

### Report on the first implementation of the ICDP program in the Gamalakhe Development Center 2010

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#### The background for the project

This project has been a cooperation between Gamalakhe Development Center, RBUP and the International Child Developmental Program (ICDP). For a brief description of Gamalakhe - see below.

In 2009 the GDC invited RBUP to implement a program to support psychosocial development for children in the area in which they are working. GDC is a foundation working to support a community center in the township of Gamalakhe. The center is involved in education, training and religious activities. The board of the GDC saw the need to increase competence and knowledge on psychosocial development of children in the township and surrounding areas. At that point, some of the teachers of RBUP were involved in the ICDP program (International Child Development

Program), and it was decided to implement this particular program. ICDP has proved to be culturally adaptable since the format of the program is structured in such a way that it is simple and easy to integrate into different contexts.

In the fall 2009 an agreement was made between GDC, RBUP and ICDP on the use of the program as well as the plan for implementation: It was decided to run 10 days of training, split into three periods during 2010. In between the training seminars the participants were expected to do homework and field work. 20 participants were invited to join the group, two from each crèches.

As far as the costs involved are concerned, GDC paid for the travel expenses, the lodging, diets and the part of the wages that was not paid for by RBUP. RBUP paid the salaries of the two trainers.

## **Requirement**

Gamalakhe is a township situated in the south eastern part of South Africa. 12.000 people live in the township, mainly Zulus. Demographically, the township has the same challenges as the rest of South Africa where 30% of the population is illiterate and where there is a high percentage of unemployment. The region in Kwazulu Natal is the epicenter for HIV/AIDS, and many children have lost one or both of their parents.

The township has many crèches where children to a various degrees are offered care and food. When the GDC started working in the region they saw a need to upgrade the crèches and when the format of the training was decided, a written invitation outlining the program was introduced to the target group by the coordinator for the GDC. He visited all institutions and talked to the leaders about the program and the criteria for participation: they were informed that the training would be in English and that at least two from each workplace should participate to be able to cooperate on the fieldwork after the second seminar. At the time of the invitation it was made clear that the participants were expected to work with the program in between the seminars, and that they should know beforehand that this meant taking a very active part in the program.

The role of the coordinator, Mr. Larry Mkhwanazi, was also clarified. He was to participate to learn about the program, and he was also to arrange for practical issues.

21 participants from a total of eight crèches and one primary school attended the first seminar. The group varied in terms of former training from having no training at all to pre-school teachers.



## Summary of the program

### **Seminar 1:** March 2010

The main objective of this seminar was to give the participants awareness and experience in the interactional components of the program. This means applying ICDP in the participants own practice with children.

Introduction to the ICDP and the main components of the program. This consists of:

- The perception of the child
- Three types of dialogue - eight Guidelines for good interaction
- Homework: practice the interactional skills with children learned in the first seminar

### **Seminar 2:** September 2010

The main objective was to qualify participants to train and offer supervision to others in a sensitizing, not instructive, manner. The main themes were:

- Feedback on the homework
- Practical implementation of the program
- Seven principles of sensitizing
- Implementation principles

### **Seminar 3:** November 2010

The main objective was to give supervision to the group practice done by the participants.

- Feedback and supervision
- Achievements and challenges
- Evaluation – diploma

## Content and process

### The way of teaching, different methods:

Lecturing, use of flip over, group work, discussions , role-play, use of photos and video film, sharing personal stories, homework, logbook.

### Content:

Implementation of the ICDP program: the 8 guidelines, the perception of the child, sensitization principles, fieldwork (how to do groups with parents).

In addition, special themes such as; sexual abuse, work with teenagers, how to involve men in the program, the use of punishment, how to talk about death and loss

### Process:

During the first seminar it was difficult to create a room for sharing personal stories, in contrast to the last seminar where they were eager to share their personal stories. The following themes were very important:

- The importance of sharing in groups in their own language
- The importance of working with the language
- The importance of creating a trustful, safe and open relationship
- The importance of rituals and cultural respect (names, meals, singing, playing)



## Evaluation

### Methods of evaluation:

We used **written evaluation** after each seminar with the following questions:

Did you benefit from participating in this program – and in which way?

What was the most important thing that you have learned? Was there anything that you did not understand and points you feel should be improved? After the last seminar we made a **focus interview** with six of the participants. The focus interview addressed both the content, the structure and the effect of the program on their personal and professional life. This was done by a person who had been an observer to the last seminar. In addition we had **informal talks** with the coordinator.

### Content of the feedback:

#### Importance of the program

Everyone agreed that the program had made a difference. Some answered in more general terms, others were more specific, like; “it has opened my mind, changed the way I see children, I talk more with the child, listen more, give the child more attention, changed the way I see children. What was said was an eye- opener for me”. They also said it has been important to do the fieldwork, share the knowledge, work in team. Through the fieldwork they had learned how to connect with the parents. Some told more personal stories: “Before I used to punish the children with a stick. When I came home they were scared of me. Now that I have learned to listen to them, to give them time, they are happy when I am at home”. Most of the participants informed that they used to punish their children but after the seminar they have learned to listen. However, some of the concepts were difficult, like *dialogue* and *regulative*. Some guidelines were difficult to understand; *following the child’s lead, expanding meaning*; for instance how to explain something that was taboo, like death and sickness. Some of them also struggled with the regulative dialogue.

#### The way of teaching

Everyone liked the role-play: “Role play was ice- breaking”. They liked the group discussions and were happy for the material we used, like photos and video film.

They also expressed that it had been seen and understood by the teachers.

#### Practical issues

An important part was that we learned their names and respected their culture as well as their rituals, such as singing, praying and respect for their language.

Being offered a hot lunch was important as well as tea breaks with sandwiches.

## **Our evaluation and comments on dilemmas:**

### **Language:**

The participants were less educated and had a poorer knowledge of English than expected. We had some concerns if this would result in only a few of the participants qualifying to be certified as facilitators. We had to work on finding a good structure in terms of short presentations on a basic level, and doing a lot of practical exercises (see description of the method).

### **The learning process:**

Despite the initial language problems we experienced that the participants were very receptive and engaged, demonstrating a good understanding of the content. Generally, there was a high level of activity with a lot of humour and vitality, songs and laughter. Equally, there were serious discussions, questions and comments. The participants seemed to use story telling and roleplaying as a way of expressing their understanding. It seems that the narrative form is an integrated part of the learning process in this culture.

### **The sensitization part:**

This refers to the process where the participants internalize the ideas in the program and experience what it does to themselves and their relationships with the children. It would have been profitable to extend this period. We found it to be a dilemma that the participants were invited to become facilitators, when we wanted to give them more time to really understand the principles of good interaction. However this would be difficult within our economical and logistical frame. In the continuation of the program (see below) we have suggestions on how to work with that dilemma.

### **The role of the coordinator:**

To have a coordinator such as Larry Mkhwanazi has been essential in this work. He played a very important part as mediator between the participants and the trainers on cultural and language challenges, as well as being in charge of all practical issues.

### **Home work and fieldwork:**

The ICDP program require a special way of learning and teaching, and we saw that there was a difference on the part of the participants between learning for yourself and teaching to others. In ICDP you have to understand the educational idea to be able to use it in the right way. We were worried that they were too instructive in their own fieldwork when presenting the program to other caregivers. Seeing their examples showed us that in some instances this may have been the case. There may be several reasons; the culture seems to be more authoritarian, and the principles of teaching has been lecturing. Another issue was the time spent on own sensitization and the transformation into using it in the teaching process.

**Difference between oral and written presentations:**

As expected in a group with less qualified participants, the level of their written presentations varied from very simple, using illustrations as the main part, to more elaborate logbooks which also included reflections.

**Material:**

In the beginning we only had material in English and we found that to be a challenge. During the seminar we had to translate some of the most important themes with the help of the participants. To promote the program in this region we have to work on translating and creating written material.

We made a photo manual to each of the field groups with photos and pictures from Angola, Tanzania and Eastern Cape. These belong to the GDC, and can be borrowed there.

It would have been very helpful if the participants had been able to videotape their interactions, both with the children and their parents.

**Number of participants:**

Due to various circumstances there were changes in the group in-between the seminars: five left the program due to illness and work conditions, two newcomers were accepted in the second seminar. The total of certified facilitators was 18.

**Visit to the crèches:**

We found it important to see the context of their work. The visits did not allow us to observe the natural interaction between the caregivers and the children. This would have required more time. The main function of the visit seemed to be creating a bond between trainer and participants. We would have liked to be able to better observe their interactions with the children as well as their work as facilitators.



## **The continuation of the program**

### **Material:**

It is important to develop more material in Zulu. We need a proper translation of the brochure with the eight guidelines for good interaction and different homework connected to the guidelines. We also think it would be useful to have a translation of the facilitator's manual for the ICDP program. This could be done in cooperation with the group in Pietermaritzburg.

**Video equipment** should be available for the participants. They should have the possibility to videotape their homework as well as their fieldwork.

### **Follow up - Sustainability – trainer level**

Since the start of this project the question of sustainability has been included in the work at various levels:

The facilitators decided to create a network of ICDP trained in Gamalakhe, coordinated by Mr. Larry Mkhwanazi where they will have regular meetings to inspire each other in the ongoing work. This network will have a follow up day in cooperation with the trainers that will take place once or twice a year as new groups are being trained.

### Trainer level

We plan to continue with a second facilitator program in 2011, and then select the most suitable facilitators from the two groups to continue in a trainers' training program in 2012. The course at the trainer level will be coordinated with the ICDP implementation elsewhere in South Africa at the ICDP network meeting in Pietermaritzburg in March 2011.

### Evaluation/research

Written evaluations are carried out/will be carried out after each seminar. At the end of the training program, a focus interview has been performed by an outside observer. Additionally, RBUP - together with ICDP and GDC - have applied to NORAD (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) for funds to evaluate the project.

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