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South Africa's Unsung "She-roes": A Practicum Study of NPO Grandmothers Against Poverty and AIDS, Khayelitsha Township, Cape Town

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**SOUTH AFRICA'S UNSUNG "SHE-ROES": A PRACTICUM STUDY OF NPO
GRANDMOTHERS AGAINST POVERTY AND AIDS, KHAYELITSHA TOWNSHIP,
CAPE TOWN**

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South Africa: Community Health, Spring 2008
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“Grandmothers are emerging as the unrecognized heroes of [Africa]. No one gives them their due. Few acknowledge that society could not function without them.... The fate of generations of children weighs heavily on their shoulders.”¹
–Stephen Lewis, Founder, Stephen Lewis Foundation

¹ Johnson Mesi. “These Grannies are Really Doing it for Themselves.” *City Vision*. 30 May 2002. Page 01K.

[°] Ilana Landsberg-Lewis. “Grandmothers to Grandmothers Gathering.” Stephen Lewis Foundation brochure. 2007. Page 47.

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1. ABSTRACT

Across Africa, the AIDS pandemic has forced HIV+ individuals and orphaned children into the care of elderly women. Though this has occurred in millions of families, little support has been offered for the grandmothers supporting children and grandchildren on a limited income. This study reports on a practicum study at Grandmothers Against Poverty and AIDS (GAPA), the first African organization to recognize the important role played by grandmothers in light of HIV/AIDS. The study was conducted in April 2008 at the GAPA center in Khayelitsha Township, Cape Town. The main objective of the study was to evaluate the organization's origin, structure, goals, methods, efficacy, community relations, obstacles, areas for improvement, and goals for the future. The study focused on GAPA's preschool bursary program, which funds preschool attendance for grandmothers' young dependents.

The study was conducted over a three week period, during which the author acted as an intern and participant observer at GAPA. Data was obtained through interviews, surveys, and observations both at the GAPA center and in home groups. This paper documents the study's findings and offers a critical analysis of GAPA's strengths, weaknesses, suggestions for the future.

In general, GAPA was found to be a highly successful organization with numerous successful initiatives in place. Of these, however, several of GAPA's programs stand out as needing refinement, namely aftercare, income generation and workshops. The author has noted suggestions for improvement, such as introducing new forms of entertainment for aftercare children, expanding the income generation sales base, and streamlining the recruitment process for workshops. GAPA's preschool bursary program was evaluated and found to be successful but in need of expansion. Acquisition of sufficient funding has proved to be the foremost obstacle in refining GAPA's initiatives.

2. INTRODUCTION

Their skin is dark mahogany, rich coffee, and deep chocolate, furrowed as the earth in the rural homes of their childhood. They wrap their hair in brightly colored cloth. Their laughter is spontaneous and powerful. Their eyes sparkle, though their memories recall indescribable pain and hardship. They were denied education and started their first jobs as children. They spent years serving white women tea on platters. Their fists were the ones shaken against the evil that was (and for them, still is) apartheid. They live in shacks. At night they shiver and their stomachs ache. They are suspended in maternity, mothering their children's children. They have reached inside themselves and uprooted years of heartache, isolation, illness, desperation, and hopelessness. They have formed a community. They have learned the facts and have become local, national and international AIDS activists, a disease that was once a mysterious silent killer. They have lost children to AIDS, and some of them are HIV+. They spend their days sewing, praying, cooking, singing, loving, sharing, supporting, and healing. They are leaders. They are strong. They are wise. They are happy. They are GAPA grandmothers.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has caused many social changes and familial shifts in South Africa, one of which is the orphaning of children of HIV+ parents, leaving them “destitute and without care.”² In the midst of their fight against AIDS, the sick place the burden of care on their parents, most often their mothers. This creates elderly-headed

² Kathleen Brodrick and Monica Ferreira. “Plight of the Aged as Primary Caregivers.” Paper presented at Secure the Future Grantees Conference, “Sharing our Lessons on Home Based Care,” 25 -27 Nov. 2001. Page 1.

“skip households”— households lacking a middle generation.³ Thus, elderly women have been placed into the role of caregivers for not only their children, but often their orphaned grandchildren, all on a very limited income.⁴ In fact, often the sole source of income in such households is a government pension, designed only to supplement elderly people’s savings, not support an entire family.

The non-profit organization (NPO) Grandmothers Against Poverty and AIDS (GAPA) exists to help support and empower grandmothers in this all-too-common situation. Responses to the pandemic have created support systems for HIV+ individuals and AIDS orphans, but rarely their elderly caregivers. GAPA has a range of initiatives in place to accomplish this goal, from hosting workshops on HIV/AIDS education, gardening, and business skills, to sponsoring support groups, to paying for orphans to attend preschool. The AIDS pandemic has made it increasingly important to empower grandmothers, who in many ways have become the pillars of the South African family.

I chose to work with GAPA because I am personally fascinated by the role of elderly women in the South African HIV/AIDS pandemic, and horrified at the situations in which most of these women live. Even before I began my study, I believed GAPA to be an important organization because of the support offered to grandmothers. I also wanted to learn more about the inner-workings of a successful South African NPO. In this paper I shall present what I have learned about GAPA in my time with the organization, and offer observations and suggestions- both from me and from those

³ Sitawa Kimuna and Monde Makiwane. “Older People as Resources in South Africa: Mpumalanga Households.” *Journal of Aging & Social Policy* (2007): 100.

⁴ Enid Schatz and Catherine Ogunmefun. “The Role of Older Women in Rural South African Multi-generational Households in HIV/AIDS Era.” *World Development*. Vol. 35, No. 8 (2007): 1391.

affiliated with GAPA- on its strengths, its weaknesses, and what it needs to do to become more effective.

3. INFORMATION ON STUDY SITE

GAPA is located in Khayelitsha Township on the Cape Flats in Western Cape Province. Khayelitsha's 500,000 residents⁵ are nearly all Xhosa-speaking black Africans.⁶ The Group Areas Act of the 1950's prohibited blacks from living in cities, though in desperation, many blacks defied the legislation and moved to urban areas in search of work.⁷ In the 1980's, the apartheid government decided to move all blacks who had lived in the area for ten years into a new township, called Khayelitsha—"new home" in Xhosa.⁸ In 1990, 80% of Khayelitsha residents were unemployed, "14% lived in small core houses, 54% in serviced shacks, and 32% in unserviced ones. Hardly anyone had electricity and most inhabitants had to fetch water from taps."⁹

Today, Khayelitsha remains notoriously impoverished, with many of its residents still living in shacks with no electricity or running water. A product of this raw poverty is a high crime rate, particularly violent crime. Despite this, there is a growing tourism industry within the township; as visitors can now take "township tours" and spend a night or two in a shack.¹⁰ In addition, there are a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community based organizations (CBOs) in the community which encourage economic and social development. GAPA is one of these organizations.

⁵ There is no official census count, but 500,000 is an accepted estimate.

⁶ Sue Johnson. "Khayelitsha." 2004. <<http://www.suejaye.com/webexhibit/2.html>>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Marigold Qayiya. 27 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa. Observed by Rachel Pryzby.

⁹ "History of Khayelitsha." <<http://library.thinkquest.org/28028/History.html>>

¹⁰ Alan Murphy, coordinating author. "Cape Town, South Africa" in Southern Africa, 430. (New York: Lonely Planet Publications, 2007, 4th ed.).

4. METHODOLOGY

This is a practicum-based study, and was conducted primarily at the GAPA center in J-Section, Khayelitsha, Cape Town from April 8 – 29, 2008. Some of my fieldwork was also completed in grandmothers' homes and during organization-sponsored site visits. Because I lived with a GAPA grandmother and her family for the duration of my time in Khayelitsha, I also drew from that experience. All of my primary informants are GAPA grandmothers or people affiliated with the organization.

4.1. INTERVIEWS

Interviewing was a crucial strategy for me while completing this project. Because formal and informal interviews evoke different types of information, I tried to strike a balance between them, and was also careful to use each for different purposes. For example, when interviewing GAPA's Executive Director Vivienne Budaza, I divided my questions into "factual" and "opinion" sets so that the tone of the two interviews would be decidedly different. In general, I used formal interviews to gather specific information or to follow up from a previous informal interview.

I also found informal interviews to be an important tool in this study. Often while sitting with a grandmother, she would make a comment that led to an informal interview related to my study. In some of these conversations, I was able to introduce one or two questions from my formal interviews, such as "How do you think GAPA could be improved?" These served to bolster and steer the informal interview.

I conducted most of my formal interviews with informants who are proficient in English, but occasionally, such as when evaluating the preschool bursary program, I used an English-Xhosa translator to communicate with the informant. I worked with one

particular translator consistently, which worked well because she became accustomed to my style of questioning and American accent. During formal interviews, I took notes by hand and did not use a sound recording device so as not to create unnecessary anxiety for both me and the interviewees, particularly grandmothers who are not entirely comfortable with structured interviews to begin with. During informal interviews, though, I did not record any information. To preserve the conversational tone, I waited until later and recorded it from memory. Most of my interviews lasted about an hour, although there were several that were considerably shorter.

4.2. OBSERVATIONS

Throughout the course of my study, I also gained a fair amount of information from observations. All of GAPA's grandmothers are Xhosa-speaking residents of Khayelitsha, so on a day-to-day basis at the GAPA center, they spoke English only when conversing with me or GAPA's director Kathleen Brodrick. This left a lot of room for observations—during meetings, income generation sessions, aftercare, home group visits, workshops, and the *indaba*. I found that simply observing actions was important because the small things grandmothers do everyday make up the organization as a whole. Even when informants were simply sitting and talking, however, I was able to interpret body language and vocal tone, and use my limited Xhosa vocabulary to decipher the topic of conversation and informants' opinions about it.

4.3 SURVEYS

During my time at GAPA, I distributed two surveys. The first was conducted on April 10, the final day of the April workshop series. Just before the workshop ended, I asked one of the grandmothers to translate and read aloud three questions for the participants to answer. The questions were, "What was the best thing about the

workshop?” “What do you think could be improved about the workshop?” and “What was the most important thing you learned?” Participants wrote their answers in either English or Xhosa on a blank piece of paper and later one of the grandmothers helped me translate their responses.

The second survey was planned in greater detail and thus, I received a wider range of responses. The nine survey questions asked informants to evaluate their experience with GAPA’s preschool bursary program, and asked questions such as “Which years did you receive bursaries?” “Do/did you send your child to school with food or does your child get food at school?” and “What are the best things about the bursary program?”¹¹ Nineteen surveys were distributed at the GAPA *indaba* on April 25, and GAPA’s administrative assistant Ayanda Phenza helped me translate the responses, which were all written in Xhosa.

4.4. READINGS

In order to gain a firm grasp of the background information surrounding older women as caregivers for AIDS patients and orphans, I performed a literature review prior to the start of my practicum at GAPA. I found that there has been a considerable amount written on the subject, particularly scholarly articles in the past two years. Because I did not have sufficient time to read all the related literature, I chose to focus on studies based in South Africa, as opposed to the many others situated elsewhere on the continent. Unfortunately, most of the published studies were conducted in rural communities, but even these helped me achieve at least a basic understanding of the key issues.

In between working on various other projects at GAPA, I scoured the center for organization brochures and pamphlets that GAPA representatives have brought back

¹¹ See Appendix for complete list of survey questions.

from conferences and events. These, like the scholarly articles, helped me frame the “granpower”¹² movement, but in a social rather than academic way. Most of these materials were collected from affiliated organizations such as the Stephen Lewis Foundation or NGOs wishing to model themselves after GAPA, such as Mothers for All. These materials did not provide analyses of AIDS-affected grandmothers, rather, they told grandmothers’ stories in a reader-friendly way, appealing to the emotions with bright, glossy photos and short, descriptive paragraphs.

5. OBSTACLES

5.1. LANGUAGE

By far, the biggest and most challenging limitation to my study was the language barrier. I came to Khayelitsha knowing that GAPA was situated in a primarily Xhosa-speaking township, but I had underestimated how difficult it would be to collect information. I found that unless I made a concerted effort to interrupt the daily routine at GAPA, I could go for several hours without comprehending anything. This was a struggle for me, because I did not want to take valuable time away from GAPA staff or grandmothers, but at the same time I knew that I needed to collect information for my study, which could ultimately benefit them.

The language barrier also proved to be a problem among English-speaking informants. In a few instances, informants would insist on conducting an interview (or even just a conversation) in English, but could not understand me because of my accent and speech habits. The only people with whom I had no language difficulties were

¹² Mesi 01K.

GAPA's Director Kathleen Brodrick and the *indaba* facilitator Erica Nielsen, my only native English-speaking informants.

5.2. TIME

Lack of sufficient time proved to be another limitation on my study. I found that in three weeks I was able to learn a lot about GAPA, but I could have learned more and integrated myself better into the organization if I had more time to do so. I also initially did not account for the time I would need to acclimate to the "culture" of the organization. I had not realized how relaxed and slow-paced GAPA would be. In retrospect, it makes sense. GAPA is, after all, an organization of elderly women; yet for a young American student, simply taking life at a slower pace can be a challenge.

5.3. INTERFERENCE OF TRANSLATORS

As previously mentioned, there were numerous instances during my time at GAPA when I used a translator to communicate with my informants. While I am grateful to have had someone to translate for me, I found that at times the translator would interfere in the interview by interjecting her own opinion, or even offering me background information on the informant. In some cases this was helpful, but it disrupted the rhythm of the interview and at times even affected the informant's response to my question.

I also suspect that my translators sometimes simplified what was said or written in Xhosa instead of translating the phrase word-for-word into English. I understand that translating, especially in the case of documents, can be tedious, but one of my biggest obstacles was that I depended on my translators for comprehension.

5.4. HESITATION OF GRANDMOTHERS TO CRITICIZE GAPA

One of the main objectives for my study was to find out how GAPA can be improved, especially from the perspectives of the grandmothers themselves. Unfortunately, though, I found that GAPA grandmothers rarely if ever criticize the organization. I believe there are two reasons for this. First, grandmothers know that GAPA has given them a plethora of opportunities and experiences which they would not have otherwise had. Grandmothers may see it as ungrateful to criticize an organization that has been such a positive influence in their lives and in the community. Second, some of the grandmothers may not have the scope and context with which to offer suggestions for a large organization. If a grandmother has had no other experiences working with an NGO, it would be hard to for her to suggest improvements to GAPA.

5.5. RACE

I found my caucasian race to be an obstacle in this study—South Africa’s racial barrier is something I have yet to come to terms with. I fear that this generation of women who have lived most of their lives under apartheid cannot separate my personality from the color of my skin. Just when I felt that I was developing a rapport with a grandmother, something would happen or a comment would be made that would force me to realize that to them I am, above all, white. While the difference of our races was for the most part a personal obstacle, I have no doubt that my race had an effect on this study as well.

6. STUDY FINDINGS

6.1. ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF GAPA

In 2001, the University of Cape Town Albertina and Walter Sisulu Institute of Ageing in Africa completed a research project on grandmother-headed households on the Cape Flats. The project was funded by Bristol-Myers Squibb's "Secure the Future" Community Outreach and Education Fund, which required that as part of the study, the institute must somehow give back to community.¹³ The UCT Institute of Ageing contracted an occupational therapist named Kathleen Brodrick to formulate and execute a plan for a community-based program in Khayelitsha. She decided to run educational workshops on HIV/AIDS in collaboration with local NGOs, including Wola Nani, Ikamva Labantu, the Red Cross Society and St Luke's Hospice.¹⁴ With the help of these NGOs, Brodrick posted notices in public places inviting grandmother heads-of-household to attend the workshop series. The initial invitations made no mention of HIV/AIDS because, at that time, there was such a strong stigma attached to the disease that she estimated few if any grandmothers would participate if the event was advertised as an HIV/AIDS workshop.

Brodrick arranged for a workshop per week for twelve weeks. These workshops offered social interaction for grandmothers acting as AIDS caregivers and covered "HIV/AIDS information, AIDS stigma, home care, grants, nutrition, business skills training (3 workshops), arthritis, disaster relief, bereavement, food gardening, human rights" and an evaluation."¹⁵ After two or three workshops, the participants' distress began to be apparent to the facilitators and Brodrick identified a need for "smaller, more

¹³ Brodrick and Ferreira 3.

¹⁴ Brodrick and Ferreira 6.

¹⁵ Ibid.

intimate support groups, which could offer opportunities for social work intervention, meaningful activities, and psychosocial and peer support in a sympathetic environment.”

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The workshops and support groups were a success, and by the ninth week there were over 30 participants who attended consistently. Brodrick reflects, “The change that I saw in those 12 weeks- the grandmothers at the start and the grandmothers at the end- was just fantastic.”¹⁷ Yet the workshop participants began to wonder about the future—what would happen after the workshop series ended? How could they be presented with this information and then be left without a support system? Furthermore, how could this information be made available to only a select group of people when they felt that everyone in the community was entitled to it?

This was the birth of Grandmothers Against Poverty and AIDS. Brodrick drew up a constitution and registration documents, and in January 2002 trained the original workshop participants as leaders in charge of recruiting new grandmothers for workshops.¹⁸ By July 2003, GAPA was renting space at a local school for an 80-person workshop. At this point, Brodrick decided that something had to change. From 2003 to 2004, GAPA hosted no workshops but instead focused on servicing the needs of the community and finding the organization an appropriate venue. Since Brodrick had familial ties with Irvin & Johnson, the company donated a wooden building in Mandela Park, Khayelitsha.¹⁹ Several years later, I&J donated a larger multi-purpose building in

¹⁶ Brodrick and Ferreira 5.

¹⁷ Kathleen Brodrick. 18 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

J-Section, Khayelitsha, and in March 2008 added a building to act as the children's center. These structures are still in use by GAPA.

6.2. FUNDING SOURCES AND AFFILIATIONS

Since GAPA's beginning, securing funding has been the organization's greatest struggle. "You don't have to have money to start an organization, but the single biggest problem is getting a professional who is willing to work for nothing," stated Brodrick, implying that without her participation, GAPA never would have developed into the successful NPO that it is today.²⁰ Grandmothers in Khayelitsha had no means with which to communicate with wealthy people to donate products, much less money, for the organization, so Brodrick's role is indeed essential. Likewise, the organization would also not have been possible without the cultural capital of the grandmothers themselves, who provided knowledge on how to navigate within their own community.

Brodrick arranged for GAPA to generate income by selling used clothing, which was the organization's first income. In addition, UCT had not spent R15,000 of the Bristol-Myers Squibb grant, so it was donated to GAPA. In 2002, GAPA submitted its first funding application to the Department of Social Development, which continues to contribute to GAPA's funding today. A year later in 2003, GAPA was chosen by the central government as one of three projects dealing with poverty in the Western Cape to receive financial aid. The organization received a grant of R250,000 over three years. In 2006, the Stephen Lewis Foundation began funding GAPA, and continues to be one of GAPA's primary donors.²¹ Despite these donors, lack of funding is the biggest complaint from GAPA grandmothers and staff members. Brodrick remarked with a

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

touch of bitterness, “The government thinks we should be able to generate our own funds—I don’t know what land they’re living in.”²²

Quite obviously, what GAPA must do for the future is secure additional ongoing funding sources. Staff members, grandmothers, and friends of GAPA are all painfully aware of this. Hopefully by continuing to expand and improve itself, the organization will attract attention from large foundations similar to the Stephen Lewis Foundation who recognize the importance of GAPA’s work.

6.3. STAFF AND STRUCTURE

Because GAPA receives limited funding and because funders are often reluctant to pay a staff member’s salary, GAPA has only a small administrative staff and a number of individuals who receive monthly stipends for their services.

As previously mentioned, Kathleen Brodrick is GAPA’s founding Director. The majority of her current duties fall into the categories of fundraising and management of finances, networking, and supervision, though most of her work is done off-site since she visits the GAPA center once or twice per week. When asked how she would define success in terms of GAPA, Brodrick replied, “My success will be when I’m not involved in the project at all,” later stating, “All the information is still in my head—I want it to get out of my head and into Vivienne’s.”²³ In one of her visits to GAPA, I observed Brodrick encouraging one staff member to pursue night school courses, coaching another on how to properly record sale information in her monthly log, and urging a third to

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

submit reports more efficiently and precisely. “This project makes you old,” she sighed, though it is clear that to her, GAPA is not merely a project or a job.²⁴

Vivienne Budaza, GAPA’s Executive Director, is the on-site head administrator. She describes her job as “advisor, counselor, supporter to grannies,” acting as overseer of finances and “day to day running needs” on the side.²⁵ In February 2008 GAPA saw the resignation of its Project Manager Mandisa Mafuya, a woman who had been very much involved with all aspects of GAPA, but who left because she was unsatisfied with her salary.²⁶ Now, Budaza attempts to fill Mafuya’s role, win the trust of the grandmothers and other organization partners, train a new Project Manager, and reshape the organization according to her own style. On a typical day at GAPA Budaza can be found answering phone calls, distributing money to grandmothers, running staff meetings, or leading prayer songs. It is obvious that the grandmothers are inspired by Budaza’s youth and energy. “We don’t stress here,” she said, “We’re all adults and full of life experiences. Stress is alleviated, we share ways of coping. We see ourselves as women of strength.”²⁷

GAPA’s other on-site administrator is Ayanda Phenza, a newly hired administrative assistant. Though most of his time is spent completing various data entry projects given to him by Brodrick or Budaza, Phenza has also been taking time to learn about GAPA and adjust to its demands and rhythm; “It’s all part of the learning process,” he stated.²⁸ Phenza’s role at GAPA is an interesting one— he is a young male hired to work with technology that GAPA’s grandmothers do not understand. “I am privileged to

²⁴ Brodrick. 29 April 2008.

²⁵ Vivienne Budaza. 17 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

²⁶ Budaza. 29 April 2008.

²⁷ Budaza. 17 April 2008.

²⁸ Ayanda Phenza. 14 April 2008. Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

be part of this organization,” Phenza said, “This is a crucial stage in history and I’m proud of what I’m doing here.”²⁹

Florence Hlangadala is GAPA’s Income Generation Coordinator, in charge of teaching grandmothers how to make crafts to sell for a profit. Hlangadala was previously employed at Sibanye, a Khayelitsha craft boutique where she made and sold leather key rings, belts and jewelry, and where GAPA continues to sell products such as teddy bears and Christmas decorations.³⁰ Between her experience at Sibanye and attending a nine-month learnership at the Cape Craft and Design Institute, Hlangadala believes she is more than qualified for the hands-on aspect of her position. At GAPA she teaches grandmothers to sew, knit, crochet and do beadwork, and also assists them with designing patterns, cutting material and operating sewing machines.³¹ Hlangadala is also required to keep a log of her activities at GAPA and record production and sales. “I know my job is good. I know I’m doing good things,” Hlangadala said with a faint smile on her face.³²

GAPA also provides monthly stipends for non-administrative staff members. There are five aftercare specialists (two coordinators receive R750, one receives R500, and two receive R400), three kitchen staff members (the kitchen supervisor receives R750 and the cooks receive R500), and a grounds caretaker, who receives R500 and housing.³³

Between April 23 – 25, 2008, Brodrick, Budaza, and Aftercare Coordinator Goldie Qayiya attended a conference in Johannesburg held by the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation. Prior to the conference, they had been unsure why they were to attend, but

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Florence Hlangadala. 15 April 2008. Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Budaza. 21 April 2008.

they later discovered that GAPA had become “quite famous” with the foundation.³⁴ Bristol-Myers Squibb proposed using GAPA’s model to train grandmothers in other African countries on HIV/AIDS and parenting skills, particularly relating to care for AIDS orphans.³⁵ As an organization GAPA has been selected by Bristol-Myers Squibb as a faculty member of the Secure the Future Technical Assistance and Skills Transfer Programme. Because Brodrick and Budaza will be required to travel frequently, GAPA will soon begin the search for a third on-site administrator who can manage business in their absence. It is anticipated that the new hire will be an occupational therapist specializing in child issues, who can develop the link between grandmothers and children to “make [aftercare] as top notch as the workshops and home groups.”³⁶

After observing the daily routine at GAPA, I believe that an additional staff member would greatly benefit the organization. As of now, most of the day-to-day needs fall upon the shoulders of Budaza, who is currently overwhelmed working each day at the GAPA center, much less traveling for weeks at a time. To prepare for this major administrative change, my findings suggest that other staff members should also receive extra training on computer, accounting, and bookkeeping skills.

6.4. WORKSHOPS

Each month, GAPA sponsors a three-day workshop series for twenty to thirty newly recruited grandmothers. The workshops touch on bereavement, HIV/AIDS education, business skills, food gardening, human rights, drawing up a will, government grants, and abuse.³⁷ All topics are facilitated by trained GAPA grandmothers in their mother tongue, a way of empowering both the facilitator and the participant. A

³⁴ Brodrick. 30 April 2008.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Alicia Mdaka. 10 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

grandmother must attend the entire series to receive a GAPA certificate, which states that she has undergone skills training and HIV/AIDS education with a registered organization. For many, this is the main attraction of the workshop series, confirmed by survey responses from workshop participants. GAPA reimburses workshop participants for the price of transport to and from the center, which helps make the information available to all.

I had the opportunity to observe two workshop days during my time at GAPA. When the participants arrived in the morning, they were served tea and sandwiches. Only when they had finished the meal did the group begin by singing prayer songs, which continued throughout the workshop. The participants sat in a half-circle and the GAPA grandmother facilitator spoke lecture-style, using notes as an outline. The participants went around the circle sharing stories, crying, hugging and singing. The group sang songs between topics, but Budaza also emerged out of her office to moderate (“What a visit! *Siyabonga!*”).³⁸ The kitchen staff served lunch in the middle of the day, and I noticed that the meal was (deliberately) balanced, including meat, a vegetable, and a starch.

During the final day of the workshop I decided to try to gain some feedback from the participants, since I had been unable to understand any compliments or criticisms vocalized during the workshop. With the help of a translator, I asked the participants the answer several questions about their experience: What did you like the most about the workshop? What did you like the least, or what could be improved? What was the most important thing you learned? Of the nineteen participants present, four responded in English, fourteen responded in Xhosa, and one abstained.

³⁸ Budaza. 10 April 2008.

For question one (“What did you like the most about the workshop?”), the most common responses were learning about HIV/AIDS (9), sharing problems with others (5) and learning gardening skills (5). Also mentioned were receiving the GAPA certificate (3), learning the importance of handiwork and business skills (2), learning about abuse (1), and parenting skills (1).

Many of the responses to question two (“What did you like the least or what could be improved?”) were inconclusive or did not speak about negative aspects of GAPA. The most helpful responses suggested including diet information for HIV+ people taking antiretroviral drugs (ARVs), including Bible studies or a choir as part of the workshop, helping participants to become financially independent, helping street children who are hungry and do not attend school, and including more information about abuse.

The responses given to the final question (“What was the most important thing you learned?”) were, in many cases, the same as the responses to question one. I believe this to be due to the similarity of the two questions. Those who did give separate responses, though, wrote that the most important part of the workshop was the certificate (9) or sharing problems and building strength (4)—one woman wrote that “We must share our pain with somebody else—don’t keep it inside. We must comfort each other.”

³⁹ Two expressed the importance of teaching about health and not judging others due to their HIV status.

Given the responses to these survey questions, it seems that GAPA is covering the majority of what workshop participants would like to know. Even the suggested additions (helping participants to be financially independent and aiding street children) are currently addressed by GAPA to the extent of its capability with the income

³⁹ N. Nansipha. 10 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

generation and aftercare programs. Perhaps the two most viable suggestions for improvement were the inclusion of more nutritional information specifically for HIV+ individuals and addition of a GAPA Bible study. A hands-on food gardening demonstration would also be beneficial.

At the April 30 support and co-op group leaders meeting, the conversation turned to workshop recruitment. GAPA grandmothers currently handle all workshop participant recruitment on an individual, word-of-mouth basis. Perhaps there is a way to streamline the process to reach a more diverse pool of grandmothers, by spreading the word at pension pay-points, clinics, and general distribution of fliers in the community. I also noted that only nineteen participants attended the April workshop series, when I had previously been told that thirty grandmothers came to each.⁴⁰ With the current arrangement, it seems that if group leaders *can* not or *do* not recruit workshop participants, attendance will suffer.

6.5. HOME GROUPS: PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND CO-OP

On the final day of the monthly workshop series, participants are invited to join to one of GAPA's twelve psychosocial support groups according to the location of their home in Khayelitsha⁴¹. Each support group has a group leader, some of whom are the original grandmothers from the pre-GAPA twelve weeks of workshops. The support groups meet once per week in the group leader's home, and members are encouraged to attend weekly group meetings for one year, where they will share feelings and stories and learn basic handicraft skills such as sewing and knitting. Ideally, support groups have ten members, but often at the end of a year in their groups grandmothers decide they wish to

⁴⁰ Mdaka. 10 April 2008.

⁴¹ Budaza. 21 April 2008.

remain there rather than joining a co-op group as is customary. This leads to inflated numbers of attendance at support group meetings—a problem for group leaders who host many people in their modest homes. The organization also gives each group R200 per month to buy tea, bread, and craft materials, but occasionally group leaders have to supplement that sum with their own money to provide for a large group.⁴² Budaza stated that she personally encourages groups to have a larger number of participants to compensate for dropouts or grandmothers who cannot attend because of other commitments or illness.⁴³

Co-op groups, in addition to providing emotional support, are designed as small business producing items to sell for profit. Co-op groups have a group leader, chairperson, secretary and treasurer. These groups also receive R200 per month for refreshments and materials. Budaza stated, “It’s not enough, but it’s what we can provide.”⁴⁴ GAPA sponsors twelve co-op groups total.

In addition to money for materials, GAPA also gives groups bags of donated scrap material.⁴⁵ During my visits to both types of groups, I witnessed groups working with the scrap material (“rubbish” according to Rita Hoza, a psychosocial support group leader) to create rugs, aprons, and skirts, but many of the fabric pieces were so small that not much could be done with them.⁴⁶ All three of the groups I visited complained of insufficient materials and funds to create products that would truly yield a profit. Numerous groups requested sewing machines because it pained their arthritic hands to sew manually.

⁴² Budaza. 21 April 2008.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Hlangadala. 8 April 2008.

⁴⁶ Rita Hoza. 23 April 2008. Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

As I discussed with Brodrick, home groups need to have a structure and agenda in place to allow for maximum productivity. If not, the groups risk being counterproductive. One of the three groups I visited was watching television during a meeting because they stated that there was nothing to accomplish⁴⁷. I also believe that it could be beneficial to train more group leaders. This would allow for smaller groups which would lessen the burden on group leaders to host many grandmothers in their homes. Of course, this would require a larger amount of money allocated for home groups. As always, funding proves to be the largest obstacle for GAPA.

6.6. INCOME GENERATION PROGRAM

One of the integral parts of GAPA's organization is its income generation program, which empowers grandmothers and helps them become financially independent. Florence Hlangadala joined GAPA in 2007, and having a full-time Income Generation Coordinator has helped streamline the program and place it as a priority within the organization. GAPA grandmothers refer to their income generation efforts as *mfitshi-mfitshi*, or making something from nothing.⁴⁸ Using donated fabric and wool, thread, knitting needles, and sewing machines provided by GAPA, grandmothers create a multitude of products that they can either keep for themselves and their families or sell for money. In the three short weeks I spent at GAPA, I witnessed grandmothers producing hats, scarves, tote bags, teddy bears and stuffed animals, and jewelry, most often under Hlangadala's guidance, but in some cases independently.

In order to sell products made by the grandmothers, GAPA has a small store attached to its multipurpose building where items are displayed neatly on shelves. The

⁴⁷ Hoza. 21 April 2008.

⁴⁸ Marianne Merten. "Grans Take the Gap." *Mail and Guardian*. 8 July 2004.

store, however, remains closed except when visitors come and it is specifically requested to be open. When I asked Hlangadala who buys the products, she replied, “Visitors, people like you.”⁴⁹ As previously mentioned, GAPA grandmothers also sell several products at Sibanye, the Khayelitsha craft store. Hlangadala shows the store samples, collects orders, and then communicates the orders to the grandmothers who produce them. When sales are made, the artist profits quite well; Sibanye allows the artist to set the price and above that, the store adds another 40-50% for its own profit.⁵⁰

The income generation program is an aspect of GAPA needing improvement. GAPA must promote their products to a larger market in order to receive a greater profit. If the organization could network with more black-empowered artist collectives and craft stores like Sibanye, they could sell their products without having to provide a venue. Using the internet as a marketing tool could also greatly increase sales, and open up the potential for online retail. Wealthy consumers are attracted to the idea of buying a product whose proceeds will benefit a needy cause, particularly the artist. Capitalizing on this is not a new idea, but one that could offer opportunity for GAPA.

However, these ideas would be difficult to implement. Most of the grandmothers and even staff members lack general marketing knowledge. In addition, producing these products is often a laborious task for the elderly women, most of whom did not receive an education and do not have the artistic perception necessary to mass-produce products⁵¹. An ideal situation would be the creation of individual small businesses. Some of the

⁴⁹ Hlangadala. 8 April 2008.

⁵⁰ Hlangadala. 17 April 2008.

⁵¹ Brodrick. 5 May 2008.

grandmothers have accomplished this; Qayiya established an enterprise called “Goldie’s Teddies,” for which she sells teddy bears both at GAPA and Sibanye⁵².

6.7. AFTERCARE

In general, GAPA’s philosophy is to “meet a challenge by shifting one’s thinking to address it.”⁵³ The aftercare program is an excellent example of that. After a series of child murders and abductions in Khayelitsha, the organization decided to begin an after school program for children where they could receive supervision and guidance. In 2007 the aftercare program officially began, using grandmothers as coordinators. The aftercare program did not receive its own building until March 2008, but even now the building is proving to be too small for the 100 children it accommodates each day.

Aftercare gives children a chance to do homework, play in a safe and supervised environment, learn skills such as knitting, singing and dancing, and receive a balanced meal free of charge. The aftercare center boasts a sizeable collection of books in English and Afrikaans, which the grandmothers translate into Xhosa and read aloud to the children.⁵⁴ On April 9, 2008, GAPA sponsored its first field trip for aftercare children to the South African Museum in Cape Town, where they had the opportunity to see fossils, wildlife from all over South Africa, and a presentation at the planetarium. For nearly all of the children, it was the first time visiting a museum, and they had been so excited about it that some had “started packing for the trip a week in advance!”⁵⁵

Aftercare also allows GAPA to view developments with the community’s children. All children who participate in aftercare have a file kept at GAPA with their

⁵² Qayiya. 15 April 2008.

⁵³ Brodrick. 18 April 2008.

⁵⁴ Qayiya. 10 April 2008.

⁵⁵ Qayiya. 9 April 2008.

personal information, including name, address, date of birth, ID number, gender, mother's name, notes on behavior, why and how often the child attends (for example, if the mother works late). In this way, grandmothers who work in the aftercare center can record notes on each child and track progress, a procedure that may or may not be followed in schools. If a child is exhibiting violent behavior toward others, one of the grandmothers might visit his or her home to speak with the caregivers and determine the cause (hunger, abuse, lack of family support, no clothing, etc).⁵⁶

The aftercare program also benefits GAPA. In the words of Brodrick, "Aftercare generates interest—people aren't interested in grandmothers. If you're a funder, you're interested in the state of children."⁵⁷ These words are not spoken out of greed. GAPA realizes that community issues run full circle; it would be foolish to offer so many helpful programs and opportunities for grandmothers without taking into consideration the children for whom they care.

The general premise of the aftercare program is strong: employ grandmothers who need money to watch over local children who need supervision. But as more and more children join the program, GAPA will have to generate new ideas on how to keep the youth entertained and safe. During my time at GAPA I observed the aftercare center so that I could get a feel for what it has and what it lacks. To improve the facility, I would suggest youth-friendly educational posters focusing on health issues (washing hands, HIV/AIDS myths, etc). In terms of programming, GAPA could organize an informal soccer team for boys, which would be a good opportunity to incorporate a male

⁵⁶ Constance Sohena. 14 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

⁵⁷ Brodrick. 18 April 2008.

role model as a coach and mentor⁵⁸. In an effort to promote gender equality, aftercare would also need to sponsor an athletic activity for girls. Educational activities for children could include an international pen-pals program for older kids (using GAPA's contacts in Canada and elsewhere), and organizing a talent show that can be attended by parents and grandparents.

6.8. MONTHLY INDABA

On the last Friday of each month, GAPA holds a large themed workshop open to all grandmothers who have completed the workshop series. From January to March 2008, an average of 89 grandmothers attended each *indaba*.⁵⁹ Past themes have included a group planning session (January 2008), peer emotional support (February 2008) and UCT memory and aging research (March and April 2008).⁶⁰

Because of the short time I spent at GAPA, I was only present for one *indaba*, held on April 25. The primary facilitator was Erica Nielsen, an American lecturer in the UCT Department of Psychiatry. She and her research team are hoping to conduct a study on aging and memory loss, so she gave a short PowerPoint presentation about dementias and the aging process and then asked interested grandmothers to sign up to participate in the study. Though April's *indaba* does not represent a typical one, I was surprised at how academic it seemed for such a non-academic audience. Nielsen's future study hopes to examine Alzheimer's disease, but when she asked, not a single grandmother present was familiar with the condition. Though Nielsen told me that she had tried to simplify the presentation, it included diagrams of the brain and scores of scientific terminology, and the subsequent question and answer session consisted of grandmothers describing

⁵⁸ Phenza. 14 April 2008.

⁵⁹ Budaza. 22 April 2008.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

symptoms and asking her to diagnose them.⁶¹ For a meeting that draws such a crowd of grandmothers and occurs so infrequently, I wonder how productive this particular *indaba* theme was. Previous *indabas* have been presented in Xhosa (whereas Nielsen's was in English translated into Xhosa), and topics have included cancer, diabetes, banking, AIDS awareness through drama, the pension pay-out system⁶².

The *indaba* is an opportune time to update the masses on news and events at GAPA, and to evaluate progress in support and co-op groups. The monthly *indaba* should be used as a sounding board for grandmothers who are not able to attend the center every day.

7. STUDY FOCUS: PRESCHOOL BURSARY PROGRAM

In 2004, GAPA noticed that grandmothers were attending meetings and home groups with small children in tow. To entertain themselves, the young children played in the streets during the meeting. Grandmothers feared for the safety and development of the children, but had no extra money to pay for them to attend preschool during the day. To solve this problem, GAPA began its preschool bursary program, which currently pays for 99 children to attend a preschool of the grandmother's choice.⁶³ During my practicum at GAPA, Brodrick asked me to evaluate the preschool bursary program.

7.1. METHODOLOGY

To obtain information for this aspect of my study, I employed a combination of interviews and a survey. For the interviews, I made arrangements to attend two support groups and one co-op group between Monday, April 21 and Wednesday, April 23, since

⁶¹ Erica Nielsen. "Memory and Ageing." 25 April 2008.

⁶² Brodrick. 5 May 2008.

⁶³ Budaza. 21 April 2008.

groups meet only during the first half of the week. The group leaders knew in advance that I would be coming and were told to notify all members of their group who they knew received preschool bursaries. Unfortunately, upon arrival at one of the groups I was told that none of the members present received bursaries. Therefore, my eleven interviews were with informants in two support groups. As previously mentioned, nineteen surveys were distributed at the *indaba* April 25, which were translated into English by Ayanda Phenza. I asked the same questions in interviews and surveys.

7.2. FINDINGS⁶⁴

The first question I asked my thirty informants was “Which years did you receive preschool bursaries?” On the written surveys, informants were instructed to circle the appropriate years. All nineteen survey respondents only circled one year each, which could either mean that grandmothers only receive bursaries for one year, or that there was a miscommunication with the survey. Six survey respondents replied that they received bursaries in 2004, two in 2005, three in 2006, two in 2007, and six in 2008. For the interviewed informants, two replied that they received bursaries in 2004, one in 2005, two in 2006, seven in 2007, and six in 2008. In total, eight grandmothers received bursaries in 2004, three in 2005, five in 2006, nine in 2007, and twelve in 2008.

Question two was “How many children received bursaries? How old are they now?” All of the informants, both from interviews and surveys, replied that GAPA sponsored one child. The average age of the children was 3.23 years.

The third question (“What are the best things about the preschool bursary program?”) did not elicit a very wide range of responses. The survey responses, in

⁶⁴ Throughout the “Findings” sub-section, I shall differentiate between informants whom I interviewed and those who completed a survey by referring to them as “interview informants” and survey informants.”

particular, lacked description. Six out of nineteen replied that they liked everything about the bursary program. Six others referred to relief of a burden. The remaining seven simply stated that they appreciated the help they received from GAPA because they themselves did not have sufficient money to cover preschool fees. During the interviews, I was able to challenge the informants and rephrase my question, which helped them give more descriptive responses. Of the eleven informants, six replied that the bursaries helped support the grandmothers and relieve suffering. One woman spoke of the heavy burden of taking care of a disabled child,⁶⁵ another told me that her husband is sick and can not be left in charge of the child.⁶⁶ The remaining five interview informants spoke about the benefit of the bursaries to the child. It stuck me as interesting that only five out of thirty informants saw the bursaries as beneficial for the child more than for the grandmother. These five stated that the bursaries “take a big part in the child’s future,”⁶⁷ that the child is safe at the crèche,⁶⁸ and that the child is benefiting from playing with other children and eating “nice food” on a daily basis.⁶⁹

Question four asked the grandmothers “What are the worst things about the preschool bursary program?” All nineteen survey respondents replied that there is nothing they dislike about the bursaries, as did nine of the interview informants—a total of twenty-eight out of thirty. The two informants who did offer constructive responses to this question answered that GAPA pays preschool fees even if the child is not attending for a period of time. One grandmother explained that she and her child had taken a trip to Transkei for one month, but that GAPA had paid the fee regardless, which she saw as a

⁶⁵ Nontsapho Mthuzula. 23 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

⁶⁶ Yoliswa Mankayi. 21 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

⁶⁷ Nosaund Maswazi. 21 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

⁶⁸ Mavis Simayile. 23 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

⁶⁹ Florence Makhalwa. 23 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

waste of funds.⁷⁰ The other criticism was that GAPA does not accommodate for all children in the grandmother's care; the informant has two grandchildren and one must stay at home because she only received one bursary.⁷¹

Accommodating all of the children in the grandmother's care came up again in question five when I asked "What would you suggest to improve the preschool bursary program?" Three interview informants and one survey informant answered that the bursary program could be improved by sponsoring more children per grandmother. Some described to me how they have many children at home but only one is receiving a bursary from GAPA. Other suggestions for improvement included sponsoring older children to attend school (3, interview), accompanying the bursary with food parcels so that the children can eat before preschool (1, interview; 5, survey), and helping the grandmothers pay for school uniforms (12, survey). Three did not respond.

Question six asked whether the grandmothers prepared food for the child to take to preschool with them, or if the child ate the food provided at the preschool. This question was much more straightforward and thus the responses were easier to evaluate. Only five grandmothers did not send their child to preschool with food, and all of these were interview informants. Four other grandmothers (also interview informants) stated that their children eat their main meal at the preschool, but that they send the child with a small snack to supplement. Twenty-one informants (2, interview; 19, survey) replied that they always prepare food for the child to take to preschool with them. One grandmother even commented that she doesn't trust the preschool to ensure that children are fed

⁷⁰ Patience Nqwnani. 21 April 2008, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa.

⁷¹ Ibid.

because “...you see children coming from the crèche very hungry—they make careless mistakes.”⁷²

The next question asked if the informant belongs to a GAPA home group, and if so, whether it is a support group or a co-op group. Because I conducted the interviews during group meetings, I omitted this item from interviews. All thirty informants were a member of either a support or co-op group. Nineteen informants were part of a support group (11, interview; 8, survey), and the remaining eleven were members of co-op groups (all survey informants).

I had originally planned to ask all informants “What do the children think about the preschool bursary program?”, but after several interviews I decided that the question did not make sense to the informants and therefore the results would be inconclusive. I kept the question on the surveys, but did not ask it during interviews. An additional reason for its omission was that my translator did not understand the purpose of the question, which I believe tainted the interview informants’ responses.

The final question asked, “Do you have any other suggestions about how GAPA could improve? What would you like to see GAPA do for you?” I received a wide range of responses. Grandmothers wished to have an old age home (8, survey), distribution of food parcels (5, interview; 3, survey), assistance improving their housing (6, survey), a clinic for the elderly (3, survey), more money and materials distributed to home groups (2, interview), financial assistance to purchase clothing (1, survey), additional cooking skill training (1, interview), and money to buy Christmas gifts for loved ones (1, survey). Two interview informants stated that GAPA should be more involved with the preschools, in providing first aid training, gloves and basic medicines for crèche workers

⁷² Mankayi. 21 April 2008.

and helping the preschools staff nurses. In addition, the grandmothers suggested that each support and co-op group should have first aid supplies on hand in case of an emergency.

7.3. ANALYSIS

The preschool bursary evaluation section of my study indicates that, for the most part, grandmother beneficiaries are quite satisfied with the program. The bursary program is a simple one, covering the full price of preschool at no cost to the grandmother. For that reason, I believe it is difficult for grandmothers to critically evaluate the program. The biggest need that I identified was an expansion to include more children, because many of grandmothers with whom I spoke had several other children at home, not benefiting from the bursary. This, like any expansion, requires extra funding. Yet, given the circumstances, I believe it would be easy to justify an expansion of the bursary program, especially because it is one of GAPA's most effective and recognized initiatives.

In terms of the grandmothers' other suggestions for how to improve GAPA, not all of them are valid for actual implementation. For example, old age homes are generally seen as culturally inappropriate (as they isolate the elderly from their family) and would leave many children without caregivers⁷³. Distribution of food parcels, which eight informants suggested, helps a family for a very limited time period instead of supplying routine nutritious meals. Other suggestions, such as assistance improving housing, would be such an enormous undertaking—unfit for a small organization like GAPA.

⁷³ Brodrick. 5 May 2008.

8. CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF GAPA'S KEY COMPONENTS

8.1. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Before I came to GAPA, one of my objectives for the study was to evaluate GAPA's relationship with the community. I had been interested to see how GAPA was perceived by local people, but what I now realize is that GAPA's grandmothers are not merely part of an organization located in Khayelitsha—they themselves are the backbone of the community, because of their age, their initiative, and their involvement with a helpful and successful organization. From my experience at GAPA, I have realized that it would be impossible to run a successful organization in a place like Khayelitsha without support from the community. GAPA's aftercare center watches after local children after the community realized that youth were in danger; its vegetable garden serves as a model for the community; its income generation projects have boosted productivity and returned profits to people struggling to afford basic needs. Most importantly, GAPA's grandmothers have "broken the silence" surrounding HIV/AIDS, which has begun a tradition of health education that will hopefully have important influence on the community for years to come.⁷⁴

8.2. SUSTAINABILITY

When I arrived at GAPA, I was skeptical of the organization's sustainability. Its founder and Director is a white woman, and very few of the grandmothers are involved in administrative duties. I came to realize, however, that although Brodrick has played a great role in GAPA over the years, she is phasing herself out and "encouraging each person to find their own niche."⁷⁵ GAPA's board of directors is comprised of people

⁷⁴ Budaza. 17 April 2008.

⁷⁵ Brodrick. 18 April 2008.

nominated by the grandmothers, mostly residents of Khayelitsha. In the beginning, Brodrick was needed to make connections and establish a foundation, but now GAPA is much more of an organization run by grandmothers for grandmothers. The framework is in place, but the challenge seems to be convincing the grandmothers. “The grannies don’t see their services as serving to sustainability,” Budaza stated, “They see the office as the source.”⁷⁶ The biggest obstacle to sustainability, she explained, was teaching the grandmothers to take initiatives⁷⁷ and not rely on the administrative staff to “push responsibility” on them, as Brodrick stated in a separate interview.⁷⁸

8.3. CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND ENCOURAGING GROWTH

GAPA is more than an organization in place to help grandmothers; it pushes grandmothers to help themselves. Instead of putting money in the hands of impoverished women, GAPA provides them with a skill that they can use to generate their own income. Rather than simply counseling grandmothers to help them grieve the death of their spouses, children, and grandchildren, GAPA teaches grandmothers how illness, particularly HIV/AIDS, is transmitted, how it can be prevented, and how to care for HIV+ individuals. Instead of having organization leaders travel around the world and boast about GAPA’s success, grandmothers are given the opportunity to speak for themselves. A prime example of this is GAPA’s participation in the first Grandmothers to Grandmothers Gathering, hosted in Toronto in 2006 by the Stephen Lewis Foundation. GAPA sent three grandmothers to participate, where they took part in the three day discussion of problems facing the African grandmothers and how their Canadian sisters

⁷⁶ Budaza. 17 April 2008.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Brodrick. 18 April 2008.

could help. The element of “by grandmothers for grandmothers” is key at GAPA, a “granny-driven” organization according to Budaza.⁷⁹

9. CONCLUSION

South African grandmothers are a “generation of women who spent their youth freeing Africa, their middle age reviving it, and their older lives sustaining it.”⁸⁰ Now, in their golden years, a group of grandmothers in Khayelitsha Township finds themselves supported by GAPA. Perhaps the best thing about GAPA is that it will no longer be unique. The GAPA model has become well-known and, thanks to Bristol-Myers Squibb, will be replicated across the continent to help some of the millions of grandmothers who find themselves acting as AIDS caregivers in resource-poor settings. As we confront the AIDS pandemic- a crisis with no end in sight- it becomes increasingly important to give power, knowledge, skills, confidence, and a voice to the grandmothers who support generations of Africans.

In my time at GAPA, I learned many things, both personal and practical. From the grandmothers, I learned that smiling faces and a friendly demeanor are often a thin veil concealing a lifetime of hardship, but it is the ability to smile that allows us to carry on. Though I came to South Africa as a privileged American student and I am receiving one of the best educations available to me, I will never be able to understand the types of experiences these women have endured, and how they endured them.

From GAPA’s staff members, I have learned that it is the ideas, willpower, and dedication of a few forward-thinking individuals who can set a project like GAPA into motion. I have also learned that working with an organization like GAPA is a delicate

⁷⁹ Budaza. 17 April 2008.

⁸⁰ Mesi OIK.

undertaking. The organization, and therefore the fate of many grandmothers and young children, relies on the acquisition of sufficient funding. GAPA has attracted a substantial amount of international interest- particularly from the United States and Canada- and must be equipped to operate as a “first-world” organization, though it is located in a developing country. GAPA is composed of grandmothers who, in many cases, lack basic education and are resistant to change. This becomes a challenge when attempting to both expand and stay true to the “by grandmothers, for grandmothers” philosophy.

Yet even with an unlimited amount of money and the best of intentions, a project like GAPA could not succeed if it failed to respect the culture of the host community. As GAPA has done for years, an organization must identify a need and develop a plan to meet it. It is through listening to one another despite cultural differences that problems are solved and worries are alleviated. I shall conclude with a statement presented by the African participants at the 2006 Grandmothers to Grandmothers Gathering, which demonstrates a declaration of need in an intercultural setting:

In the short-term, we do not need a great deal, but we do need *enough*: enough to put food in their mouths, roofs over their heads and clothes on their backs; enough to place them in school and keep them there long enough to secure their futures. For ourselves, we need training, because the skills we learned while raising our children did not prepare us for parenting grandchildren who are bereaved, impoverished, confused and extremely vulnerable. We need the assurance that when help is sent, it goes beyond the cities and reaches the villages where we live. In the long-term, we need security; we need regular incomes and economic independence in order to erase forever our constant worry about how and whether our families will survive.⁸¹

⁸¹ Landsberg-Lewis. 2007.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

I believe it would be beneficial to expand my study, focusing on one specific aspect of GAPA. Though this may not be suitable for an Independent Study Project, it could form a basis for a more in depth study. I also propose studies on how GAPA's model has helped develop and shape other organizations.

11. SUMMARY REVIEW OF ESSENTIAL TEXTS

1. Baumgarten, Robin. "The Granny Revolution." *Sister Namibia*. Windhoek: Vol. 18, No. 5/6 (Dec 2006): 10.

Briefly describes the history of the partnership between Canadian and African grandmother groups.

2. Brodrick, Kathleen. "Grandmothers Against Poverty and AIDS: A Model of Support." Paper presented at 8th Global Conference of the International Federation on Ageing, Copenhagen, Denmark, 30 May – 2 June 2006.

Summarizes GAPA's mission, programs, and successes.

3. Brodrick, Kathleen and Mandisa Mafuya. "Effectiveness of the Non-Profit Organisation 'Grandmothers Against Poverty and AIDS'—A Study." *Southern African Journal of HIV Medicine*. Iss. 19. June 2005.
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13. APPENDIX

13.1. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview with Ayanda Phenza, 14 April 2008

1. How long have you worked for GAPA?
2. How did you become involved with GAPA? Were you attracted to the organization because of the cause or the job function?
3. What kinds of things do you do on a day-to-day basis?
4. What do you enjoy most about GAPA and your job?
5. Is there anything you wish you could change about GAPA?
6. How does it feel to be a man working for an organization by and for women?
7. How involved do you feel in GAPA's cause?

Interview with Florence Hlangadala, 15 April 2008

1. How and when did you get involved with GAPA? What is it like working here as a younger woman?
2. What is your role here, and what do you do on a day-to-day basis?
3. How and when did the income generation program at GAPA begin?
4. Where does GAPA get the equipment and materials (sewing machines, cloth, needles, thread, etc.)?
5. How many grandmothers make products to sell in the store?
6. How often do you make sales, who buys things, and where do the profits go?
7. Is the GAPA store in Mandela Park still open? Which products are sold?
8. Which products are produced the most often by the grandmothers? Which sell the best?
9. Are you involved in helping grandmothers start their own businesses? What kinds of businesses do they start?

10. What are the challenges associated with the income generation program? How do you address them?

First Interview with Vivienne Budaza, 17 April 2008

1. How and when did you become involved with GAPA?
2. What would you say are your primary responsibilities at GAPA?
3. How would you describe your relationship to the grandmothers?
4. How does it feel to work at GAPA as a younger woman?
5. Since its beginning, GAPA has been expanding. What are your visions for the future? How could GAPA be improved?
6. What is the best part of working for GAPA? What is the hardest part?
7. What do you think is the grandmothers' favorite part of being involved with GAPA?
8. What do you think is the children's favorite part?
9. What are the current big issues at GAPA, and how are they being addressed?
10. How sustainable do you think GAPA is? How could it be made more sustainable?

Second Interview with Vivienne Budaza, 21 April 2008

1. Could you explain the structure of home groups (psychosocial support and co-op) and group leaders?
2. How is transportation to and from workshops and *indabas* arranged and paid for?
3. How are grandmothers recruited? How many grandmothers has GAPA reached over the years (approximately)?
4. How many people receive stipends from GAPA, how much and how often? Are they satisfied with that arrangement? Have stipend amounts remained constant over the years?
5. How many children receive bursaries? What are the qualifications necessary to receive a bursary? How many preschools participate?
6. Does GAPA still have a choir? How often do they rehearse and perform?
7. Could you discuss GAPA's initiatives in the Eastern Cape and Gugulethu?

8. How successful do you think GAPA is at communicating with all the grandmothers it has reached?

Interview with Kathleen Brodrick, 18 April 2008

1. Could you explain how GAPA got started, and what was your involvement in the process? How and why did you choose Khayelitsha?
2. In the beginning how was GAPA funded, and since then what funding sources have been added?
3. Has GAPA's mission changed since 2001? How?
4. Since the beginning, GAPA has been expanding. What are your visions for the future?
5. What is your current role at GAPA?
6. Where are GAPA's areas for improvement?
7. How sustainable do you think GAPA is? How does sustainability relate to the fact that GAPA is an organization for African women directed by a white woman?

Pre-School Bursary Program Interview Questions

1. During which years did you receive pre-school bursaries?
2. How many children received bursaries? How old are they now?
3. What are the best things about the bursary program?
4. What are the worst things about the bursary program?
5. What do you suggest to improve the program?
6. Do you send your child to school with food or does the child get food at school?
7. What does the child think about the bursary program?
8. Do you have any other suggestions about how GAPA could improve? What would you like to see GAPA do for you?

13.2. WORKSHOP SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. What was the best thing about the workshop?
2. What do you think could be improved about the workshop?
3. What was the most important thing you learned?

13.3. PRESCHOOL BURSARY PROGRAM SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Ingaba ngowuphi unyaka owafumana ngawo ibhasari? Bhala insangqa kwabanyaka balendelayo.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
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2. Bangaphi abantwana abathe bafumana ibhasari? _____
Ingaba bane minyaka emningaphi ngoku? _____
3. Zintoni izinto ozithandayo ngezi bhasari zabantwana?
4. Zintoni ongazithandiyo ngezi bhasari zabantwana?
5. Zintoni izinto ongazithanda ukuba zongezwe kwezibhasari?
6. Ingaba abantwana bakho bafuma ukutya kwaGAPA okanye ubaphathisa umphako?
7. Ingaba ukwi GAPA support group okanye ukwi co-op group?
8. Ingaba abantwana bacinga ntoni okanye bava njani ngezi bhasari?
9. Ingaba zikhona izinto ongathanda ukubona zisenziwa nguGAPA ezingekhoyo nqoku okanye yintoni ongathanda ukuba uGAPA akwenzele yona?