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2007

Seed Update

2007 has been a fantastic year, a year full of quantum leaps for SEED. We have been operating as an independent NPO since January 2007, we have received our Section 18 A tax exemption status and we are well on our way to becoming an Accredited Training Provider that delivers Applied Permaculture Facilitator Training. We also kicked off our National Program and our second text book, *Growing the Living Laboratory*.

On the people front: Sharon Mondell slides out of the Nursery for 6 months to wrap up 4 schools in the Sustainable Schools Program and Talryn Harris, Wendy Crawford and Yoliswa Mahobe team up to deliver the Organic Classroom Program. Yoliswa joins the team as a Permaculture learner with the idea that she mentored into the position of Permaculture Facilitator by 2009.

We have just spend three very illuminating days working with Fatith Sax on Organisation Building and visioning and another two days on Strategic Review and planning. We are feeling really excited about our work for 2008 and united in focus as a team.

We welcome the following funders on board for the Organic Classroom Program: The DG Murray Trust, The Solstice Foundation, Gorta, Thathu and Anglo American Chairman's Fund. We thank Old Mutual for supporting the further development of our website into an educational resource – this includes the development on a Permaculture Design Game. Without these fantastic funders we would be nowhere

ORGANIC CLASSROOM PROGRAM works for global cooling.

With global warming pretty much accepted as fact, we really need to look at changing the way we live. The world, its weather and its landscapes will not survive if we do not.

The Organic Classroom, which launches in January 2008, addresses this issue through teaching and sustainable livelihoods, planting over 200 trees per school and all on-ground work supports the delivery of Outcomes Based Education.

The program works with schools for three years and ex-its them with a Sustainable Permaculture for food security and a teaching resource and a garden-based entrepreneurial project that employs one community member. The Organic Classroom project works cumulatively and thus makes significant changes to peoples lives and the planet.



Wendy Crawford and Kannemeyer Primary learners share the joys soil improving herbs.

The benefits of the Organic program are:

- Gardens are living learning laboratories for the delivery of Outcomes Based Education.
- Permaculture food gardens provide nutritious food for school children (1.5 mil children age 1-9 suffer from malnutrition).
- School environments where waste is managed, water is conserved and soil is enriched are cleaner and healthier.
- Gardening as a metaphor for social change, learners realize the potential they have to affect their environments.
- Fresh, organic food increases awareness of the positive impact of good nutrition on health, especially with regard to HIV/AIDS.
- The gardens have led to a range of additional outreach projects like teaching other schools, parents and community members how to develop their own Permaculture food gardens.
- Garden-based entrepreneurial projects employ community members and ensure the sustainability of the garden.

National Program Update

First PermEd Teachers Course facilitated in Limpopo

SEED facilitated its first PermEd Five Day Teachers workshop in the Soutpansberg in September 2007. The course was held at Lesheba Wilderness and was facilitated over five solid days of rain. Participants spent a lot of time getting thoroughly to grips with Permaculture mapping and design. The National Curriculum Advisor, for the whole Soutpansberg region, attended the full 5 days and bought a wealth of links to the Curriculum. The level of education was high, with most teachers from Secondary Schools. The discussions were hot and interesting. The on-ground component was intense and designed to be relevant to



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the hot dry Limpopo conditions. The National Program is interesting because it deals with such a variety of climatic and social conditions which provides a great learning base for planning for South African schools Permaculture.

Organic Classroom Program kicks off in Mamelodi.

Tina De Waal started working with Balebageng Primary in September 2007.

Work done today includes: Garden design. Outdoor Classroom construction (The Outdoor Classroom provides sheltered space for delivery of garden related lessons.) Water harvesting in the form of rain tanks. Start-up windbreak and perimeter plant-up. Key hole beds and start-up food garden.

Plans for 2008 are to strengthen education links. Medicinal garden. Windbreaks. Worm farms. Run off management.

Food garden development. Mulch banks. Orchard guilds. Compost systems. Chicken tractors. Mamelodi is SEEDs first trail at facilitating this program remotely. We look forward to getting the other nodes going and to the immense sharing and learning that this program brings.



Teachers on the PermEd Course in Limpopo get their hands dirty.

On ground report from SEED Operations Manager

The most important element in the delivery of SEED's program is the local knowledge, Permaculture skills, Educational understanding and passion of SEED's Facilitator's at schools. The work is demanding, and there are few local people with both Permaculture and Education skills. We are excited about SEED's eminent Permaculture Facilitators course as capacitation and employment of people from school communities strengthens the local economy.

The other essential ingredient in SEED's program is committed, enthusiastic Schools. There is no substitute for hands-on teachers and learners, and Principals who are visionary Leaders.

Which leads us to ask what is it that fuels the passion of SEED Facilitators, Educators and Learners who are "transforming learning through Permaculture"?

The most important reason why we are out there gardening is a yearning for a more meaningful existence than that offered by consumerist, media saturated culture. A life in which we are producers of food, where the means of production and survival are in our hands. We see this desire to become producers reflected in the interest that awakened Educators and Learners show in SEED's work. During school holidays we have Educators who phone us to talk about their school garden, or Learners that walk for kilometers to the SEED office to ask if they can work in the garden. Not all Educators and Learners are awakened yet, but we know that they will be – our survival as a species depends on it. We can change the world with our own two hands-and have fun doing it!

Quotes from the year that was

"I now understand what we need to do – we should not grow food gardens around schools, but build schools in food gardens." **Kevin Pretorius** after attending an ILUD workshop in Zimbabwe.

"I think of the SEED crew often - I had quite a soft spot for the work you were doing and what it represented to me on a larger level - it made me hopeful for South Africa to know that you were there and it was somehow working despite what are some pretty dismal realities in terms of racial reckonings, HIV/AIDS, and a serious need for karma cleansing. I think you have a great thing going on so many different levels and all I can say is keep on rockin'." **Wick Powers**, USAID funder

"Teachers use the Living Laboratory as a bible." **Liyanda Maseko**, Old Mutual (who bought 1000 copies for distribution through their "Out the Box" program).

"The aim is to build an urban development model like no other, one that will capture the imagination of the world and all Africans. Its landscape and structures a testament to a new African civilization at one with nature, proud of its ancient heritage, a place to promote and demonstrate a vision for an equitable planet friendly reality." **Nicholas Heinemann**, Afristar Foundation on the proposed Urban Permaculture model for the Cape Flats.

"SEED was particularly enterprising selling various different items to raise money. They also offered goods in Community Exchange Talents, which was awesome. I bagged a great seed cotton t-shirt (100% locally made), a Permaculture manual for school kids, some mixed dried herbs grown by the kids at Rocklands Primary School, and some seeds (of course!) for planting. Permaculture will be a way of life in the 21 Century so it's great that seed are doing this work in schools in the Western Cape and are looking to expand nationally. The Chicken Tractor on display was pretty cool too". **Feedback** from Natural Organic Expo.



NEW TEXT BOOK

SEEDs new text book for the Intermediate Phase, is out.

"Growing the Living Laboratory" is available through SEED, Sharenet or on our website: www.seed.org.za

