Welcome to Solofelang Project
Empowerment of Youth with Disability

@ Parents’ Guidance Centre REAKGONA
Gelukspan/ North West Province

Presentation at 2nd African Conference for AAC
02.08.-04.08.2011
by U. Rauter, L. Sehako, R. Moseane
Presenters: Lebogang Sehako

Group Co-Facilitator
PGC Youth empowerment Program 2003-2005

FOFA Project participant 2005-2009

Deputy Chair Person of DPO: “Kgalagadi people with Disability”
Presenters: Rachel Moseane

- Chief Physiotherapy Assistant
- CP courses planning, mothers teaching, intervention
- mother of an adolescent with disability
- Co-Facilitator
- AAC courses
How it started – Our Context

Ngaka Modiri Molema District - Rural District of North West Province in SA

Parents Guidance Centre Reakgona
25 years history of working with CP children & their mothers through full time courses (poster presentation 2003 at this conference)

Youth Programs on individual basis:
Lebogang Sehako as a pioneer

Contact to CAAC & FOFA Inspiration to try our own model in 2010
Identified Needs

Young persons with disability need to stand for themselves

Stigma may be subtle, disguised as “too much care”

In 2010 we had a “critical mass” of young people whom we saw as individuals → use the synergy effect of helping one another

Lebogang advanced in own process invited as co-facilitator
Target Groups

Various/ mixed target Groups:

- **Youth** who has attended CP groups and grown out of it
- Youth and young adults with physical disability or/and intellectual challenges
- Youth with Paraplegia admitted at Gelukspan Hospital with severe pressure sores
- **Family members:** to realize and give freedom for the youth to pursue their dreams
- The **staff team** participating: new experiences
Participants of first Solofelang Project Course
1.-5. March 2010
Dare To Dream Process

General Features – differences to Fofa

- **Use of Setswana throughout**
- **Adjusted Process**: Down to earth - tailored
- **Individual Presentations of dreams & revisiting them → Homework**
- **3 onsite weeks** (March, June, October)
- **Adjusting goals & finding solutions** when obstacles appeared: avoiding to get stuck for a long time
- **Blend in other disability & empowerment topics**
- **Project Cycle**: 2 years
- **Possibility for new admissions during the process**
First Week: Day 1-2

- Talking about the individual identity
- Finding the group identity
- Giving the project its name, logo and slogan
  - The choice of the group
  - Self determination
  - Appreciating the gifts and ideas got from individual presentations
  - Evolving confidence
Day 1: Self introduction
Khumoetsile / “Khumo”

I AM AN EAGER AND ACTIVE GIRL

I love people and to communicate with them

I use my face, gestures and pictures to talk

I am the youngest in Solofelang! 11 years

Look who I am → → →
- My identity

Rose Khomoitsike Moses
20 January 1999
11 years
LOTTHAKANE

birthday.

I like the following

solo
skepelo
Diaparos
kerke
Go thameka le bana bangwe
Muguke yotire je dijo
le gotte wo PGC C.

I don't like

gu ke rate = Motoko
Bojawa
Budwa

PGC Reakgona
Day 3: Presentations
Khumo’s Dream

Coaches
Mother & Mmatumelo

Resources
Transport Assistance

GOAL
AAC Device
School

Time
Summer 2011

Places
Companies
PGC

People
Family
Khumo’s Dream achieved
Improved & enjoyable communication
Dreams (1st & 2nd goals) – Total: 17

- 5 referred to AAC devices incl. laptops – even Lebogang needed a new one
- 2 referred to healing
- 3 to start some form of schooling
- 3 to empowerment to work/ run a business
- 2 to study
- 2 to improve in present schooling
First I have to learn **English**

I have hope

I see that to have a dream is important to achieve a better future

Magadi, CP athetoid, 25; never went to school; taught in PGC Setswana literacy within one year!
My dream is to work for myself with making Pottery

Kgalalelo, CP, 18 yrs, never went to school
My dream is to work in the **PGC** wheelchair repair & to coach netball in our village
pressure sores; admitted at Gelukspan Hospital & attending Tlamelang School

I am still young
But I want to become a doctor
I will work hard
Day 4: Implementing: ordering by myself (at Spur)
Lerato using *Tech Speak*

Ke batla - Ice cream - enyane

Eng?
Challenge: Overcoming barriers

I can’t understand, what does he say?

Ice cream

Isch… music, it’s too noisy here
Back to low tech
Which one? – That one
Achievements of participants

The speed of achieving was amazing

June 2010 - 3 participants had a laptop: 1 through family, 1 through saving strategy with own disability grant, 1 as a sponsorship

October 2010: 2 persons started to work: pottery and wheelchair repair

June 2011: 2 received a voice output device (Go talk)

Everybody progressed, even our Centre achieved a longstanding dream
Communication Barriers and others
Barriers faced by participants during the year

- **Family problems (death in family)**
  - Slow down due to lack of finance, depression

- **Accessibility issues** once the device was there

- **Negative attitudes & reluctance to share resources** e.g. not allowed to use electricity for laptop studies in school due to jealousy
  - Feeling discouraged ➔ getting new courage in next module

- R. Kelly: “You kept the fire burning, You kept hope alive”
What helped Solofelang to stay on track

- Reflection on individuals and their progress
- Responding to participants problems
- During onsite weeks ongoing evaluation (daily or every second day)
- After the week full evaluation
- Having a group aim too
- Continuing with individuals between onsite weeks
Conclusion

Solofelang is exciting for all of us
We encourage similar efforts: Make the dress fit you! Don’t force to be the same – you will never achieve that: Acknowledge your special needs in your environment
Dare to be unique
Dream with the people – take off
Mold the jug as you go, keep it moist
Try your own project and enjoy it like ice-cream!

Thank you for your patience and your listening