



# GR@ILVINE

## GRAIL PROGRAMMES NEWSLETTER

Kleinmond, South Africa, March 2016



*The most important value I learnt from Tft was the sense of commitment to the community, which will live in me forever."*

Afaf Doleeb

### **TFT is a Life-Change Programme**

By Afaf Doleeb

Since I participated in the Training for Transformation course in 2012, my life has changed in many different ways personally, professionally, and spiritually. It has been a life changing experience, not just a study programme.

After I came back from South Africa, I conducted research on the "brain drain" in Sudan and started to realize the extent of the problems my country is facing. I interviewed many talented, well educated people and most of them asked me the same question "why did you come back from South Africa? Do you plan to migrate?" And I said the same to all: "I didn't shift my study major to the topic of development in order to develop other countries". I know that at least 90 percent of the younger generation is looking for an opportunity to leave the country due to the economic and political situations of the country. However, for me TFT gave me the hope and motive to change; although sometimes I feel frustrated.

I started working with the United Nations Office for Project Services a few months after my graduation, and it was not long before I realized that we are far away from development even though our agency specialization is 'sustainable development'.

I worked at the program unit and watched senior program specialists writing proposals from the office. There was a clear gap between the communities' needs and what the agency offered. After a while,

### **IN THIS ISSUE**

#### **TRAINING FOR TRANSFORMATION**

TFT is a Life-Change Programme

By Afaf Doleeb – p. 1-2

#### **MTHIMKHULU COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Western Cape Association for People with Disabilities  
Peer and Parent supporters train to become Change Agents

By Lindia Trout – p. 2

#### **THE GRAIL CENTRE**

The latest on the Grail Centre

Picture by William Scrooby – p. 2

I convinced the head of office, our hub and head quarter office to conduct assessments before implementing any project.

It wasn't easy as they said that we were working in conflict zones and no specialist would risk his or her life to go and conduct assessment there. So I volunteered to do the first assessment after getting clearance from the UNDPSS "security office". The project budget was 5 million Euro to build water infrastructures on specific areas. However, the shocking feedback I received from the community forced us to change the whole programme. The communities didn't want us to build water holes close to their villages. At the beginning I couldn't understand why, but they told me that water resources attract rivals "Janjaweed", a militia active in Sudan that put their lives at risk. That's why every time we construct such infrastructures people move away, preferring to walk at least 6 hours a day to get water. I also asked about the facilities in the area, like schools, and the mothers' response was shocking to me.

One of the women said "the government or Janjaweed might bump us at any time, or they will take these kids to become soldiers, so let them enjoy the childhood life they have for now". I cried for many nights and reported all the responses I got to my supervisors and HQ. Now we have a policy saying that – "no project should be designed without communities consultations". Now the project is

servicing 500 000 direct beneficiaries and we do our best to find solutions to deliver better interventions.

### **Cooperation with “Center for Protection of Women and Child Rights”**

Since 2013, I am supporting an organization called “SEEMA Center for Protection of Women and Child Rights”, working on providing services to the victims of Gender Based Violence and protecting Human Rights Defenders “HRDs”, in addition to other vulnerable groups.

The center is delivering psychosocial, legal, health and financial services to the victims. They support around 300 victims of rape each year, and work on the law reform through advocacy. They have now succeeded in making changes to the rape article which was one of the most discriminative articles on the Sudanese Criminal Law 1991. The article didn't have a specific identification of rape, and confused it with adultery. It needed 4 men or 8 women to witness the rape incident in order to accuse someone of rape. This is usually impossible. Fortunately the center with other groups managed to change it.

### **Western Cape Association for People with Disabilities Peer and Parent supporters train to become Change Agents**

By Lindia Trout

The Mthimkhulu Community Development (MCD) Programme has been training WCAPD peer and parent supporters to become change agents in their local communities. The aim of the Change Agent Training Programme is to build local leadership who will take the lead in their communities around social issues that impact them. Over the past three months the MCD team has been training Peer and Parent supporters as far afield as Beaufort West, Oudtshoorn and Knysna.

The learnings from the training have been successfully implemented on the ground. Peer and parent supporters have taken up issues of accessibility and transport in many communities. The Hermanus APD branch met with their local councilor to problem solve around access in the area.



Other branches have conducted community surveys to ascertain the number of persons with disabilities in their areas and what their needs are. In this way the voices of persons with disabilities are coming to the forefront where they can be heard and responded to. Mthimkhulu salutes all the WCAPD Peer and Parent supporters who are part of this training programme and who are implementing their learnings in a practical way to make a difference in the lives of their peers. We reflect on this particularly in light of Human's Right Day coming up on 21 March – we say that ‘human rights are not optional’.

### **The latest on the Grail Centre**

Picture by William Scrooby

In February, The Grail Centre had the honour of hosting the memorial of the remarkable Anne Hope, Hamba Kahle Anne! If you wish, you can contribute to the Anne Hope Legacy Fund by sponsoring women for training in the Training for Transformation course. Email Eunice at [eunice@grailprogrammes.org.za](mailto:eunice@grailprogrammes.org.za).



This month, the ‘March Lily’ is flowering in the Western Cape region. We are in a privileged place for you to take a break from the hectic city life and enjoy Nature. With mountains above and a long clean beach just ten minutes walk away; The Grail Centre is perfect for you to restore your energies to the fullest. Bookings with Leverage at [grailadm@mweb.co.za](mailto:grailadm@mweb.co.za).

### **ABOUT US**

The Grail Centre Trust is based in Kleinmond, Western Cape. This Not-for-Profit Organisation delivers two programmes, namely Training for Transformation and Mthimkhulu Community Development Programme. In addition, the Grail Centre Conference and Retreat Centre can accommodate groups of up to 50 people.

#### **The Grail Centre**

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#### **Training for Transformation**

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