteers to visit women who had medical conditions that they could not handle. The communities regarded the volunteers as health workers ('*onompilo*') because there was no such service in those areas. Our volunteers had to listen to health problems that they had not been trained to deal with. On the way, the volunteers bought groceries. The trainers were amazed to see the bags of mealie meal, rice, potatoes and cooking oil being loaded into the taxi and to realise that the meagre allowance was a lifesaver for some families.

"The volunteers dropped their groceries in the remote village (lali), and we accompanied them to the homes they wanted us to visit. We were warmly welcomed at the first home and because it was a hot day, were given a very welcome drink of mahewu (cold maize drink). The old lady was on TB treatment that had run out. She also had an ear problem that she had treated with drops of mercurochrome. The mercurochrome was meant for a previous ailment for cuts and bruises only. Her ear had crusted up and sealed off. I advised her to go to the doctor immediately and she said she was waiting for 'nkam-nkam' (her pension) to pay for transport. I suggested using castor oil in the meantime to loosen the blockage in the ear. The second visit was to a woman who had had a kidney operation. She lived far from the road at the bottom of a steep slope. I struggled to get down, wishing that I could slide on my bum. There was only one serviceable rondavel, (the others needed new thatch). The woman was ill and frail and was 3 weeks late for her post-operative check-up. Her story was the same — waiting for 'nkam-nkam' to pay for transport to the hospital."

"On another occasion Sthembile Made and I missed our Translux Bus transport in Mthatha. We opted for a taxi that took ages to fill up and depart. When it got dark somewhere near Mt Ayliff, we asked the driver to put on the lights. He said there were none. That was the condition in which the owner gave him the vehicle. We asked him to turn back or stop, but he ignored the outcry. We shouted at him to drive more slowly on that dangerous Transkei road that was pitch black. We travelled for about 38 kilometers until we reached Kokstad! People worked on the vehicle for about an hour and got the lights working. We arrived in Durban at 2 in the morning and stayed in the taxi until the morning broke and we could part and go home. What a harrowing experience!" **Thoko Makhanya**

"In 2001, I went on a field visit with the HACS and AIDS volunteers in Inhlazuka, a remote but spectacular mountainous area near Richmond in KwaZulu Natal. My nephew, Anton van Dyk accompanied me to experience the realities of a rural area. To reach some homesteads on the banks of the Mkhomazi River we walked for seven kilometers down a very steep path. Rural people often take the shortest route instead of following the natural contours of the terrain. We visited the families and had lunch admiring the beautiful river and watching people wade through it to and from a more remote village on the other side. (A pedestrian bridge has since been built). On the way back, I became faint because of the heat and the steep incline and was unable to continue. The young men ran back to a homestead and fetched a donkey that I was obliged to ride bareback. It was most uncomfortable and the donkey seemed to delight in trying to scrape me off its back by moving very close to every thorny bush. After about two kilometers of this torture I felt well enough to walk again. The young men turned the donkey to face the opposite direction, gave it a slap on the rump and off it trotted home rejoicing in its freedom. By the time we neared the top of the mountain it had become dark and in one place I toppled over the edge of a steep cliff luckily into the "arms" of a tree. From then on the volunteers insisted on taking turns to pull me to the top.

When I reached home the next day, I removed a number of ticks from my body. Sure enough ten days later, I woke up with a severe headache and tickbite fever. Anton and a volunteer from Ndaleni, a township nearer Richmond, also got the disease, but the Inhlazuka volunteers were long immune to it." **Marilyn Aitken**



Thinabantu Shange leads prayers
Port St John's

“In the Eastern Cape and Limpopo I was worried that communication was going to be a problem since it was my first time to run a workshop in isiXhosa, but then I remembered that Mam’Marilyn had worked with Xhosa-speakers and she is English-speaking. As the workshop proceeded we found that mixing the three languages was the best option. We were talking about “Introduction to counselling” which is “Intshayelelo yokecebisa” in isiXhosa and “Intsholongwane kagawulayo” (isiXhosa) and “Igciwane lengculaza” (isiZulu) meaning HIV/AIDS. I discovered that the same words have different meanings. In isiZulu Amadlozi means ancestors while in isiXhosa it means sperms, and ancestors are Izinyanya. After that experience I decided to learn other South African languages. In Limpopo, I didn’t think I would manage to facilitate the workshop because some of the participants spoke Sepedi and Xitsonga (Shangaan) only. With Audrey Mboweni’s great help in translating for us and who taught us a lot, I did well. At Ave Maria Conference Centre in Mooketsi, I saw “white frogs” (geckos) in my bed and on the walls. I was very scared of them.

In the Port St John’s area, we visited homes in Emthalala. It was wonderful to experience a different rural area from the one where I grew up. I saw the conditions people live in – the different way the houses are built and the challenges of sanitation diseases. There were no toilets in most houses and I wondered where people relieved themselves. I saw the reality of the conditions most black poor South Africans live in. Families with more than four children told me that people were not aware of HIV/AIDS or were not taking the disease seriously.

We also visited Snuka hot springs. People believe that the water heals diseases. I doubted that because of the bad smell (sulphur), but after interacting with the people who were fetching water, I put my leg that had a sore on it into the water expecting miracles. I even bought some water and took it home. My brother had many sores on his legs and the water cured them. It was a wonderful experience walking through the indigenous forest at Snuka. For the first time I admired many monkeys instead of chasing them. It reminded me to do something about conserving nature.

Working with WLTP empowered me and I learned a lot about women. I am a different Thinabantu now. When women approach me to get involved with them, I am able to say No. In Inhlazuka, the rural area where I grew up, women were not respected and had no voice. But there is a big, big difference now and it’s all WLTP’s work. Women now attend meetings and serve on the traditional council.

I am a WLTP product! I am a good organiser and have the skills to work with different kinds of people and am no longer aggressive. I started off in WLTP as an HIV/AIDS Communicator and then became a Community Health Worker (CHW). I am now the manager of 218 CHWs and 9 supervisors in 4 large districts, Richmond, Camperdown, Mooi River and New Hanover.” **Thinabantu Shange**

HIV AND AIDS PROJECT WITH FARM WORKERS (2006-07)

The independent project was meeting an urgent need in the community and employed young men and women who had come through the WLTP HIV and AIDS, the '*Unwelolude*' and the '*Inhlabamkhosi*' programmes. It went through a crisis in 1996 and the workers approached WLTP to take it over. We obtained funding from the AIDS Foundation and then negotiated with Turn Table Trust to take on the project that is still doing good work in the Bulwer/Underberg area.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST UKUTHWALWA AND UMHAYIZO (2010-2011)

Although '*Ukuthwala*' and '*Umhayizo*' (abduction and bewitchment of girls and young women by boys and young men who fancy them and use these methods to make them marry them) are illegal, these practices are still rife in the Hlokozi and Centocow communities. Both Emthonjeni staff members and participants have been the victims of these practices. In March 2010, WLTP obtained funding from the HIV and AIDS Response Fund of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to address the problems. We have employed two men and two women to assist WLTP staff in educating youth and older members of the community, including church and traditional leaders, in an attempt to wipe out the practices.

MUSIC

We always have energizers during our workshop sessions, often a song and dance. In the Eastern Cape the music did more than revive our bodies, it fed our souls. In the Port St John's workshops, a tenor stood out. The owner was an unassuming young man, Nkuselo Mngeni. He had organised a musical group of young men in his village, Majola. According to Nkuselo, when they sang together, the walls of the rondavel they were in vibrated. Through our friend, Dr Dave Dargie, who worked in the School of Music at Fort Hare University, we obtained a bursary for Nkuselo. He now has a Bachelor of Music Degree, a Postgraduate Diploma in Education and a good post in a high school in Majola.

*"I thought that Zulu music was wonderful, but the indigenous music of the Eastern Cape, the music that comes with the movement of the bodies, bowled me over. I requested particular songs or the participants would say, "Let's sing Mam'Makhanya's song." Three songs were special. And I would be taken up by the beautiful sound and rhythms." **Thoko Makhanya***

TIMES OF PRAYER



Dave Dargie
playing a traditional bow

Music again played a very important part in Prayer. The sublime sound that followed the readings and prayers reminded us that we were part of the Transcendent. Who can forget the morning reflections as the sun rose on the beaches in the Eastern Cape or with the background sounds of the Bushveld at the Ave Maria Conference Centre in Limpopo? We were doing eco-spirituality long before we knew that term. The prayer times led by trainers and participants who were very in touch with their Creator touched us deeply. One of the trainers, Thinabantu Shange, was also an outstanding poet.

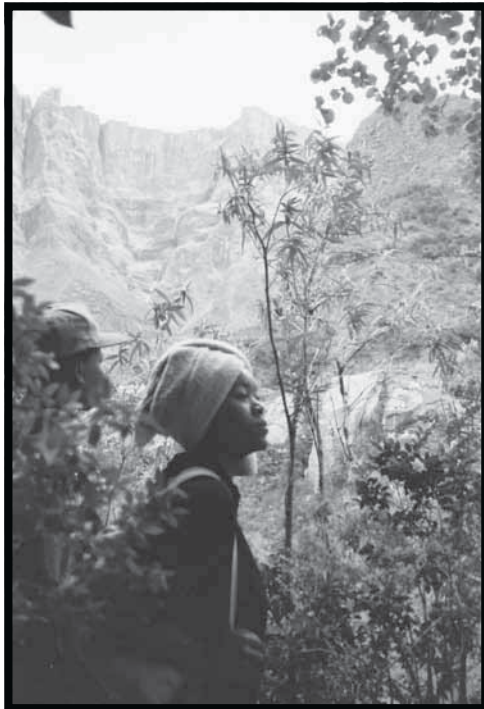
The HIV and AIDS workshops set as they were in a religious milieu, challenged the volunteers and workers to think deeply about their sexuality and their lifestyles. In one session participants reported on the changes they had made. One young woman said she had been "servicing" five men in the past, but had only one partner now. A young man who had been a serious abuser of dagga and alcohol, reported that he had stopped drinking and smoking dagga and others confirmed that this was indeed the case.

These were signs that deep transformation (one of Freire's principles) was occurring. During HIV and AIDS Counselling workshops, participants on gaining insight into their personal emotional wounds, would be reduced to tears. Thoko often did individual counselling into the early hours of the next morning.

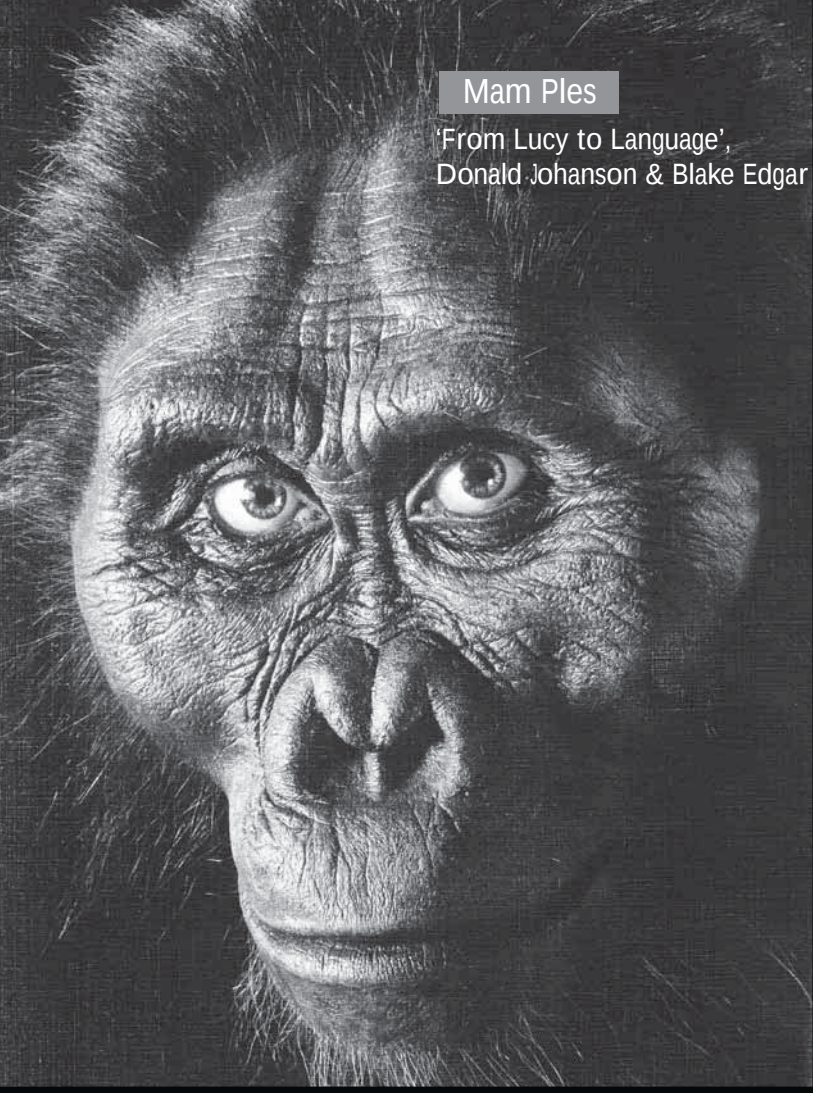
1989-2010...

EARTH & ENVIRONMENT

"In my previous job in Justice and Peace, included in my job description was the Integrity of Creation, but I had allowed the human Apartheid Struggle to dominate my work completely. My chance to make amends arrived in the early '90s when Sr Hanna Remke and Emilia Charbonneau ran workshops called "Heal the Wounded Earth" sponsored by the Lumko Pastoral Institute in Germiston. The workshop was an Aha! experience; I was thrilled with the 'New Story of Creation', the three Principles of the Universe and other insights into the huge environmental challenges facing us, including water. I vowed to make work for the Earth my priority and to study further. We sponsored WLTP staff and participants to attend further workshops and they started implementing environmental projects." Marilyn Aitken

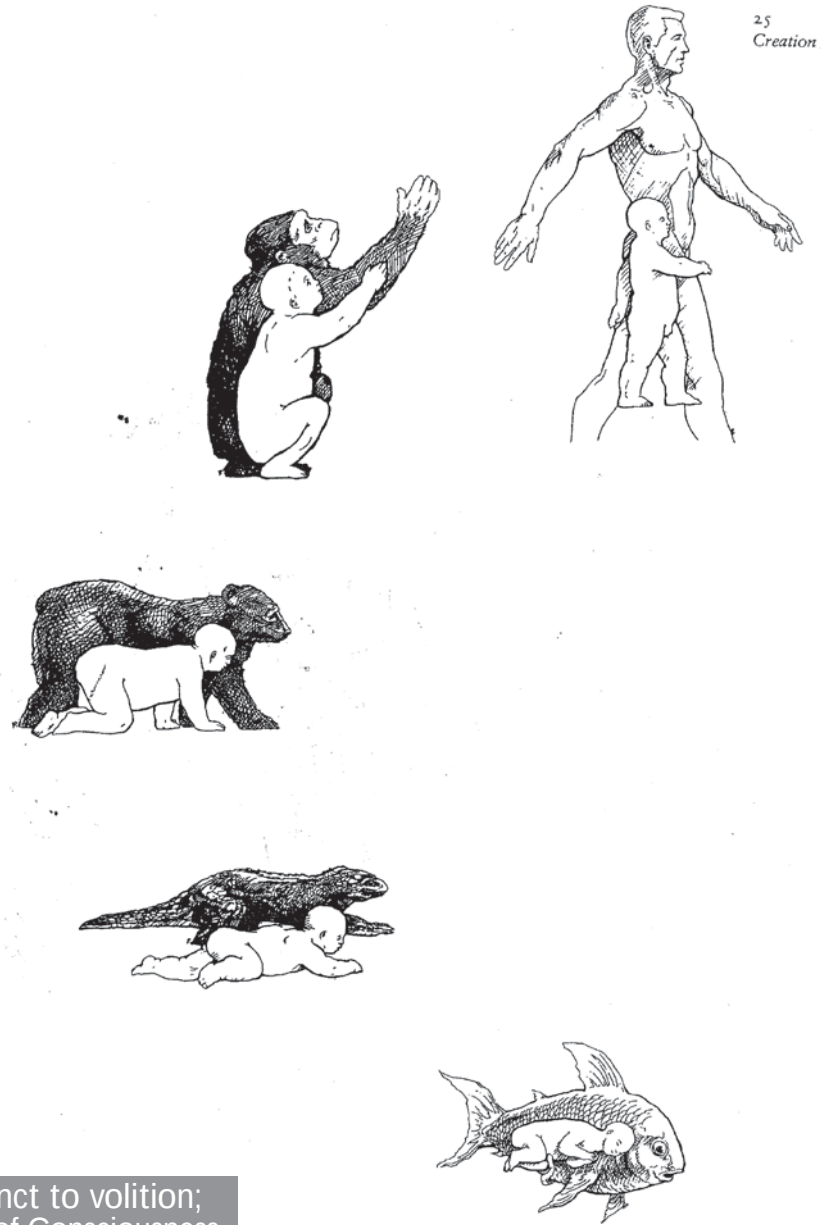


Left: Exposure trip. Shirley and Lizzie, Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park
Above: Sphelele Mtshengu gives wetland education



Mam Ples

'From Lucy to Language',
Donald Johanson & Blake Edgar



From instinct to volition;
The layering of Consciousness

With gratitude to Stanley Keleman
'Emotional Anatomy'

ORGANIC GARDENING AND PERMACULTURE

In 1988, Marilyn met Sheila Masote at a ACAD workshop in Roma, Lesotho when they shared a room at an organic agriculture conference. Sheila wanted to move from Mafikeng where she was working for Agricor, to Soweto to be closer to her ailing father, Zeff Mothopeng, the leader of the Pan Africanist Congress. He had been released from Robben Island together with Harry Gwala to die. After this chance meeting, one thing led to another and in 1989 Sheila initiated the WLTP gardening project in Soweto. In the past, gardening had assisted Sheila to deal with her own problems.

The tears:

"The fields of my childhood have washed into the river and left huge deep dongas because of overgrazing in the Bantustan and lack of agricultural knowledge."

"We used to plant and reap many crops like beans, potatoes, maize and load them on the train for the market. But when the tractors came, we stopped planting because we had no money to pay for the tractor."

Arbor Day August 1992.

Sheila Masote explaining different soil types to Brenda Tlhmola, Portia Makwane and Shirley



Healing from Mother Earth

“The bliss of my freedom from political detention where I had been tortured and had a miscarriage, and my newfound womanhood in my 16 month old son (Zeph, named after my father) was brutally shattered by a divorce summons from my husband’s lawyer. I found myself being a lonely, dejected, humiliated wife facing divorce by my husband with whom I was still uncontrollably very much in love.

Overnight I had to face reality and the need for self support. I knew I had to be my best friend and find the answer inside of me. I was unemployed, thin and unattractive for any employer. I was alone and scared. I was forced to turn to the soil and THEN...my childhood hobby blossomed. I started a vegetable garden, a beautiful flower garden and neat lawn around my home in Orlando West.

I had close affinity to the plants. Watching them grow from seed to beautiful and edible vegetables. I learnt to protect them, clothe them, talk and sing to them. They were my babies, my friends and my joy and hope. They rekindled my belief in myself.

I dug trenches in my yard and later a few old ladies in my immediate ‘next doors’ joined me. They dug door-size plots in their yards. Our children and youth joined in collecting material for the trenches, mulch for clothing and protecting our soil and orange bags for sewing the nets together to protect the plants against weather and birds. I began to feel the excitement and healthy vibe, laughter, self worth, healthy competition and sincere involvement of all who participated. The climax was reaping time! We bartered vegetables, shared recipes and health tips. We learnt to stagger our planting by weeks so as to

sustain reaping time. We knew the seasons well and began to know plenty at all seasons. My children regained confidence in me as a working mummy. I was a heroine suddenly! I was popular with the womenfolk and did not miss being affirmed by my wayward husband. I listened and heard when the wise and elderly women leaders in the garden group counselled me.

I acquired the love and skill to counsel other women in need. The healing process began as I gave of myself to others. I began to move further into the townships as ‘mama vegetable gardens.’ I got employment with Food Gardens Unlimited in 1981 and Agricor in 1984. My ultimate growth began when I joined WLTP where I was offered more opportunity to expand the women’s struggle against poverty and hunger. I trained women in Soweto to grow vegetables on both small and vast plots. Like me, I saw more women reclaim their lives, their dignity and become providers of food and cash to their families. There began a vibrant ‘small business’ movement around the WLTP initiated co-ops around Jabavu, Kliptown, Moroka and White City.

The most invaluable growth for me at WLTP was being exposed to Training for Transformation. I learnt to interact with others on an equal footing, look for burning issues of our day and challenge for change. I grew bigger than me and my human relations, I discovered my place in the creation alongside the occupants in my environment i.e. plants, animals, water and air. I became concerned with learning more about these and helping to preserve them. I treasured my ancestors who had been right, living on the yield of mother Earth, recycling waste and being in unison with nature.”

Sheila Mothopeng-Masote

WLTP continued to advocate good attitudes towards the soil. In 2000, we organised a Permaculture Design workshop at Reichenau, led by Ewald and Janine Viljoen, for 24 young men and women. Later that year, although we had no money, we employed Lihle Ntombela to promote organic gardens in the neighbouring villages. Lihle left for a better paid job and Mdu Zuma took over the training. He started a co-op of 7 people called *Qala Ngembewu* ('Begin with seeds'). Len van Schalkwyk and Beth Wahl did training with the members and helped them establish a small nursery. Jane Harley worked intensively with the group helping them establish gardening circles in their home gardens. She also tried unsuccessfully at the highest level for more than a year, to get funds released for them from the Department of Agriculture!

GARDENS IN EMTHONJENI

We have tried to change the prevailing attitude in South Africa that working with the soil is for uneducated people. We have helped Emthonjeni girls and young women analyse the underlying reasons for the negativity. As a result, some girls decided to study agriculture when they completed Matric. In 2009 Nqobile Masuku spent 6 months at the Grail Centre in Loveland Ohio, USA. She worked daily in the beautiful permaculture gardens and also in the Community Supported Garden that is rented from Grailville. Here a farmer is given capital by families to work for them and they work in the garden too at times, planting, watering, weeding and harvesting. Nqobile also obtained a Certificate in Permaculture Design. In 2009, the Emthonjeni Programme initiated a project to train unemployed young women in Permaculture and with generous funding from CIDA, and a partnership with Dovehouse Farm, is expanding the project to include teenage girls in 2010.



Permaculture, 2002.

Leyland and Thengeyakho

EXPOSURE TRIP TO THE UKHAHLAMBA DRAKENSBERG MOUNTAINS

In the early 90's Ashley Ngoetjane and Marilyn organised 24 young women from Umtata, Gauteng and the Brits townships to spend a few days at Hlalanathi resort, Bergville, in the mountains near the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park which is now a World Heritage Site.

"It was a risk to take city girls into the Wilderness for the first time. I was worried during the 22 km long Gorge Walk along the Tugela River, that we would have a mutiny. The girls in front walked too fast and some of those less fit groaned and complained, but insisted on continuing to the basalt wall of the mountain range where they swam and relaxed. I read the evaluations of the trip with delight. The highlight had been the Gorge Walk. The theory that I now strongly hold began to take shape: that for people to be in touch with their Interiority, their deepest selves they need to spend time in nature." Marilyn Aitken

We also did a small "People and Parks" project before we understood that concept; there was a very impoverished community, the Amazizi, living right next to the Protected Area. Some of the WLTP group made contact with the Chief and obtained permission to run a day-long workshop for girls in the area. The workshop went very well, but to our shame, we never followed up that attempt at outreach.

Marilyn's Sabbatical (1995) *"I obtained funds from Missio Aachen and Misereor to take a 6 month sabbatical in Europe, the USA and Canada. I did an informal study of eco-feminism and attended a number of workshops to gain more expertise in the subject. Two workshops in particular were further Aha! experiences: "Earth Wisdom" and "Native Wisdom". Sr Miriam McGillis of Genesis Farm, New Jersey, challenged me to go home and promote Earth Wisdom. The Native Wisdom workshop run by people who were reclaiming their Native American cultural heritage that is so closely linked to the rhythms and creatures of the Earth, left me wondering about the Native Wisdom at home, and realizing that I knew nothing about it."*

We did "The New Story" with some groups after that. The seeds of environmental engagement were being sown and these came to fruition when Marilyn moved to Reichenau Mission in 1999. Later that year, we asked Sandile Ndawonde and Lindelihle Africa from GREEN (Greater Edendale Environmental Network), to run an environmental workshop with a mixed group of old and young people at Reichenau. That workshop empowered us to run our own workshops after that.



Top left: The group ready to go inside the Natal Parks Board Centre, Bergville, 1992

Bottom left: Trip to the Maloti Drakensberg Mountains, 2008

Top right: At the end of the Tukela Gorge Walk

Centre right: Young women from the village Kwa Dukuza, Mziki, near Bergville

Bottom right: Shirley, Inkosana's father, Portia, Inkosana and Makgabu

PARTNERING THE MALOTI DRAKENSBERG TRANSFRONTIER PROJECT (2003-2008)

Sibongile, Bonginkosi Ntshiza and Marilyn attended the World Parks Congress of the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) in Durban in 2003. The Congress was an eye-opener. We made contact with the SA Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Valli Moosa, whom Marilyn had known from the Struggle Days in Johannesburg. We also met Kevin Zunckel, the director of the new MDTP. We told him that we were doing environmental education and he referred us to Elna de Beer, the socio-ecologist of the Project. Our meeting with Elna led to a very fruitful partnership in environmental and cultural heritage work. WLTP began to implement the principle of “People and Parks” opening the eyes of those living adjacent to a Protected Area to the economic, recreational and cultural benefits that the parks could provide. We applied the Freire approach to Environmental Education (EE) and ran three one year-long courses to train 58 young people as EE Educators in the Southern Drakensberg Ukhahlamba region. Each series had 4 weeklong live-in workshops followed by fieldwork. Despite living adjacent to conservation areas, the trainees had never before been into those places because of Apartheid restrictions of the past.

Hundreds of youth and school children, including many of the Emthonjeni participants, have since taken part in previously unheard of activities such as hiking in a wilderness area with eland and baboons in close proximity, and

visiting rock art. Some trainees attended courses to become bird guides. Young people became aware of their environmental footprints and changed their behaviour to lighten them. One trainee, Genke Ndlovu described WLTP as the “Environmental Messiah” in the area. In 2006, WLTP tested EE material with different groups for the MDTP.

Sibongile worked with Elna de Beer, for 17 months as the Regional Coordinator of the MDTP at the beginning of 2007. This appointment added value to a four-year long partnership between the two organisations and gave Sibongile new contacts in the communities adjoining the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park.

In 2007 the MDTP sponsored seven of the educators to do Environmental Education Training and Development Practice Learnerships. The course run by the Wildlife and Environment Society of Southern Africa was of a very high standard, but Musa Mntungwa, Marilyn Aitken, Nqobile Masuku and Langalakhe Made obtained the EETDP Certificate. The MDTP sponsored Nqobile Masuku to attend an international Environmental Education conference in Ahmedabad India in 2007.



Top left: Trip to Cobham, Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park

Top right: Rock Art. Women with digging sticks

Bottom left: Teens visit Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park (2008)

Bottom right: Environment Education. Pre-Teens examine otter droppings

ATTENDANCE AT UN MEETINGS ON THE EARTH AND ENVIRONMENT

16 WLTP staff and participants, including 6 crafters, attended the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. We successfully ran a WLTP stall that included the “New Story”.

In 2008, Marilyn travelled to Bonn in Germany to attend the Ninth Conference of the Parties (COP) who signed the UN Convention on Biological Diversity at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. She has been helping Emthonjeni participants ever since understand the enormity of the threats to the Earth of the continuing loss of Biodiversity. We hope that we will have enough

funding to be able to send two or three delegates to the crucial Tenth COP in Japan in October 2010 to present their research on “Fear and the Loss of Biodiversity” in an NGO Side Event.

At the beginning of 2010, Thoko Makhanya began a project on the dangers of GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms) to Biodiversity and Food Security. She is educating Emthonjeni girls and young women as well as women organised by other NGOs. In 2010 Marilyn worked with Justice and Peace workers and volunteers from the SACBC region to help them understand the issues of Biodiversity, GMOs and Climate Change.



‘Biodiversity is not monkey business!’

Postcard UN Convention on Biological Diversity,
Bonn (2008)



Bonginkosi Ntshiza

WSSD, 2002

UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE 15TH COP IN COPENHAGEN

The Emthonjeni Programme studied the issues related to Climate Change (CC) during 2009. Three teenage girls, Tusiwe Masuku, Sindi Qwabe and Thando Nzimande met with Minister Buyelwa Sonjica to raise their concerns about CC issues. In December, Anelisa Shamase, Yenziwe Masuku and Nonthuthuko Xaba, flew to Denmark with **Sbongile Qwabe** to attend the 15th COP. It was a great experience. One of the many workshops they attended was one by Wangari Maathai. Emthonjeni promotes the 7 Rs - Reduce, Re-Use, Recycle, Repair, Restore, Re-educate and Refuse to encourage the participants to reduce their carbon footprints.

Professor Wangari Maathai. In 2005, 16 WLTP staff members and participants travelled to Johannesburg to hear the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner give the Nelson Mandela lecture. They also attended the launch of the SA Faith Communities Environmental Institute.



Sbongile Qwabe

"WLTP changed me. It made me more environmentally conscious. It gave us the greater spirit of ubuntu (humanity). It's about love- love for yourself, other people, nature and love of God. As young people we need to participate in building our future. WLTP builds powerful leaders who empower other people. Loving leaders who listen and address the needs of the people and the Earth."

Wangari Maathai

with Bishop Geoff Davies at the launch of SA Faith Communities Environmental Institute



Copenhagen, Dec 2009

Top left: Demonstration by Youth

Top centre: Demonstration by ActionAid

Top right: Demonstration by Avaaz

Centre left: Sbongile Qwabe in Copenhagen

Centre: Anelisa Shamase (KwaMashu), Sbongile Qwabe (chaperone), Annelies Henstra, Yenziwe Masuku (Southern Drakensberg), Nonthuthuko Xaba (Hlokozi)

Centre right: Sbongile Qwabe with Annelies Henstra, Dutch environmental lawyer

Bottom left: One ton of Carbon, COP 15

STRATEGIC GENDER ANALYSIS

The tears:

“Our culture inhibits/suppresses our womanly wisdom and identity is forced on us.”

“Girls who are not in the programme, gossip about me and undermine me when I try to share what we are doing.”

“My husband and sons refuse to cook. They wait for me to come home from work and start cooking for them, even when I am late after a meeting.”

“I am longing to be free to be a full human being, to get treated with respect and dignity.”

“I want to be recognised and rewarded for having given so much as a mother, friend, as a wise woman, as an independent woman.”

Over the years, WLTP has addressed gender issues. In 1994, Adelina Mwau, from Kenya came to educate WLTP staff and other women about gender relationships. Adelina worked for Oxfam at the time and later became an MP in the Kibaki Government.

WLTP’s experience in HIV/AIDS work during the past eight years has convinced us that gender imbalances are at the root of the HIV/AIDS crisis in South Africa. Women’s practical gender needs have improved lessening their workload, but strategic gender analysis and interventions are still rare. In the Emthonjeni Programme, a lot of emphasis is given to helping girls and young women recognise how they have internalised patriarchy. They have analysed patriarchy and are finding ways to challenge its power. Girls and young women are growing in the self-confidence and knowledge needed to change attitudes, customs and institutions that block their progress to full participation in cultural, political and religious matters.

“Mine was a common cry of women; my unfaithful husband was a man of unique and respectable standing, a most sought after musician. As a younger Sheila I was intimidated by the norm that men are protected by society. They have the liberty to sow seeds (be promiscuous) and brag about it, particularly to their wives who have begun to lose their youthful lustre and identity to honorable family building. We lose our identity staying with the women in the husband’s family and receiving subtle, sometimes cruel and shackling, traditional training from them. Of course you are not allowed to be ‘jealous and demanding’ of your ‘forever young’ husband... “Indoda ayigugi Makoti” (“Daughter-in-law, man never ages”) I would be constantly reminded by my mother-in-law. I dared not share with those around me, my mind was not at rest and over and over replayed thoughts like ‘true wives don’t tell; the fault is mine that my man yearns for other women. Somehow I had a hand in driving him out of our home’.” **Sheila Mothopeng-Masote**

Evah Mnisi



“Now I can face any challenges. Without WLTP, who knows what would have become of me. I am 36 but I only have two kids, and peer pressure never dominated my life. I’ve also always emphasized to my husband that I would not depend on him. I am an independent woman.”

ECONOMIC LITERACY

WORKSHOPS & PROJECTS

The Tears:

“I bought a kitchen cupboard on Hire Purchase and paid three times its value because of the high interest charged.”

“I am Black-listed because when I became unemployed I was not able to pay my instalments.”

“My credit card tempts me to buy things I don’t need. My children put pressure on me to buy designer clothes for them that I can’t afford. I pay very high fees on the credit card.”

Materialism is sweeping South Africa and there is no culture of savings. A huge number of women are in debt because of easy credit, and the anthropomorphic power of commodities like cellphones and clothes, to become extensions of the ego. WLTP has helped participants to become good stewards of their financial resources and the resources of the ‘*oikos*’, the earth household. They have learned to distinguish between Needs and Wants in drawing up personal and family budgets. They have studied the South African economy and how they contribute to it. The girls and young women have explored career options and chosen careers that will build the economy for the good of all.

WLTP has continued to train participants to establish small businesses and cooperatives. Besides Secretarial Services and Qala Ngembewu, there were Ikhwezi Crafts, Reichenau Catering and Hospitality, Reichenau Tour Guides, and Rock Art Interpreters and Mountain Hiking Guides

COUNTERACTING THE BRAIN AND YOUTH DRAIN FROM RURAL AREAS TO THE CITIES

From 1995 until the present, WLTP consciously tried to develop projects in rural areas to provide youth especially with skills and work that would stop them going to the cities. We can look back and say that we succeeded to a large extent. WLTP, through its donors, also injected hundreds of thousands of Rands into rural economies in the 6 provinces where we worked. This was especially the case in KwaZulu Natal from 2000 to 2006.



Pictures

Top left: iKhwezi co-op. Gladys Zuma with snow creature at her home

Top right: iKhwezi co-op craft workshop

Centre: Alien vegetation removal group. Laurentia Dlamini on right.

Bottom left: Caterers Eunice Qwabe, Benedicta Zuma, Sebe Shezi

Bottom right: Caterers, Reichenau (1995)

WOMEN & HEALTH

THE 'UNWELOLUDE' (GROW TO A RIPE OLD AGE) PROJECT - SOUTHERN DRakensberg (2003-2004)

The Tears:

"I was raped by my husband."

"We have 'high-high' (hypertension) from all the stress our husbands give us, drinking and womanising."

"I am seriously ill with diabetes."

We trained and employed 20 part-time Women's Health Trainers to educate girls and women. Most participants felt greatly empowered. One woman, with a primary school education only, was very proud that she was able to explain the menstrual cycle to other women. The women insisted on knowing all the physiological terms in both English and isiZulu. They were very creative in the workshops they ran in the community. After 15 months unfortunately the funding ran out, but the idea has been incorporated into Emthonjeni.



Thoko giving health education about carrying heavy loads on heads

ETHICS & MORALITY

WLTP is a faith-based NGO where one would expect staff members and participants to be motivated by Christian values, especially honesty. Over the years we learned that praying was one thing, but living the values of the Gospel was often lacking. There were a number of incidents, such as shoplifting, stealing time from WLTP by working short hours and lying about whereabouts, cheating on sexual partners, promiscuity, stealing money from the project and other victims, as well as drunkenness. Some of the girls even boasted about how they had stuffed the ballot boxes with ANC votes during the 1994 election when they were election monitors!!! These were some of the problems we dealt with over the years.

When we began the Emthonjeni Programme in 2007, WLTP staff from the beginning highlighted Ethics and Morality to develop girls and young women into leaders with integrity. Many young people have poorly-formed consciences that do not inform them to critique and resist the values of materialism and the culture of entitlement that surrounds them. WLTP staff have tried to counteract materialism and develop a good work ethic amongst the participants by guiding the girls to develop a deep spirituality that can differentiate between right and wrong .



Tusiwe Masuku

"I started at Emthonjeni when I was 15. I've learned to be assertive and have self esteem as a woman.

I started to love myself and see that not having a boyfriend is a good thing because so many people are dying of AIDS. I started to believe that I could start a new life."



Web of Life Meditation

CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Tears:

"I never knew my grandparents or where they came from and don't know my praise names."

"Family members won't tell me our family history because they are ashamed of certain things."

When the Women's Leadership and Training Programme (WLTP) first established itself at Reichenau Mission in 1999, no-one at the Mission was aware of its tourism potential. As the result of WLTP's work, Reichenau Mission is now a prime node for tourism development in the KwaSani Municipality and is also featured in the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (MDTP) Tourism Guide.

The Apartheid policy of State racism and tribalism left many South Africans with serious identity crises. Languages are being lost and young people know nothing about or have no pride in their ancestry. Reclaiming cultural heritage is very important in developing self-esteem.

WLTP helped the young and some older people in the Southern Drakensberg appreciate and celebrate the importance of cultural customs incorporating dance, traditional attire and music, by hosting a number of large cultural gatherings at Reichenau. Many groups from the villages in the Kwa Sani Municipality attended. One of the WLTP Co-ops, 'Amaugu Namasiko', produced traditional dress and made a record of traditional music and dance. They performed once at Splashy Fen.

Robert and Hilary

"One Sunday afternoon in 2002, I heard someone calling me from the road next to my garden. I found Hilary Kromberg standing there. Soon she was joined by her fiancé, Robert Inglis. I knew Hilary's sister well and we got chatting. A long chain of events followed. Robert and Hilary were married in the church at Reichenau. WLTP trainees provided the traditional food for the reception and some of the live entertainment. Robert worked part-time for WLTP for two years, commuting from Pietermaritzburg. Robert coached Sbongile Qwabe to upgrade her Maths and Science marks. Robert and Hilary worked long hours drawing up funding proposals for the NDA and LOTTO for WLTP to do eco-tourism work. Robert also helped us improve our administrative capacity. The partnership continues. They have established Jive Media which is working with us to publish the Emthonjeni Manuals." **Marilyn Aitken**



Robert & Hilary
on their wedding day

SAN BUSHMEN IN THE SOUTHERN DRAKENSBERG

As a result of WLTP's Cultural Heritage work and Tourism development, hundreds of adults and children in the Southern Drakensberg now appreciate the heritage of the First People of Southern Africa and understand the importance of the World Heritage Site on their doorstep.

In 2000, WLTP worked with 6 San Bushman girls from Angola and arranged for them to enter the school at Reichenau. They were living with their parents on the Mingay Farm while their fathers were employed by the local Farmers' Association as stock theft trackers. These men had worked with the SADF to track SWAPO guerillas in the 1980s. After Namibian independence they were moved to a settlement near Kimberley for their own protection.

WLTP arranged for Len van Schalkwyk and Beth Wahl to train youth to become rock art guides. It was very exciting when Zanele Mkhwanazi discovered her Bushman roots and subsequently wrote a story about her Bushman grandmother, Makhulomhlophe. She won first prize of R10 000 in "The Witness" story competition in 2003. Amazingly, Zanele found that there were San words in common between her and the girls from Angola. Unfortunately, the girls' fathers were caught drunk on duty and the families were sent back to Kimberley.

In 2005 Frans Prins of the MDTP arranged for WLTP to assist Professor Himla Soodyall from the University of the Witwatersrand to do DNA testing in the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg area for the National Geographic Project. She took hundreds of DNA samples and many people discovered that they had San genes. The late Kerrick Thusi, one of the last surviving Bushmen, taught youth how to do Bushman paintings using the authentic materials – animal blood, fat and plant juices for paint, and twigs for brushes. The Culture and Heritage group ran many workshops for young people and in schools to educate people about the San. They found an unprotected rock art site in the Stepmore area and befriended a number of San families.

WLTP staff, project members and trainees acquired skills and experience enabling them to find jobs and study opportunities. Some of the crafters and tour guides are still working. The Caterers still exist as a cooperative. A bird guide is attached to the Marutswa Forest project in Bulwer. Many work in Municipalities and the commercial sector.

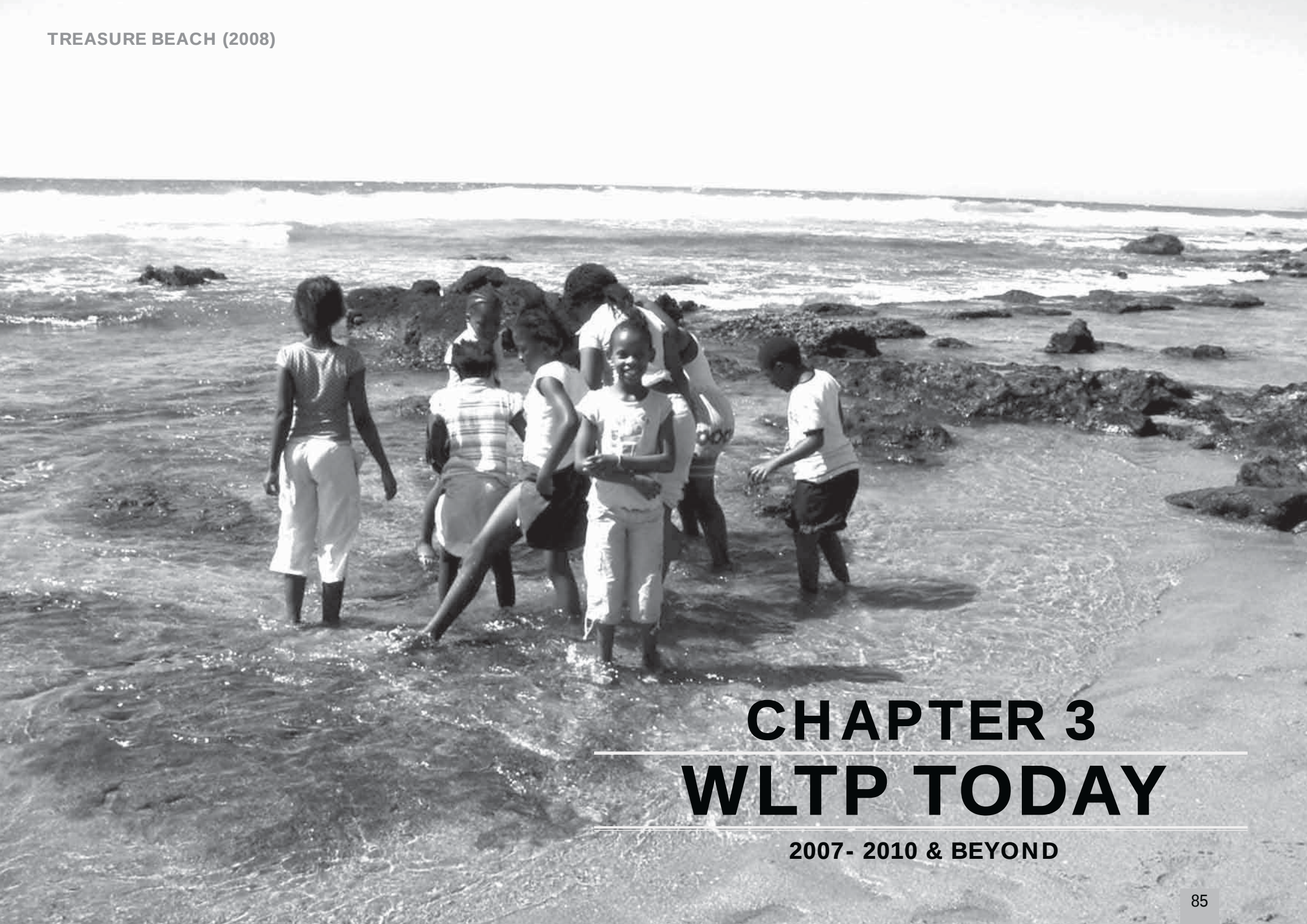
WLTP helped establish the Reichenau Restoration and Development Trust to continue to develop the work begun in 2000.



Top: Dudu Mkhize (right with doek on head) with Bushman girls from Angola & Kimberley at Reichenau (2000)

Left: Mdu Zuma interprets Rock Art

Right: Mdu- Tour Guide, 2008



CHAPTER 3

WLTP TODAY

2007- 2010 & BEYOND

‘EMTHONJENI’ ‘AT THE WELLSPRING’ PROGRAMME (2007-2010 & BEYOND)

With the launch of the Emthonjeni programme in 2007, the organization has re-focused on younger women and girls, and tackles 7 major themes.

When Sibongile returned from Ireland in 2006 with a degree, she and Marilyn sat down and evaluated WLTP. It was like a flashback to the question Marilyn had asked herself in 1984. “Why are we working with young men who are draining our energy with their own agendas? “The Board members also questioned “Why are there more men than women on the staff of this project? Why are we neglecting the girls and young women who are WLTP’s core business? Why don’t we start a programme for girls that will involve all the Grail members in KwaZulu Natal?”

Together with KZN Grail members Julia Khanyile, Jane Ngobese, and Thoko Makhanya, we were searching for a new way to work with both girls and young women. Our deliberations were greatly enriched by the presence of Swedish Grail member and theologian, Bibi Helgesson. Together we decided to launch and staff the Emthonjeni Programme in 2007 as a WLTP project. Bibi unfortunately had to return to Sweden and was not available to staff the programme.

We had left funding applications late and had no money for 2007, so Sibongile accepted a short contract with the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project (MDTP). The Emthonjeni launch was initially funded through friends of Marilyn, Alf and Rosanne Field, while we explored other funding sources. Sibongile returned with newly-acquired skills from MDTP and took over as Director in June 2008.



Sibongile Mtungwa

“Our method is unique and helpful because it helps girls to develop their creativity and to grow mentally and spiritually. We use stimulus so that they can understand things better and question. The participants enjoy this method as it liberates them from the way that they were taught in schools – where they believe that the teacher has all the answers and is always right. Here they realise that they have their own answers and this methodology helps them to find those answers.”
Sibongile Mtungwa, Director of Emthonjeni



Top left: Hlokozi Teens at Reichenau (2008)

Top right: Julia with KwaMashu Pre-Teens, Koinonia (2007)

Bottom left: Growing girls group, Reichenau (2002).

Phindi Qwabe (Back left), Sibongile Mtungwa (back right) Sbongile Qwabe (middle left)

Bottom right: Ukhahlamba Pre-Teens (2007)

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

We have added new approaches and material to meet the needs of this new generation in a manual called *“Emthonjeni: Come to the Wellspring”*. We hope that past participants will recognise themselves in this manual.

Emthonjeni is based in 3 areas of KwaZulu Natal: Hlokozi near Ixopo, KwaMashu and the southern Ukhahlamba Drakensberg area. The locations were chosen because Grail staff members live or grew up in those areas and are able to organise and mentor the participants more easily.

There are three groups of participants: Pre-Teen Girls, Teenage Girls, and Unemployed Young Women. We also work with a group of Influential (professional) Young Women on an ad hoc basis.

Emthonjeni expanded to a new area, Bomvini near Empangeni, in Zululand in 2009, when Samkele Mhlanga started working with a group of Pre-Teens in her home area. Now that Samkele has moved to Denmark, we hope that her daughter, S’thoko, will be able to continue that work.

OUR OBJECTIVES ARE:

- To achieve a new leadership style coming out of womanhood that will model simple life styles in contrast to the prevalent materialism and ostentation.
- To motivate women leaders to aspire to the highest positions while remaining integrally connected to the poor and oppressed.
- To train an influential group of woman of integrity.
- To create new models of leadership, new women “heroes” in this phase of our country’s history.
- To motivate women leaders to model a culture of hard work and to recognize their power in using it for the good of others.

FOCUS ON 7 THEMES

The Emthonjeni Programme draws on many elements of the work WLTP was involved in during the preceding 25 years. Our aim is to build the leadership skills and potential of girls and young women by immersing them deeply into our 7 Themes:

Leadership and Life Skills

There are still too few women leaders. Our society is impoverished without women's holistic, integrated approaches to situations. "Emthonjeni. Come to the Wellspring" provides girls and young women with skills, information and a worldview that will equip and encourage them to fill this leadership vacuum.

Gender

Despite the political shift toward promoting gender equality, most girls are born into a society that is dominated by men. They grow up believing that boys and men are superior. They take part in traditional and religious ceremonies that perpetuate patriarchy without questioning them. When girls and women believe that they are inferior and cannot challenge patriarchy, their development is retarded and their ambitions are stunted. Women can break their gender chains and live as equals with men.

Economic Literacy

The Creator has provided us with our beautiful Planet, Earth, to live our lives according to natural limits, times and seasons. When human beings live respecting the Earth's Commons, its soil, air, water and energy (heat) from the sun, and use its resources sustainably, every creature will have enough for its needs. By understanding how the Earth's processes work and living with them, we will build harmony amongst the Earth's family.

Women and Health

The human body is an intricate example of the principle of Communion. It is made up of systems that work together. Our bodies contain our lives so it is very important to give our lives the best possible chance to function well. Many women do not understand how their bodies work and instead of ensuring that they are in harmony, they do things to their bodies that harm them. The four elements of life that is water, air, energy and soil are all in one way or another found in different body systems.

Ethics and Morality

Many people have adopted values from the materialistic culture that surrounds them, without questioning the behaviour that results when individualism replaces communal ways of relating to others. The spirituality that was in touch with the earth and all its creatures is lost in the race to acquire status symbols. We are called to examine our beliefs and actions in the knowledge that each person is related to others, including creatures and the elements.

Culture and Heritage

By understanding our history and cultural roots, we will appreciate and honour our own culture and find our true identity. African culture is losing its power. African youth, together with young people worldwide, have adopted the values of Western Culture that conflict with traditional African values and behaviour. Individualism replaces communal ways of relating to others. The spirituality that was in touch with the earth and all its creatures is replaced with materialism and the acquisition of status symbols.

Earth and Environment

There is a commonly-held belief that the human being (Homo Sapiens) is more important than all other creatures and natural phenomena. Most human beings live unaware of their intimate relationship with the elements and creatures that bring them life. The anthropocentric (human-centred) behaviour of humans is bringing about the Sixth Great Extinction of Species and major destruction to our planet, Earth. At the same time human beings have great intelligence and can reflect on and contemplate their reality. Our hope is that a huge number of participants will become aware of the threat their actions pose to biodiversity and will act swiftly to avert their own extinction and those of other species.



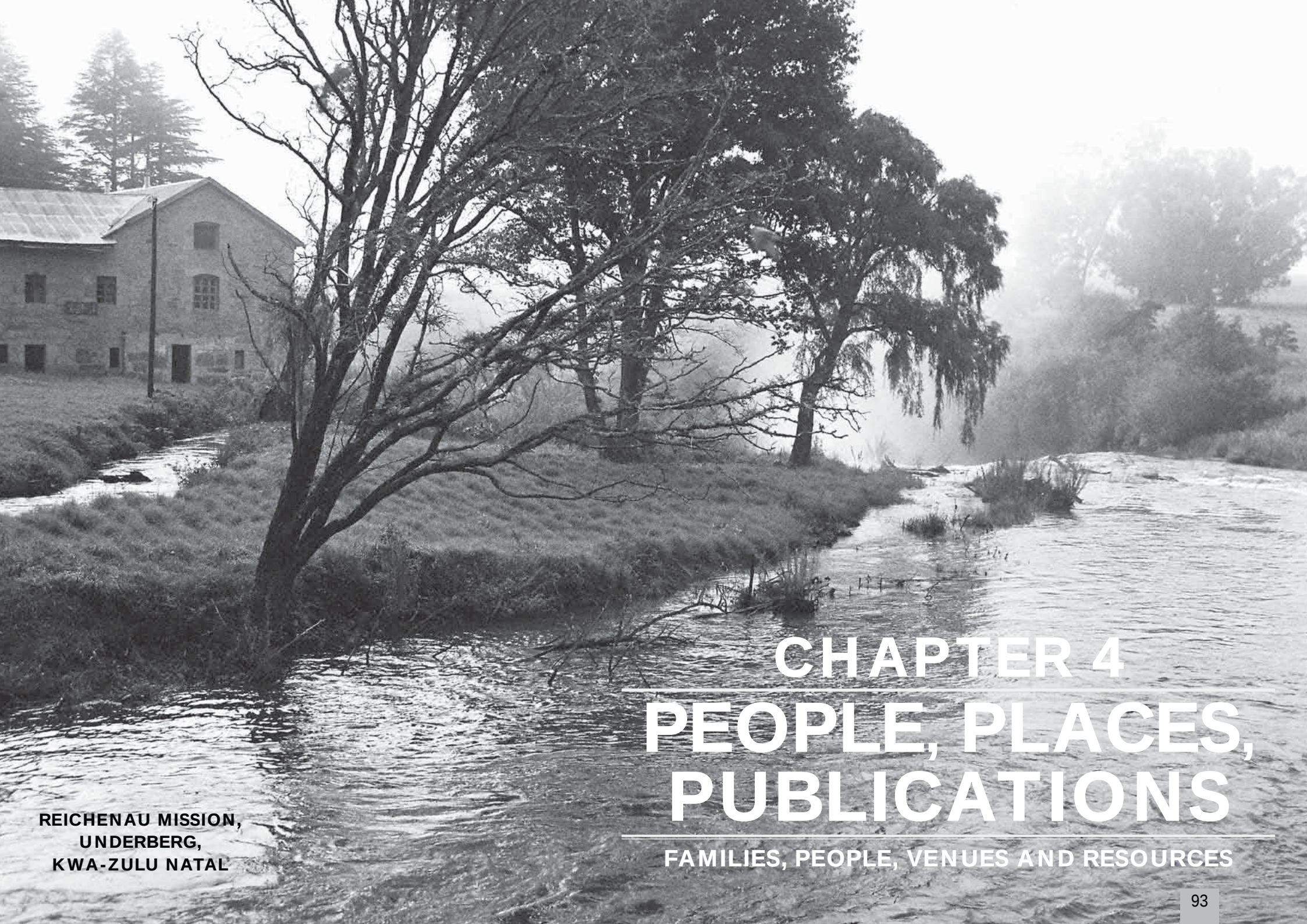
Top left: Hlokozi Pre-Teens
Camp Jonathan (2007)

Top centre: Preteens dance

Top right: Environmental confession

Bottom left: Nqobile Masuku, Zulu dance

Bottom right: Group discussion



REICHENAU MISSION,
UNDERBERG,
KWA-ZULU NATAL

CHAPTER 4

PEOPLE, PLACES, PUBLICATIONS

FAMILIES, PEOPLE, VENUES AND RESOURCES

WLTP OFFICES

In the beginning, Marilyn and Zodwa worked from their homes, meeting as needed either at the Grail Centre in Loch Avenue, Johannesburg, where Marilyn lived, or in Zodwa's home in Rockville Soweto. Zodwa used to joke that the boot of her car was her filing cabinet. As the staff complement grew, WLTP moved into the Cottage at the Grail Centre and later to Khotso House, the SACC building in the city centre.

Marilyn moved from Johannesburg in 1999 to a rural area, Reichenau Mission near Underberg, KwaZulu Natal. Her intention was to live closer to the Richmond and Centocow Young Women's Centres she was working with. The WLTP office in Johannesburg closed in 2000 after funding dried up when funders chose to support work at the grassroots rather than an expensive head office. The WLTP Board asked Marilyn to run WLTP from Reichenau.

REICHENAU MISSION - UNDERBERG



Sister Virginia Didi

"My transition to Reichenau was greatly facilitated by Sister Virginia Didi and the Franciscan Sisters who became my good neighbours and friends. Sister Virginia has been very supportive of our work and even housed Sibongile's sisters and nephew when she had no accommodation while her house was being built in Himeville." Marilyn Aitken

Ghosts in the Guesthouse.

Reichenau Mission that became WLTP's head office in 2000, was established by Trappist monks in 1886. The Mission became the venue for many different workshops from 1999. One night sometime in 2001 during a Craft training workshop involving young women from Inhlazuka, there were some spooky visitors in one of the rooms in the guest house where the participants were sleeping. We assume that the "ghosts" were deceased Trappist monks. They pulled two young women out of their beds and were dragging them towards the door when their screams woke the other two girls who were sleeping in the same room. They switched on the lights and of course the ghosts disappeared. Everyone refused to sleep in the guesthouse after that incident. The parish priest, Fr Ngcamu with the assistance of Sr Virginia Didi, said a Mass in the building the following afternoon and the ghosts were duly exorcised with Holy Water splashed liberally over all the rooms. The ghosts were seemingly repatriated to Germany because no-one has ever complained since then.

Nightwalk in the Snow

Reichenau Mission is situated near the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Mountains and periodically experiences snowfalls. One such snowstorm occurred during 2003 in September. The facilitators of a Women's Health workshop were staying in a cottage belonging to the farm of neighbours, Richard and Caroline Mingay. The snow began early in the morning and continued falling heavily all day. The participants enjoyed playing snowballs during their breaks. But after supper when it was time for Thoko Makhanya, Zanele Mkhwanazi and Phindi Qwabe to return to their cottage, the farm road had become impassable for Marilyn's small car. They had to walk through the snowdrifts for one kilometer with only a small torch to guide them. They returned the next day driven by Richard in a farm vehicle.

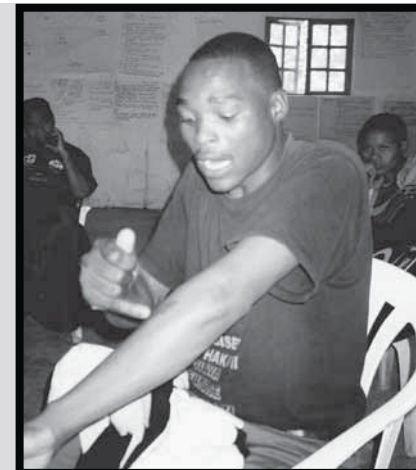
SECOND BEACH AT PORT ST JOHN'S AND HAMBURG (NEAR EAST LONDON)

We ran one workshop at a hotel for the Tsholomnqa HIV and AIDS Team. It had a nil-star rating with good reason. We were bitten by bedbugs and had badly-cooked short-rations for the whole week of our workshop. In Port St John's we rented holiday camps to train the HIV and AIDS team. In the first one, the facilitators, Marilyn and Thoko, had to move from their rondavel in the middle of the night for fear of being eaten alive by the huge rats that were occupying the thatch above them. And there was no privacy in the toilet. It was occupied by a big rat that watched all proceedings. The meeting room had a corrugated iron roof that a troop of Vervet Monkeys enjoyed running on. It was impossible to hear anyone, so we went outside to watch them play.

We tried another camp, for the follow-up workshop. This camp had "power outages" long before they became fashionable in South Africa, and the taps constantly ran dry. Participants and facilitators alike had to fetch seawater to wash in or go for a swim instead of a shower. On the first night Thoko prepared the newsprint for her presentation and left it on the spare bed in her rondavel. She was dismayed to find that a rat had urinated on it during the night. A funder who spent 1 hour with us on a field visit, subsequently wrote an article for an AIDS magazine about a well-funded NGO that chose an idyllic venue on the Wild Coast for its workshop. The article insinuated that this NGO was actually having a holiday. We read the article and wondered which NGO he was writing about, until it dawned on us that he was writing about us! That added further insult to injury!

Empowering Taxi Owners and Taxi Drivers

Most of WLTP participants do not possess cars. The Minibus taxi industry has played an essential role in transporting our participants safely to workshops. Many taxi owners and drivers have become "part of the family". One taxi driver, Sibongiseni Shezi, decided to stay and attend the HIV and AIDS training workshop in KZN in 1999. He subsequently became an educator and trainer and travelled to many events inside and outside KZN in his dual role as driver/trainer. He is now a successful businessman. We have also trained taxi owners to write invoices for the work they do for us and to be paid by internet rather than with cash.



Aids work is dangerous.

Sibongiseni Shezi shows scars of wounds he received during an attack by two irate young men he was educating about Aids

TRAINING VENUES

WLTP has run workshops in scores of different venues, all at the bottom of the price range, because we couldn't afford more expensive venues and don't like the impersonal ambience and unnecessary expense of hotels. Many of the venues became "homes away from home" and their personnel became our friends. **Lumko** in Germiston with Fr Dick Broderick, Emilia and Sr Ursula, St Philomena's in Durban with Sheila and Kathy, and Koinonia at Botha's Hill with Denise Marescia, spring to mind in particular.



Celebration with Lumko staff at the end of the workshop



De Qwabe and Gladys Zuma, iKhwezi

FAMILIES

Families have played an important role in WLTP. Beginning with the worldwide family that is the Grail and that provided the inspiration and expertise, the contacts and much of the women power that developed the organisation.

The **Qwabes** from Enhlanhleni Underberg are the biggest family to have been involved in WLTP. The relationship began in 1999 when Phindi and her sister Noma (later deceased) attended the first HIV and AIDS workshop run by Thoko and Marilyn at Reichenau. Their mother Theli and brother Delani were founder members of the Ikhwezi Craft Group that WLTP started later in the year. Phindi and her sisters, Phumzile and Sbhongile were staff members for some years. Bheki joined the Catering Cooperative, and to complete the three generations, Theli's grandchildren Khanyi, Nwabisa and Nozuko are members of Emthonjeni. 10 in all!

They are rivalled by the **Mtungwa family** in Centocow. Sibongile attended the first WLTP workshop in Centocow in 1994. Her mother, Theresa, was an *Unwelolude* worker. Her siblings have also been involved. Nqobile works for Emthonjeni. Musa worked in the Inhlabamkhosi and Culture and Heritage project in the past. Mlondi attended environment workshops, Zandile workshops for young women, and Tusiwe and Yenziwe are part of Emthonjeni. Phiwa, Theresa's grandchild is in the new Inhlabamkhosi project. 9 in all!

Then there are the **Ngobeses** in KwaMashu Durban. Thembi Jane is an Emthonjeni staff member. Her daughters, Thoko and Sizakele, were participants in the first workshop in 1985 and Nana has attended an Influential Young women's workshop. Thoko's daughter Anelisa Shamase, is taking a gap year with Emthonjeni at present and her second daughter Nokubonga is a member of Emthonjeni. With Jane's niece, Nomhle, that makes 7 in all. Also 3 generations!

In Burgersdorp, Limpopo, Audrey **Hlangwana-Mboweni's** family were involved. Her sister, Thandi Hlangwana was a women's centre worker and her daughters, Xithembiso and Khensani were part of the Burgersdorp group.

In Gauteng: in Soweto there were the **Mabasos**, Zodwa and her children, Nhlanhla, Lindi, and Nkuli, her husband Peter who organised workshops attended by WLTP girls, and her sister Nomsa; and in Tokoza Molly Sekonyela and her daughters, Ntisi and Mampo.

There were other families too. To some observers it may look like nepotism, but WLTP has always issued open invitations to communities to attend our training. Some families responded with more enthusiasm and used the opportunities WLTP offered them. Others did not.

There have been a number of Premature Deaths over the years:

Lindi Mabaso died tragically at the age of 16 from a tropical disease Babesiosis. We often wonder how the project would have developed had Lindi lived longer. We established a small Trust Fund in Lindi's memory. It was run by some WLTP staff members and some of Lindi's friends. A number of girls and young women received loans for Tertiary Education. Other people associated with the project who died before their time were Khanyisile Mbatha (car accident), Sr Dymphna Vanwesenbeeck (Cancer), Bongani Khuboni and Joan Wright (car accidents), Vuyiswa Radebe, Nonhlanhla Mbanjwa, Khombi Dzanibe, Nomusa Malanda, Sthembile Made, Sizani Duma, Margaret Msimang, Zanele Mkhwanazi, Ziningi Radebe, Laurentia Dlamini, Theresa Zuma, Ziningi Ntshiza, and Angie Kgasi from diabetes, anaemia, pneumonia, hypertension, and HIV and AIDS opportunistic diseases. Fr Eberhardt Muller, a descendant of the Trappists, died in Germany of old age. May they all rest in peace.

WLTP STAFFING

New staff members joined the project through the ranks, by asking to become staff members, on the recommendation of someone we knew, or in the case of trainees, by being invited. The girls of 1986 grew up and learned to facilitate by being mentored by WLTP staff members in workshops. Some then joined WLTP as staff members. That pattern has continued to this day. The prime example of that staffing policy is Sibongile Mtungwa. She began in 1994 as an unemployed, highly motivated 20 year old from a deep rural area who is now the Director of WLTP with a great deal of local as well as international experience.

During our 25 year history, WLTP only advertised once for staff. That was in 1994 for a Manager. As WLTP grew, problems began to arise when there was no finally accountable person to hold the project together and deal with interpersonal problems. In 1993, Marian Nell and Janet Shapiro were engaged to do an Evaluation of WLTP. They recommended that a Project Manager be appointed. We received 52 applications, and interviewed two people. Lenkie Khanyile was appointed. She had once been involved in the same candle-making project as Sheila and they knew each other well from music circles. Lenkie remained the manager until 1999.

Zodwa took a sabbatical year and completed an MA in Development Studies at the University of Reading in the UK in 1995/6. She completed an MA in Rural Social Development. She wrote her thesis on WLTP. Sibongile spent 6 weeks at the Women's Global Leadership Institute at Rutgers University, USA , in 2002.

Full-time and part-time staff members (1985 – 2010)

Marilyn Aitken, Zodwa Mabaso, Sheila Masote, Aggie Modise, Busi Tedile, Nokuthula Nzimande, Queen Mkhabela, Rose Brock, Ashley Ngoetjane, Lenkie Khanyile, Olga Mtheleni, Audrey Mboweni, Portia Makwane, Mandundu Masilo, Liziwe Nabe, Thembi More, Thoko Makhanya, Sibongile Mtungwa. Lihle Ntombela, Thabiso Zulu, Bonginkosi Ntshiza, Sphalele Mtshengu, Mdu Zuma, Phindi Qwabe, Robert Inglis, Tupu Molefe, Langalakhe Made, Musa Mntungwa, Mandla Zuma, Jane Harley, Sbhongile Qwabe, Thembi Ngubo, Phumzile Qwabe, Peter Hartzenberg (accountant), Nqobile Masuku, Jane Ngobese, Julia Khanyile, Samkele Mhlanga, Anelisa Shamase, Setha Gcume, Nomusa Mkhungo, Zanele Ngcobo, Mlahleni Zondi, Thule Sibiya, and Khanyi Khumalo



Top left: Lenkie Khanyile (left), Ashley Ngoetjane (centre kneeling), Thembi More (4th row standing) with the Kliptown group

Top right: Sibongile at WGLI, Rutgers University, USA

Bottom Left: Emthonjeni Staff (2008). L to R Nqobile, Marilyn, Sbongile Q, Thoko, Sibongile M, Jane Ngobese, Julia absent

Bottom right: Busi Tedile, Transkei (Dec 93)

WLTP MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS (1985-2010)

The Board Members at present are: Trish Crawley (Chairperson), Emilia Charbonneau, Julia Khanyile, Snoeks Desmond, Mary Hlalele, Marilyn Aitken and Nosipo Zulu. All of the present board members have served for longer than 5 years. Emilia and Mary have served for more than 14 years.

People who have served WLTP in the past are: Ann Moore, Doris Fakude, Jane Ngobese, Mokgadi Tlakula, Baby Tyawa and Mamodupi Mohlala. The Board has provided WLTP with excellent direction and continuity. Board members dealt effectively and decisively with the various crises that occurred. WLTP has been very fortunate to have had such dedicated skilled women at the helm.



Trish Crawley, WLTP Chairperson

“Changing our world into a better place need not be just a line in a song or a pipe dream. It can be a reality. And the starting point is with women/mothers of our planet. The Women’s Leadership and Training Programme has and will continue to change the lives of many women in our country thus equipping them to make a substantial, sustainable difference to the people and areas where they live and work. Making their world into a better place.”

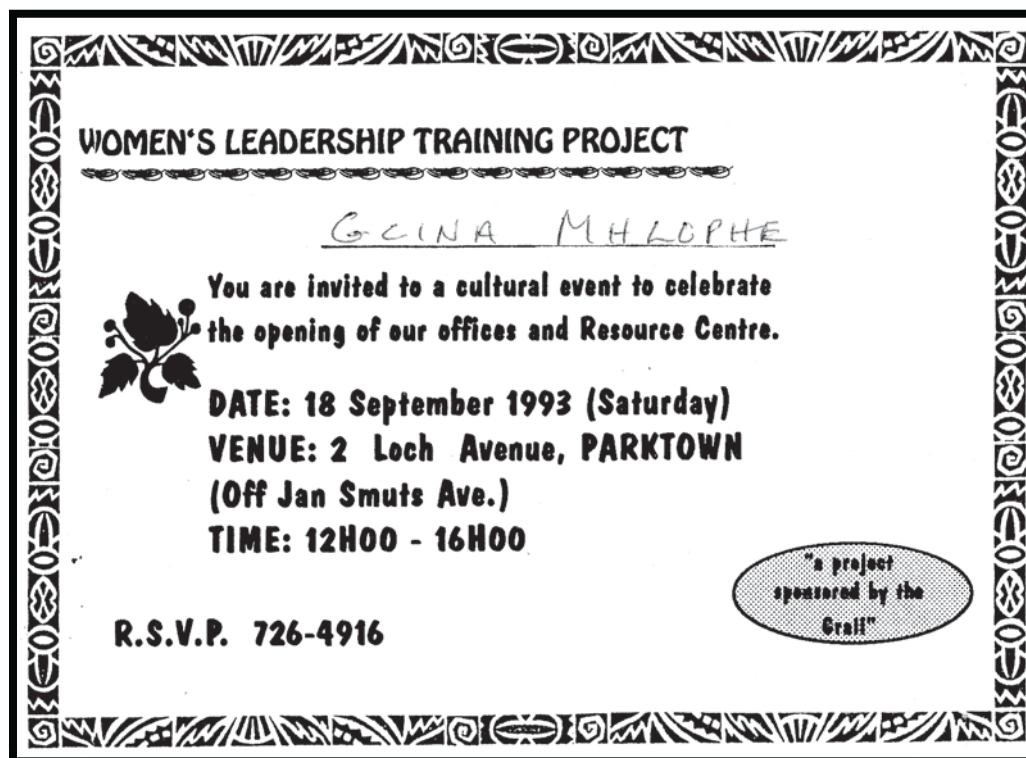
Note: Women’s Way of being in the World

Because many participants relate to WLTP staff as extended family, we might be judged “unprofessional”. We are sure that we would benefit from some aspects of corporate culture, but we believe that a woman’s way of running a programme with girls and other women will achieve more if it empowers them by giving them easy access to facilitators and builds an ambience that encourages communication from the heart. Former participants, years after workshops, still pick up the ‘phone to keep in contact. This is testimony to the effectiveness of women’s ways of knowing and doing.

PUBLICATIONS, RESOURCE CENTRE AND ARCHIVES

Besides "Growing to Be", we also published "The Future is Yours, Careers for the New South Africa" in 1990 with a reprint in 1992, "Nokhukhanya: Mother of Light" (Biography of Nokukhanya Luthuli) in 1993, and "Ziphuma Emgodleni- Litsoamkotleng" - a Zulu/ Xhosa/ Sesotho newsletter in 2004. We are about to launch the manual "Emthonjeni. Come to the Wellspring" in English and isiZulu. It is a collection of training material produced since 2007.

WLTP set up a resource centre in the Loch Avenue offices, Johannesburg. Rose Brock helped to train some staff members to classify books. Speak Magazine closed soon after 1994 and donated their papers to WLTP. When the resources moved to Reichenau, Norma Russell, a retired librarian, continued with the classification. And now Sarah Carlisle, a librarian, is assisting us to get the papers into the University of KwaZulu Natal Archives.



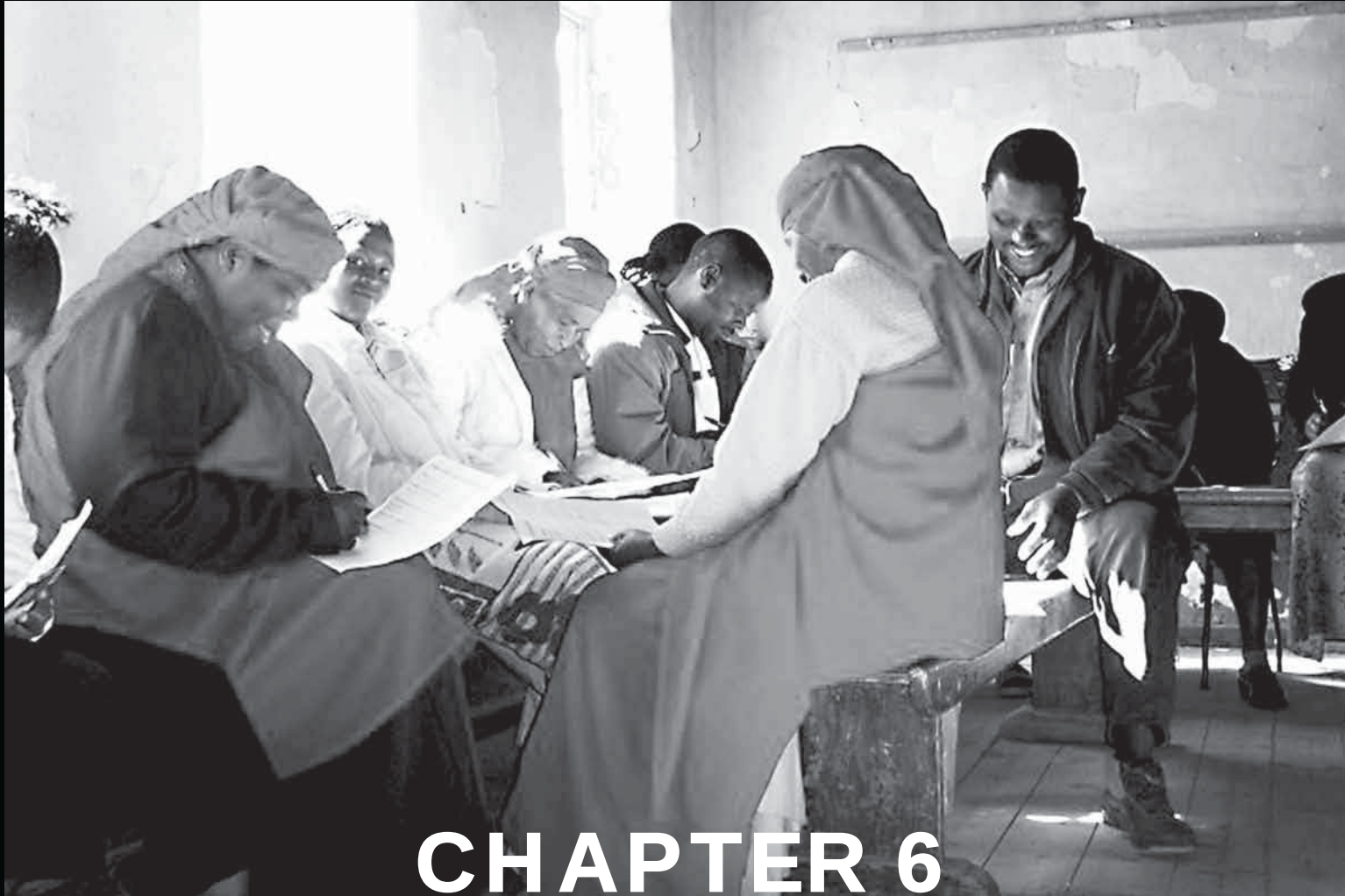


WLTP Resource centre (1993)
 L-R Ashley, Thembi, Liziwe Nabe, Pununu;
 Vero Schoeffel and Kelly Xorile, Visitors from Delta Cape Town



Left-Right:
 Virginia Moloi and Rose Brock (1994)

ENTREPRENEUR TRAINING WORKSHOP AT REICHENAU MISSION



CHAPTER 6

ASSOCIATES & CONTRIBUTORS

THE INFLUENCE OF FUNDING PARTNERS

Funding partners, because they relate to projects in many different parts of the country and the continent, see things in a wider context. Meetings with them are often rich and challenging beyond the immediate business of the organisation. Two examples spring to mind: Jenny Rossiter the Southern Africa desk officer of War on Want, UK, insisted that WLTP should make contact with Mocambique. Zodwa and I took her advice and in 1987 flew to Maputo where we stayed with Portuguese Grail member, Teresinha Tavares. She was delighted to have some South Africans meet with the group of young women she had gathered together. The Grail in Mocambique grew out of that meeting.

In 1989 we invited Ida Alvarinho, a Mocambican Grail member, to facilitate a girls' workshop in Johannesburg. She made a very big impact. She told us how the Civil War between Renamo and Frelimo was affecting girls and young women in Maputo. Many students, especially from areas in the north of the country lost family members. They would receive messages, but there was no time or possibility to go home and mourn the death of a father, mother, sister or brother, because of the dangers of travel. Life simply had to go on. Students attended lectures carrying heavy burdens of loss. South Africa's Struggle seemed quite mild in comparison. Unfortunately we in WLTP never really continued to network with Mocambique. The denouement of the Apartheid drama and the demands of building a non-sexist democracy took over our lives.

In 2001, Nozuko Majola of the AIDS Foundation of South Africa affirmed our work on Gender Issues saying that we were the only organisation directly addressing the links between Gender and HIV and AIDS. That advice led to WLTP establishing the Inhlabamkhosi Boys' Project to address the culture of Ubusoka as well as alcohol and drug abuse. At the same time we established the *Unwelolude* ('Grow to a ripe old age') project.

No NGO can survive without good funding partners and we were very fortunate to have many excellent project officers who took a personal interest in our work. We have had many wonderful people from the fifty-one partners who have funded us over the past 25 years. One of these, Joan Wright, from Oxfam, was killed in a car accident soon after visiting us in the early 'Nineties. WLTP organised the memorial service held at the Afrapix offices in Johannesburg. Some project officers have remained lifelong friends. Marilyn visited Sr Dymphna 2 weeks before her death in 2008.

Not all funding partners were cast in the same mould. One organisation gave us almost three million rand over three years and never made one field visit.

"Another bad experience was when the European Union in 2005 insisted that the National Development Agency should ask all its funded projects to do a further audit of its books. This was to be the fourth audit, but this time all vouchers had to be detached from cheques and arranged in line items. We had received almost R1 million from the NDA in 2004 and had thousands of vouchers and hundreds of cheques. I spent the whole Easter weekend, when I wasn't in church, organising the vouchers in that way. I was well and truly nailed to the cross. Then followed a 2 day visit from a forensic auditor and his assistant. We received four unqualified audits for the same set of books" **Marilyn Aitken**



Teenage girl's workshop, Daleside, Dec 1989

The Soweto, Thokoza, Noordgesig and Transkei groups who attended a workshop.
Bojosi Modise (far left), Ida Alvarinho (centre, front row)

WLTP FUNDING PARTNERS (1985-2010)

Cebemo, Oxfam UK, AMA, SCIAF, War on Want, Charles Mott Foundation, Missio Aachen, WK Kellogg Foundation, Trocaire, Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, Misereor, Interfund, German Women's World Day of Prayer Committee, Vrouw en Studie, Transitional National Development Trust, National Development Agency, Bristol Myers Squibb, Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, SA Department of Health, Operation One Day's Work, Australian Catholic Relief, Norwegian People's Aid, Racine Dominican Sisters USA, SA National Lotteries Board, Women's Global Leadership Institute, Anglo-American and De Beer's Chairman's Fund, Bidvest Chairman's Fund, Jack Wilson Fund, Irish Government, Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project, Alf and Rosanne Field, Cafod, Rex Harbour Foundation, Global Greengrants Fund, Sr Hanna Remke OP, Kindermissionswerk, Maire Pompe, International Grail Movement, B.P. Masana, African Women's Development Fund, CMC, Mensen met een Missie, The AIDS Foundation of South Africa, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Department of Social Development, Vodacom, CIDA, Dutch Grail Members, Norwegian Embassy, Gertrude McLenahan Bequest, Mervyn Gatcke.



Günter Thie

"In 1982 I was asked to cooperate with Partners in South Africa for Misereor, the development partnership organisation of the German Catholic Church. This was in the 'Eighties at the height of the Apartheid ideology and policy. Forced removals, detentions, violence, "necklacing" characterised the mood, as well as fear and courage. At this same time many South Africans were seeking solutions to end Apartheid, to reduce the violence and to end widespread human rights abuses.

What else could I do but look for dedicated and involved partners who were working for another future for the South African People? I was trying to find persons who believed in a new South Africa and in cooperating with other like-minded groups. Through Misereor the German Catholic Church had taken a stand for change through its Lenten Campaign "I want to be human", by presenting the reality of South Africa to its faithful and the German public.

Misereor found the women of the Grail Movement at their Loch Ave Centre in Johannesburg, dedicated Christian woman, who worked for the full rights and equality of all South African Persons. The idea of preparing women for leadership in their struggle and for change in the society was in essence to facilitate a full human and rights-based role for young women in their communities and in the public life of the country. Humble and small was the start but it was led by hope, confidence and steadiness. Guiding them was a spirit of cooperation, not top down but in concerned sisterhood with the affected women. It was an early understanding of what later was defined as the social and economic human rights approach.

It was out of this ideal that Misereor accompanied the ups and downs of WLTP, not just by contributing finances but by sharing the concerns and dedication throughout the years of the initiative after it started in 1985.

I personally want to congratulate all the women who worked in and for WLTP throughout these years for their dedication and perseverance, realizing and practising the Christian conviction of liberating us all - whatever colour and wherever around the globe - into full human beings."

Message from Jenny Rossiter, former project officer for War on Want, one of WLTP's first funders.

"I can still remember sitting in the garden at the Grail House in Jo'burg with Marilyn and Zodwa in about 1984 discussing the seed of an idea that turned out to be the WLTP. I was new to South Africa - I had previously worked in Latin America - but the WLTP rang so many bells in my head. It was similar in many ways to women's projects that had worked so well in Nicaragua and Honduras - but also different in many ways because of the constraints and injustices imposed by the Apartheid Regime. Twenty-five years on and I am delighted to know that it is still functioning and changing women's lives. So few community-based organisations survive the ongoing problems of funding and personnel changes so WLTP must have, and must give something very special to both workers and the women who participate in the programmes. Congratulations and I wish you every success for the next 25 years. May the WLTP continue to unlock the true potential of women to make this world a fairer, more just and happier place. Blessings be upon you.



Jenny Rossiter



"With Emthonjeni I was happy to see different age groups of girls and young women during my visit, who are enthusiastic and motivated to work together. They show their new knowledge and skills by telling about the environment project and the importance of it. They told me about their own development and growth, and forgot about their shyness doing so. I feel the hope and expectations amongst them and leave after visiting with an optimistic feeling. Thank you Grail movement, for giving so much hope and strength to these girls and young women!"

**Jacintha Puntman. Programme coordinator - Africa
Mensen met een Missie (MM) / People on a Mission**
Jacintha with some Emthonjeni members in Centocow



Cordaid

Memisa·Mensen in Nood·Vastenactie

"Cordaid sincerely congratulates the Women's Leadership and Training Programme with its 25th birthday, which is an important achievement for a women's organisation!"

**Julia Schipper, Project Officer East and Southern Africa
Cordaid, the Netherlands**

“Many congratulations to WLTP on the occasion of your 25th birthday. It was a great honour for CAFOD to collaborate with you in the early days of setting up WLTP and sustaining its work through what were sometimes very challenging and difficult circumstances. The work of WLTP was, and continues to be courageous, admirable, prophetic and hugely influential in ensuring women in South Africa can claim their leadership place and voice alongside men and work together for a more just and equitable society.

I have some cherished memories of working with WLTP in the early 1990s when I was a very new CAFOD staff member, particularly of my trip with some WLTP members to KZN - Centocow in late 1994, which left me with unforgettable treasures of experiences and stories shared. The women I met then and their stories of violence experienced and just occasionally replicated by them onto others have stayed deeply engraved in my memory and my learning. I used them many times over the years to ground my own thinking and root my discussions in the reality of those admirable women.

One amusing and at the same time symbolic anecdote from that trip was when we stopped to get petrol in rural KZN. I was driving and two WLTP members were seated in the back seat. The garage attendant was very impressed that his sisters in the then very recently post-election South Africa had a white driver! We all just smiled and drove on, quietly joining him in his spirit of celebration! Happy 25th Birthday WLTP and wishing you continued fruits in your valuable work over the next 25 years.”

Ann Smith HIV Corporate Strategist CAFOD, London

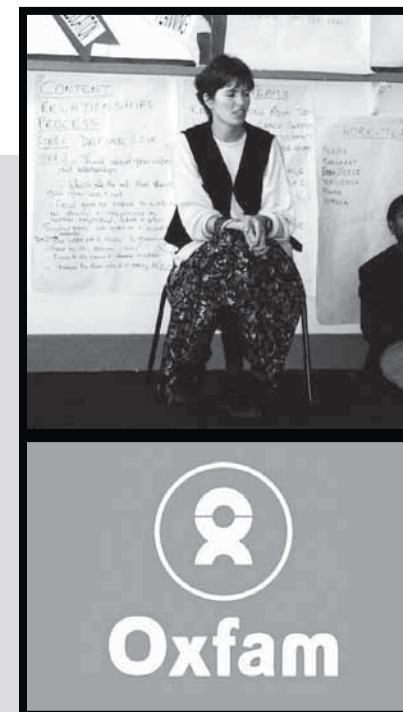


Without CAFOD we would not exist. Cathy Corcoran through us a lifeline in 2000 when we were bankrupt. CAFOD has given us a very big donation for our birthday conference.

“I remember well my meetings with the WLTP in the early 1990s and in particular the GGG – Growing Girls’ Group. I was working for OXFAM GB at the time and OXFAM GB gave a grant to the GGG. The GGG provided a much needed separate space for girls and young women in their formative years to meet and think and develop on their own terms. In particular I remember the wide range of programme activities and the very important task of managing and building a library. The WLTP identified a significant area of support for girls and young women with its particular emphasis on leadership development. It was wonderful to see the members of the GGG from one year to the next, growing in confidence as they reported on their activities and becoming leaders. The gentle support from WLTP staff members and the structure of the GGG model was an effective model of change. Through regular meetings and the idea of a Train the Trainer programme, the GGG had a snow ball effect which meant that hundreds of girls and young women were reached and touched by the vision and practical support of the WLTP. And so congratulations to all involved – leaders and participants – and may the work of the GGG under the auspices of the WLTP long continue. It was a great privilege for me to get to know the WLTP and to be able to recommend and support WLTP and GGG in particular through an Oxfam grant over a number of years.”

With all good wishes,

Penny Plowman, Oxfam GB Representative Southern Africa Programme (1992 – 1994)



COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Edzimbuku

Edzimbuku is a highly effective AIDS partnership between Canadians based in Edmonton, and the people of Ndawana, a highly impoverished rural village near Underberg. WLTP worked closely with Jim and Chris Newton in the first years of their project. A number of Edzimbuku's staff members received their initial training working for WLTP or attending WLTP workshops. In 1994 we had a joint project to do the initial training of women, and some men, who aspired to become entrepreneurs – Sewing group members in KwaSani, beaders and thatchers in Ndawana and Working for Water contractors in Bulwer.

PRH

PRH (Personality and Human Relations) is an international School of Education for young adults and adults. It offers various tools for personal growth and development, helping those who use them to develop their own personality and the harmonious inter-personal relationships and their commitment to society that result from personal growth, while remaining faithful to themselves.

Emilia, Dick Broderick and Verena Kennerknecht came to KZN on a number of occasions to run workshops for the young staff members. Verena's course was a highlight because she ran it in isiZulu. Some staff members travelled to Johannesburg to attend courses. PRH is one way of meeting the need for skilled helpers to work alongside WLTP. However, not enough has been done to develop the partnership – distance, time, money, no PRH educators in KZN, and language are some of the reasons.

Inhlabamkhosi

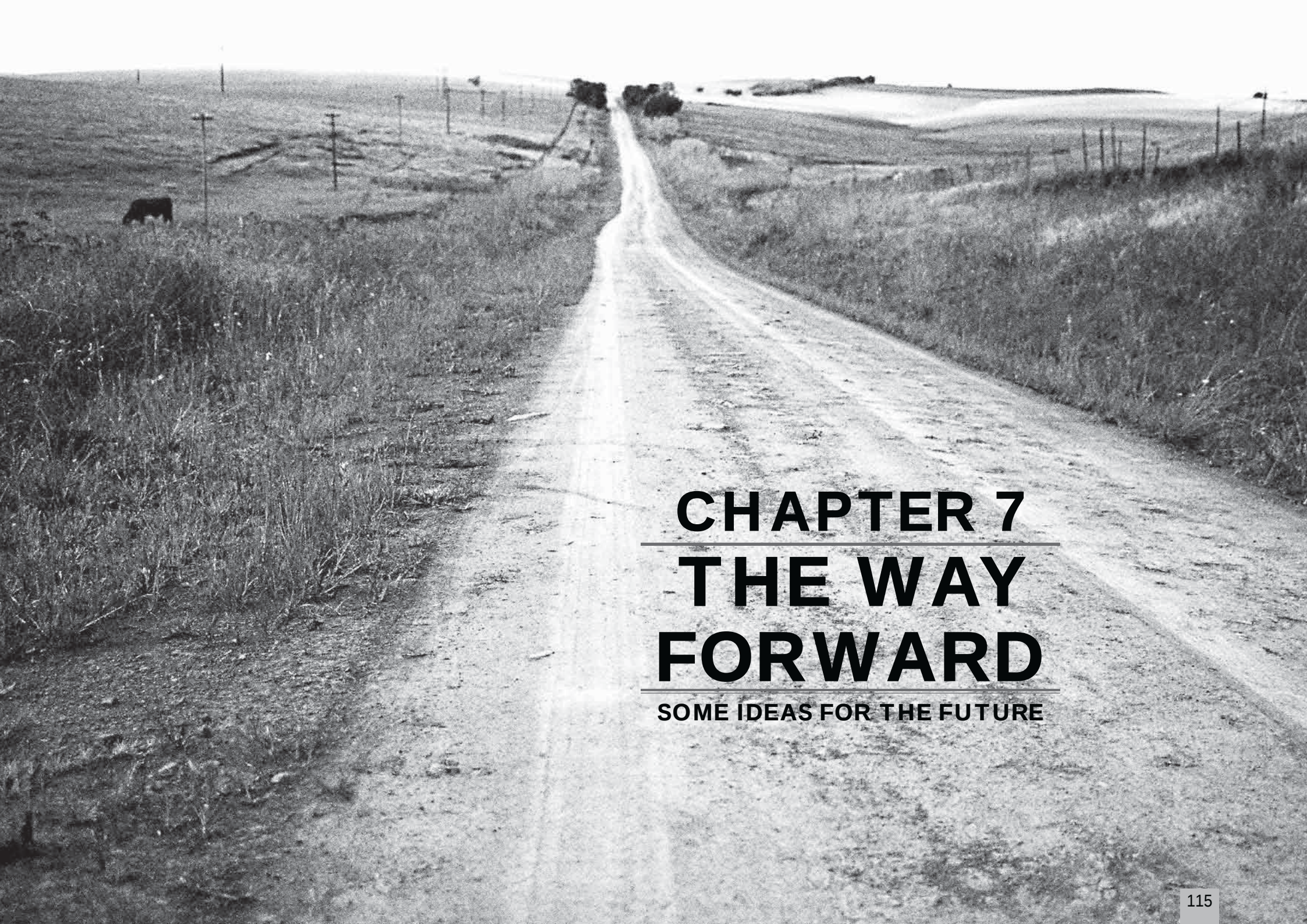
In 2009, one of WLTP's funders, Buchard Schloemer of Missio Aachen, in Germany, suggested that there should be a parallel programme for boys. Thus a new project called *Inhlabamkhosi* ('The trailblazers') was born. WLTP is working very closely with the organisation and is sharing training materials with them. We helped to get it registered as a Section 21 Company, with two WLTP staff, Jane and Samkele (now replaced by Anelisa) as directors. *Inhlabamkhosi* is helping WLTP deal with the problems of *Ukuthwala* and *Umhayizo* in the CIDA project.

PACSA (Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness).

We embarked on a partnership with PACSA in 2010. PACSA is helping WLTP facilitate some workshops in the CIDA project. WLTP is running leadership workshops for women in the groups that PACSA works with in the Pietermaritzburg area.

Biowatch

WLTP has done leadership workshops with women in Biowatch groups in Zululand. Biowatch promotes organic agriculture and an awareness of the dangers of Genetically Modified seeds.

A black and white photograph of a long, straight dirt road stretching into the distance. The road is flanked by fields and utility poles. In the distance, there are some trees and a small building. The overall scene is rural and open.

CHAPTER 7

THE WAY FORWARD

SOME IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE

WLTP is still very relevant in South Africa today

Today's young people are the leaders of tomorrow. This programme helps them to choose and internalise very good values, that really need to be lived.

WLTP has chosen to do something very important that is also very difficult because they are contending with so many other pressures in society. Young African women are the most deprived of care and chances to develop through education, especially in the small towns and rural areas. In 2007, the organization began to re-focus on young women, and bring resources there. I believe it's very important to 'save' teenage girls because they can be so oppressed. They may be very gifted, and have a great contribution to make to the country, but are often taken advantage of, end up having a baby, and their life is put in a direction where they never fulfill themselves and use those gifts.

Our gifts are intended not just for our own use, but so that we can make a contribution to others. If we can help young women become aware and make important choices for their own future when they are young then we are making a very important contribution to the country. We can give them something to live for- inspiration (it doesn't all have to be religious inspiration although that is important). They should look at ethics and love themselves.

WLTP has also identified the needs of the older groups of young women, and I think that we can make a difference by helping them to move to the next level. It's about presenting people with values that they can reflect on and make choices about. Young girls need the support of friendships of wiser, older women with some experience to guide them.

It is important to have good role models who are actually living something important in your presence. Many young people don't have good home lives - their parents are absent, and there is no one to help them sift what they get out of the media. So the WLTP programme can provide something that the school doesn't provide - schools simply cannot counteract all that lacks in the homes with all the social problems.

The women of WLTP are providing something solid- they have an interior life that is alive. They are very loving. They have wisdom and understanding. They are authentic, and are real with the young people and I think that that is something that will make a difference.

When I looked at the book that Wendy and Marilyn produced, I felt proud. At first I was at a loss for words. The testimonies of those who have benefited really tell the story better than I can, but after sitting quietly this is what I wrote about where my dream has led: A journey of 25 years, inspired by a graced image rising from the depths of one, lit a fire within the inner depth of another. The response awakened enduring compassion and love, strength and endurance for self-giving and service, and great trust in the goodness of the Creator, trust also in the hearts and souls of many others. What great work has been accomplished. Together, a Wonder has taken place."

Emilia Charbonneau

WLTP – THE WAY FORWARD

Here are some ideas ..

Accreditation - Many WLTP participants received a good foundation for their lifelong journey picking up skills in areas such as project management, administration, fundraising, HIV / AIDS counselling, home based care, gender analysis, knowledge of women's and men's health, and facilitation and training. They have reported that they recognise their maturity and wide understanding of issues when they are in their new work places. It is important for the WLTP training to become formalized and accredited so that girls and young women will be able to receive some kind of certification for their experience in WLTP or else be assisted to receive RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning).

A Women's Leadership Academy that could research women's ways of working and promote women's collective strength in community structures. It would build women's leadership by offering courses to strengthen women to work against patriarchy in communities, promote indigenous knowledge (IK), define new gender relationships and create space and support for girls and young women's choices and options.

The Promotion of Biodiversity through a new Earth-based Quality of living in cultures, the economy and the environment, involving IK and new technology.

Developing a deep Eco- spirituality which will help to grow the Spiritual Footprint by acknowledging the sacredness of every life in Creation, while lightening the Ecological Footprint of human beings.

A Feminist Theology and Spirituality that has been denied for centuries begins to blossom as women read the Bible with Women's eyes and critique the patriarchy in the Bible.

A Regional Women's Movement for Girls and Young Women, including Mocambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe which could perhaps begin with a tree planting campaign

CONCLUSION

“These are reminiscences only and not the definitive history of WLTP. Time constraints have prevented me from looking at more than a few documents and there are certainly gaps for which I apologise. I have written the text mainly from memory with the assistance of a number of people. Sibongile Mtungwa contributed to the last section on the Way Forward. It is our hope that one day someone will do a full research project on WLTP using our archives.” **Marilyn Aitken 27 June 2010.**

**“THE WORLD WILL NOT BE WHOLE UNTIL THE WHOLE OF
WOMANKIND MAKES A FULL CONTRIBUTION.”**

**FATHER JACQUES VAN GINNEKEN SJ.
FOUNDER OF THE GRAIL. 1921**