

## BRICKS EDUCATIONAL REPORT - 1986

Bricks is a non-profit Community project, serving the community in various ways. One initiative of the project is different areas of education which is open to the public and other community activists.

The first and highest level of Bricks education programme, is in service training of volunteers out of community. We have several people coming in for one day training sessions as well as students giving up their holidays to learn more about the situation and how to sustain the momentum. Our experience is that people find it difficult to understand what Bricks is all about and what is to be done. At some time we had three volunteers for one month. They did not really understand, and could not take the pressure, therefore they decided to go and work at the airport as waitresses rather than work at Bricks. This is one typical example of the problem mentioned above.

People also walk into the office and ask to learn more about say photography or about storywriting etc. These people are then taken by our full time activists for one hour per day. There are also lots of students walking in and out asking for advice on students matter and are usually willing to sell the paper from door- to - door and explain to the people who don't know.

Also part of the education programme is the one to two - hour sessions on Friday where we ask community leaders, activists of other community groups, lecturers busy with experiential education as well as Bricks activists to give lectures and also practical<sup>^</sup>. Various activists of community groups are invited and volunteers join by themselves.

Regularly we have<sup>ci</sup> group of seven to eight, because on Friday afternoons people are mostly busy with other types of activities. Sessions we have covered including interalia: managing skills, the kairos document (where we have made a critical analysis) News gathering and storywriting - (a practical session); communication (especially group communication. This was done in several categories over a period of weeks) Precip and how we can use it, layout and what it is; Ideas on layout; Education - (types of and what several intellectuals

says on/

says on it (here we mainly used methods of Paulo Freire).

During one of these sessions we have attended a talk arranged by the YWCA about sex abuse in our community; (How we as community organizations could solve the problem.); After a survey in Katutura on housing and unemployment, (where Bricks activists took part), we discussed and analysed it together in order to have a clear scene of the situation; We also had sessions on motivation; how to react in a crisis etc.; Recently we had a session on one of Armah's books, "The Beautiful ones are not yet born". We discussed it in the light of the Namibian situation. From time to time we have to do some sessions over, especially the ones about newsgathering; storywriting and layout. Whilst working we also gathered materials for these sessions because it has become necessary. We also did a session on practical planning in community organization.

Apart from these Friday sessions we also have workshops, seminars, courses etc, which is arranged to educate and conscientise. We also attend other courses, seminars workshop etc. as part of the education programme.

There will be two week- courses in 1986 whereby other activists will be invited, and also people who can give a definite input. People of the rural areas have asked for a workshop on the alternative press because they want to start with their own community media initiatives. We also gave small day workshop at schools or wherever we are asked to. As part of education we have invited a community drama group "Action workshop" to teach us community drama. It is a new concept in Namibia, but we have initiated a group, platform 2000 which are totally independent from Bricks.

Some of our activists who attended courses also arranged courses. Where they impart what they have learned. One of the activists who have attended such a course are busy with a sewing group now.

Another kind (if not the most important!) of education is a day - to day interaction with our community where they learn from us and we from them. We have also started with area reading groups where people of the same area read and discuss the paper together. We aren't so successful in this regard because people are regularly intimidated (for example recent indiscriminate bomb attacks which led to mass fear) What they say is that: "Tomorrow the same thing can

happen/

happen to us, so we don't want to be involved". At this stage people are forced to become apathetic which make the challenge that much greater.

However, Bricks activists are daily in close contact with the community on a grassroots level so that's why the project is still moving and that's why we can print a paper full of community stories and growth in certain areas, as well as practical effects of a vicious apartheid society regularly.

This is a very general description of our level of involvement in alternative education at present. With various community organizations in Namibia in the phase of emergence, our biggest need in terms of education concerns training. Our opinion at this stage is that with the necessary cooperation and planning more concrete steps concerning this will be made in the near future. At the moment we make maximum use of all progressive and alternative educational opportunities offered us.

YOU TEACH ME: I TEACH YOU

Compiled as a general document by

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