

ALEXANDRA PROGRAMME REPORT

1st – 8th AUGUST 2006

The Spousal office in collaboration with SAWID launched the older persons programme in Alexandra from 1st -8th august 2006 in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Women's March to Pretoria in 1956. The response from the community in terms of volunteer support was overwhelming; 50 volunteers were recruited as planned, the programme began on the 1st with over 50 young people deployed in two old age home in Alexandra. They started working with a schedule that included gardening, laundry, kitchen support and they received a lot of support and appreciation from both homes, in the afternoon they provided a report back of their work. For many of the volunteers it was a first time that they had been inside a home within their own community. This exposure was good and has sparked an interest to take the project forward as they continue to look after the interest of the aged in their own community. The painting and many other activities planned continued successful, but the elderly were just happy to have young people around and they were encouraged to interact.

In addition to the 50 volunteers at the homes, many volunteers were deployed to collect names and addresses of older persons in every corner of Alexandra, the whole week was full of activities and the excitement was building up in the community. The Department of Social Development, Directorate for the care of the older persons, offered an intergenerational Dialogue in Alexandra during the week, discussing various topics between the youth and the elderly. It was so fruitful that both the elderly and the youth requested more dialogues because it gave them a platform to be heard.

The programme managed to bring together various stakeholders to ensure that the needs of the elderly are addressed in this community post the programme. The municipal government through councilors came on board and provided support; it was through this support that the Alexandra renewal project undertook to renovate the homes but also to build 5 new houses for Itlokomeleng old age home. The Department of Housing also pledged their support for the programme and many other Departments in the Johannesburg Metro fully supported the programme through various contributions towards both the programme and the community of Alexandra.

The Private Sector responded well to the programme and to the establishment of meaningful partnerships for community developments. Nestle came on board and provided refreshments in the morning of the event, as well as 1 000 gift hampers for the elderly and they sent one of their board members to attend the event. Coca-Cola sponsored the event with drinks for 2000 people.

The event itself took place at Altrek Stadium in Alexandra; marquee was erected to accommodate the people. When the elderly arrived by busses it was as if the whole of Alexandra had been woken. The Department of Health had supported the event by setting up Health screening facilities which had over 30 staff and offered a variety of screening from oral to eye care. The main tent was filled to capacity and still there were people coming, 500 more chairs had to be ordered. In support of the theme of the younger generation honouring the older generation, the MC. For the day was Thwasa Seoke a radio and TV personality. She was very good and kept the elderly on their toes and in stitches with laughter. There was one guest speaker, Ma Dlamini who was one of the women who marched in 1956, she lives in Alexandra. At the event itself there were more than 200 volunteers assisting. The schools around the community participated by entertaining the elderly, local talent was also utilized especially young people doing traditional dances and Ballet.

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The day ended with much excitement and as the elderly were leaving they were given food hampers from Nestle as well as toiletries contributed by the Department of Social Development. There were left over's of food hampers and these were distributed a few days later to the elderly that are sickly at home, who could not join the celebration by the volunteers. The volunteers who distributed these parcels gave a very good feedback on how happy these small gifts made the elderly, who feel much neglected. The programme of the older persons continues off course and the office will rely on the partnerships established through this particular programme.

DURBAN PROGRAMME REPORT

28th-31st AUGUST 2006

SAWID (South African Women in Dialogue) and Isigodlo Trust in collaboration with the Spousal Support office in the Presidency launched a programme in Durban targeting older persons during the month of August, similar to the Alexandra Project. This programme targeted four old age homes from the main townships of Kwa-Mashu and surroundings, Umlazi, Clermont and Lamontville. The first assignment was to mobilize the support of the community in ensuring that the needs of the elderly in their communities are taken care of in a sustainable manner. It was also important to mobilize the support of all the role players in the provision of services to the older persons in the above communities for effective and sustainable programme.

The project received a huge amount of support from the City manager, who pointed to the relevant people that work in the area of the elderly in the city. This was followed closely by local government Departments, who formed part of the planning committee. The planning for the renovation of the homes and the main celebration went parallel as it had to be planned within a short period of time. The recruitment of volunteers to clean the homes happened at the same time in all four townships and this was proportional to the size of the home to be serviced, in total there were 130 volunteers between the four homes. The work began on the 28th August, when the volunteers started there was much excitement as the staff anticipated much needed rest during the three days. While the volunteers worked 50 more volunteers were deployed in all sections of Kwa-Mashu to collect the data base of the elderly that were to attend the event and register those that could not.

A day before the event all stakeholder sat in one table and shared responsibility for the event, the City of Durban, Department of Sports and Recreation, Department of Health, City Health, National Department of Public Works, SAPS, Metro Police and the community shared a vision. The event took place because of this partnership and the private sector that pledged their support for the event and the renovation of the homes. ACSA played a major role in ensuring that the old age home in Kwa-Mashu is to be restored to its original beauty. All councilors in Kwa-Mashu sat down and to plan, contribute and to ensure that the elderly in their wards were not left behind, they also provided a lot of guidance on the community involvement.

On the day of the event all went as planned with each stakeholder holding their side of the bargain. The elderly arrived by busses, on foot, accompanied by grandchildren and others on their own. They filled the marquee to capacity and there were over 400 volunteers with co-coordinators to ensure that the day goes smooth. Community members themselves who were not elderly also attended

three schools from the community provided entertainment for the elderly. The Deputy Mayor of E-Thekwini opened the event in IsiZulu and his speech was warmly received. The guest speakers for the day were the two veterans of 1956 March, Mrs. Ndlovana and Mrs. Ngcobo. After their touching speeches of what they fought for, there was entertainment and Lunch. Again Coca-cola came to the rescue and provided drinks for the elderly with staff members to serve. This was more than just a donation but rather a very visible presence of Coca-cola as supporting the course of the older persons

Aim/objectives: for the older persons programme

- To create awareness of the plight of older persons in the community.
- Honouring and appreciating the role of the elderly in the struggle for freedom.
- Mobilizing community support in contributing towards a better life for the elderly in their community.
- Providing a platform for the elderly to impart knowledge and skills and to instill cultural values to the youth.