

## YOMELELA REPORT SEPTEMBER 2016 (written by Zoleka Sauli)

Yomelela is very proud of the idea to involve young people who passed matric and don't have the means to further their studies. The young volunteers are helping in the after school care programme. They help with fresh ideas of educating the children.

The volunteers come from a similar difficult background. This makes it easy for them to understand the children's situations and easy to pick up their different behaviours and find sensitive ways to address that behaviour.



The volunteers help as facilitators in various activities. The facilitator is explaining the activity to the children. The first activity is about differentiating between the needs, rights and wants.



The facilitator cuts out pieces of paper and writes needs, wants and rights then mixes the papers and the children are tasked to paste the paper under the right heading at the flip chart. They write the words in English – this is also a way for the children to learn English. Examples of answers: bicycle – protection from being hit by adults – clean water – food – good teachers – television – nice bed and blankets, outings to the city...

The second activity is the resilient factors for orphans and vulnerable children. The children are being grouped and paste their resilient factors.

These activities make the children being able to know their own resilient factors and being motivated to carry on with life no matter what challenges they are facing. They are even able to identify in their families the people who are very important to them and appreciate their carers' support. The children are enjoying the Yomelela educational activities as they are different from school work.



They do the activities like they are just playing whereas they are learning. The group-work makes every child participate as they all discuss the activity with the assistance of the facilitator.



We have a vision to start a **“Bridge of Hope”** Programme for our volunteers. That means we hope to get finances to support our volunteers to register with an institution for further training. For each month they help at the centre they receive bonus points for financial support later.

We have approached our friends in Germany to help us finding organisations that support training for young adults.

## THE CHILD HEADED FAMILY

The children who are attending the Yomelela Centre are the ones with difficult family circumstances and suffer hardships in their lives. We care for child-headed families and children from families with domestic violence and abused children. We observe, however, with pain that some guardians disappear with the grant-money that is paid into their bank-account. We report such cases of grant-abuse to the Department of Social Development but such cases take years to follow up because they have to be brought before court. The children suffer because they are without income.



(The photo has been exchanged in the report which we put up in the internet – the illustration is from the workshop-book: The Child Within).

This is the story of Nana (not her real name) She is 13years old staying with her four siblings. Two girls and two boys their ages are: 10yrs, 9yrs, 6yrs and 4yrs. Nana is doing grade 5. Their mother left them and said she is going to look for a job – but she has not returned.

Nana is the one who does all the home chores and even prepares the young ones for school. She has to look for the woods to make fire so that she can cook. The house is electrified but sometimes they don't have money to buy electricity. Nana doesn't have time for their school work and there is no one to assist her at home.

Yomelela is making a difference in Nana's life. Volunteers and facilitators at Yomelela are helping with school work and Zoleka has counselling sessions with her. Nana goes to bed tired as she has to bathe and wash the young ones so that it will be easy for her to prepare them in the morning. Yomelela is a Centre for the school going age children, but the families like Nana come with their younger siblings and we cannot turn them back as we know their circumstances. And these smaller ones also receive a plate of food which they love.

Our village does not have a child care centre for small children and this make the life more difficult for the families like Nana. Sometimes they ask the neighbours to look after the young ones. When there is no one to take care of the child Nana leaves the child at Yomelela and picks her up when she comes to the centre after school. This makes Yomelela to go an extra mile as an elder sister like Nana has no other option because she wants to go to school.



Making a difference in children's lives is giving us strength to carry on with our work and we are able to face the challenges.

## OUR HARD WORK IS SEEN BY OUR COMMUNITY



The community is appreciating the hard work of Yomelela and thanked for the good initiative of looking after the children. The government institutions are far and not easy to reach. Yomelela centre is easy accessible by the community.

Yomelela was having a challenge of not having enough equipment to meet the norms and standards of registration as a DROP IN CENTRE because there is no budget to buy the required equipment.

The municipality (Matatiele) heard about Yomelela and donated chairs, tables, stove, plates and spoons to add to the ones that we already have to fit the number of the children. The community was witnessing the handover of the equipment from the municipality to Yomelela. The Matatiele Municipality promised the community that they will assist Yomelela with training to strengthen the activities and good work of the centre.



The chief (with navy jacket) addressed the people about Yomelela beginnings as the chief was the one who gave the site to Yomelela. He also emphasised that Yomelela is not leaving behind the people that they are serving - they always put them first in whatever Yomelela does. He also encouraged the Yomelela volunteers to keep on doing the good work of assisting the community and the community must keep on looking after Yomelela centre and value it as they know that Yomelela is the future of the community and the sustainability of Yomelela depends on Yomelela staff and community involvement.