**Restoring Humanity Project in the Western Cape**

The Youth Development Programme in the Western Cape focused on the implementation of the **“Restoring Humanity”** which brought together young people from three diverse communities (Atlantis, Athlone and Masiphumelele). The project aims is to equip young people with the capacity and skills to address actions and attitudes that harm or destroy human dignity in their community, and to re-draw damaging patterns of behaviour. Participants assess the individual, social, economic and political factors that undermine equal worth, and contribute to destructive feelings of inferiority and alienation in the neighbourhoods where they live. They work together to identify and implement solutions that restore dignity, purpose and hope at individual and community level, and produce case studies of their observations and interventions. Learning processes included workshops, youth platforms, story-telling circles and ‘remembering’ visits and walks.

Whilst the young people from the three areas came together on a regular basis, they were also tasked with establishing “Restoring Humanity groups in their communities. In Atlantis and Mamre these local groups exceeded 30 members as they managed their own local programmes with support from IHOM.

Community festivals hosted in the three communities attracted more than three hundred participants at a time, parents, children and grandparents participated. These festivals were important to introduce the project to the communities.

**4.1. Youth and Healing**

The core of the project is starting young people on their own healing journeys- many young people have already been damaged by social violence and dysfunctional family life. During the process they link their own story to the story of their community, to the stories of their peers in other communities and begin to see the similarities that exist between youth coming from diverse backgrounds.

Three Healing of Memories workshops for youth were offered during this period. Participants on these workshops where drawn from the “Restoring Humanity” as well as from other youth organizations and schools. An intergeneration workshop was also piloted. This was received very positively by youth and adults. It pointed to a need to create a space where parents and children listen each other’s story.

**“Never Again”**

Exploring ancient, old and past wounds of the community and country we live is a fundamental to the process for ensuring that we do not repeat the same mistakes of the past. This interrogation is also important for young people to better understand the current socio-political situation that they find themselves in. Through the project, young people managed to visit different historical places that are connected to the slave history of the Cape, the colonial past and apartheid.

**4.2. Youth voice**

Participants come together in workshops, youth focused platforms, storytelling circles to discuss and explore issues of identity, community, human rights, the South African Constitution and Bills of rights, working with conflict and transformational leadership. The aim of these activities is to develop their leadership skill and share experiences on how social, economic, political and spiritual situations past and present affect their human dignity and that of their communities.

Making it possible for them to put forward solutions to problems facing themselves and their communities, that can contribute to building a more humane and non-violent society and respect for the human rights of all.

**4.3. Highlights 2011**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of workshop** | **No of participants** | **Population Group** |
| Three Youth Healing of Memories workshops | 130 | Coloured: 70Blacks: 60 |
| Festivals | 3000 | Coloured: 2200Blacks: 800 |
| Various restoring humanity activities in communities | 600 | Coloured: 400Blacks:200 |
| Leadership skills workshops | 300 | Coloured: 200Blacks:100 |
| **TOTAL** | **4030** | **Blacks:1160****Coloured:2870** |

**Partners**

• Baluleka Youth Project of the District Six Museum

• Beacon Hill Church (Atlantis)

• Khoisan Coloured Reformation organisation (Atlantis)

• Fusion- South Africa (Athlone)