
Monthly Report – FEBRUARY 2013

Projects Abroad Human Rights Office, Cape Town

Social Justice Project Updates

The Social Justice Department now has Debriefing meetings every morning for all volunteers that are participating in projects and volunteers participating in these projects are now expected to give a report on what they have been doing and the progress of each project.

- **Bonnytown**

We did the Legal role-play about their rights when being detained and in court, this time the boys did not know as much as we expected, but learned a lot through the role-play. We also taught 1 dorm how to juggle and another dorm how to make the friendship bracelets. At one of the workshops we did, we divided the boys in groups and did a quiz on The Rights of a Child; this was a very interesting experience for both volunteers and boys. We also played a few ice-breakers as the boys wanted to have fun and relax. On the next workshop, we decided to do some arts and crafts with the boys, we made two different kinds of Origami, frogs and samurai hats, this was a really fun workshop as the boys and volunteers helped each other out and made the origami crafts for each other.

- **Vredelus house**

We also did the Legal role-play about their rights when being detained and in court; the girls also knew a lot about their rights but still asked a lot of questions. The girls really seemed to enjoy the ice-breakers we played as 1 of the girls said “it helps them relax and have fun”. We also had a modeling competition which we called “Project Runway”, the girls got to put on make up, have their hair done and had to make an outfit out of 3 newspapers and tape. We had 3 judges (volunteers) rate the girls performance, the volunteers could not believe the amazing creations the girls were able to make out of the newspapers, as each girl created something different and unique from the next girl. The volunteers and girls really enjoyed this experience and requested to do this again. On the next workshop we had a presentation on smoking and all the different damages caused by smoking. The girls were intrigued by the information we represented to them regarding smoking, some girls even promised to stop smoking. The last workshop we did we decided to make friendship bracelets and had the girls give a bracelet to someone whom they value as friends.

- **Ottery youth care and education centre**

This month at Ottery has actually been a progressive month, we started our first workshop at Ottery by making Friendship bracelets, which the boys actually enjoyed doing. We also did a role-play exercise, teaching the boys about their rights when being detained and in court. The boys were really engaged in this role play and asked a lot of questions. We also asked them questions regarding their rights and

were surprised when many of them could answer our questions. After the role-play exercise we did some ice-breakers. On the 19th of February volunteers went to the camp site where 10 of the more difficult Ottery boys were and did communication games. 1 of the games we used sweets; they boys could take as much sweets as they wanted and for each sweet they took they had to mention something about themselves. After that we divided the boys with volunteers in 3 groups where we had to make a tall building out of newspapers and sticky tape, the boys really like doing this as they all wanted to be the winner. This month the boys at Ottery were really into the programs/workshops we planned and participated and enjoyed every moment. We also played a called “survival on the moon”, where they each received a piece of paper with 15 items on and had to rate which of the items were the most needed to survive on the moon. We also taught the boys how to juggle, which was a really fun experience; however we were unable to control the boys abrupt behavior, so the program for the day did not turn out as well as we expected.

Women’s Shelters

- **St Anne’s** – St Anne’s We have been unable to attend St Anne’s this month, as there have not been any women present to participate in our workshops.
- **Sisters Incorporated** - The volunteers ran a workshop inspired by the ideas of previous intern Claudia Lammert’s stress-relieving exercises, and based on the Cognitive Behavioural Theory. All of the women participated in group discussions on what constitute thoughts and feelings, but some got rather emotional during the exercise. However, all of the women were extremely empathetic and supportive of one another. Due to the heightened emotions, the volunteers decided to have a tea-break, after which they moved on to the positive thinking exercises.

The women at Sisters enjoy hearing about the country of origin of our volunteers, and we have previously run a workshop about the culture, traditions and history of Holland. With this in mind, Anisha Humphreys had baked ANZAC biscuits (traditional Australian biscuits), and they shared a Dreamtime story as told by the Aboriginal people of Australia. They then helped the women to create their own Dreamtime painting, using the traditional dots of Aboriginal artwork.

The following workshop focused on healthy relationships. The women were asked to identify certain values that help to form a healthy relationship, and they then engaged in a group discussion. The process sparked a lot of good discussion and the identification of important relationship factors. The session ended with making friendship bracelets.

On St Valentine’s Day, the volunteers arranged to take the women to the One Billion Rising Dance Class. This is a cultural and social revolution led by Eve Ensler, which has the goal of ending abuse against women. The initiative was inspired by a survey that estimated that 1 in 3 women will be beaten or raped in their lifetime, and the idea was to get women to walk out of their homes, offices, schools etc. on the same day and dance. It is a vision of a world of women across boundaries coming together as one, and there were events run all over the world. Cape Town’s event was a dance class run at OurNiaSpace Movement Studio in Observatory. It was a very relaxed and free atmosphere – all of the ladies joined in and enjoyed themselves. Angela, the social worker, sent me an email after the event to say that the women had thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

On February 21st, the workshop focused on conflict resolution. All of the women participated in the discussion and were actively engaged, after which they did some painting and made cards. Following

this, the volunteers visited the craft workshop located at Sisters Incorporated and bought some of the ladies' creations.

Curry Kitchen - On the 1st of February we had a Curry Kitchen for the vagrants in Parow, Cape Town. We planned to feed 100 vagrants, but more than a 100 showed up and luckily we had enough food to share with everyone. We had volunteers from PAHRO, PAJO & The building project that helped make the curry, clean up the dishes and distribute the food to the vagrants. This was a wonderful experience not only for staff, but for volunteers as well. Not only did the volunteers distribute the food, but they also chatted with the vagrants, the vagrants were asking a lot of questions for example where they are from and what they are doing here. Volunteers have given positive feedback regarding the Curry Kitchen and requested to have a Soup/Curry Kitchen often.

Parliament Tour - Friday, the 22nd, a Parliament tour was scheduled by Judy for the volunteer. This tour is normally booked by Judy once a month if enough volunteers shows interest in going. On Friday all volunteers went on the tour and informed that it was a great experience as they got to learn a lot about our government system and about politics in South Africa.

Press Conference – on Wednesday the 27th February, Miriam arranged for some volunteers to attend a press conference organised by an organisation known as PASSOP (People Against Suffering Oppression and Poverty) entitled “Susan Forgives”. A talk aimed at raising awareness about domestic and gender based violence in Cape Town. Susan is a victim of such violence. An unknown attacker poured acid on her face and as a result she has had to undergo several reconstructive surgeries. This was such an emotional event, Susan has really showed the world that she's a strong, beautiful and courageous woman whom will not let her disfigurement bring her down. The volunteers were deeply moved by this.

Legal Services Updates

The Legal Services Department has continued to increase in clientele. This month we have still received a lot of Refugee Cases as well, but have also received many new cases through our Legal Clinics, which vary from Divorce and Maintenance, Property and Labour related issues.

This month has seen the development of the Legal Services Department to greater heights. We attended our second consultation in Pollsmoor prison. We concluded our first murder Trial via a plea bargain with the State and our client pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 10 years in prison three years being a suspended sentence. Our client was a 20 year old male charged with murder. He had no previous convictions and had never had any problem with the law. This is what made this case so difficult from an emotional perspective. As we got to understand our client we realised he is from the Manenberg Township where gang culture is rife. He was never a member of a gang. However his older brother was murdered as a result of a gang war the previous year (2011). It is because of this that he sought to protect himself by becoming a member of a gang. As part of a gang the culture is kill or be killed, hence our client's predicament. Two volunteers accompanied the attorneys to Pollsmoor prison and subsequently to Court. The volunteers were glad for the opportunity to actively participate in a case of such magnitude.

We have now established the Child Justice Chapter of legal services. In this chapter we represent the young offenders from Bonnytown with whom we have conducted workshops for the past four years. This it is a great honour that PAHRO could be entrusted with this kind of work. Our Legal Services Coordinator, Sherwin Daniels had his first appearance representing a young offender against a charge of Murder on the 26th February 2013. Sherwin has informed that the case is a difficult one, but that everything went well in court. We postponed the matter for bail application. Sevrin, Paul and Chine (volunteers) accompanied Sherwin to court and really enjoyed the experience.

The Legal Services Department has also produced the Legal role-play at Bonnytown and through Sherwin's initiative to start this role-play the young offenders have been made aware of their rights, the role-play includes acting out court proceedings and thereafter teaching the boys their constitutional rights. We were asked to do this role-play at least once every 2 months, so that they do not forget their rights or so that the new boys could learn their rights.

In this month of February we successfully made an application for a school fees exemption for a refugee who is a single mother of two boys. We saw the reinstatement of a client who was facing dismissal following a charge of negligence. Another of our refugee client's application for a SASSA grant was approved by the SASSA office and she can begin receiving this from March this year.

We have had 44 new clients this month.