

## **P.E.A.C.E ACTIVITY REPORT 2003-2005**

**T**he period August 2003 to July 2005 was a time of renewal for the PEACE Centre. Thanks to the generous funding provided by the Dutch and Finnish Embassies in Namibia, it was possible to hire additional, well-qualified staff members and to develop new programmes. Furthermore, the building in which the Centre is housed could be renovated so that the Centre now offers a very pleasant working environment and lends itself to use for workshops as well. Computers and other equipment obtained have made the Centre's work procedures more effective.

A time of renewal often follows a time of difficulties and frustrations, and indeed this is what the period 2000-2003 was for the PEACE Centre. The renewal would not have been possible without the determination, vision and sheer hard work of a few people who kept the Centre running during this time. But for the hours of unremunerated work, creativity and sheer courage of long-serving PEACE Trustees Danie Botha, Hetty Rose-Junius and Hans Pieters, the Centre would not exist today. Vicky Festus joined the Centre during this time and ably faced all the challenges and tasks that came her way. In doing so she took a big risk, and the opportunity to develop personally at many levels. Salomon Uirab, the Centre's longest-serving staff member, in his quiet, unassuming way, provided support of various kinds to the people who accessed the Centre's services.

Working with the PEACE Board of Trustees has been challenging, demanding and never boring. In times of crisis and difficulty, the Trustees' sound judgement and commitment to the Centre could be counted on. Their wealth of experience, interest, commitment, integrity and standing in this country form the solid foundation of PEACE.

Since its establishment PEACE has provided psychosocial services to victims of organised violence, specifically war. During the reporting period this focus was broadened so that the Centre now provides psychosocial services to *any* victim of trauma, irrespective of the source of traumatic stress. Thus, victims of domestic violence, severe accidents and rape gained access to

## **OVERVIEW OF PEACE IN 2003-2005**

Counselling or psychotherapy through the Centre's professional network of psychologists and a social worker. These professionals give up to three hours a week at very low or no cost to PEACE clients. The PEACE Centre is grateful to these professionals for their time, and for their willingness to be flexible and innovative in working with PEACE clients. Operations Coordinator Vicky Festus has ensured that all clients get help quickly and that there is follow-up. Her warmth and capacity for empathy, and her ability to make time for everyone, are indispensable qualities for the network to succeed.

As PEACE has an office in Windhoek only, and few (four) professional staff members, we have had to find ways to make the Centre's services more widely accessible. Accordingly, training courses were developed in, among other areas, basic counselling, crisis and trauma intervention skills, to strengthen the capacities of members of partner organisations. Training was provided to health workers in the Ministry of Health and Social Services, social workers in the Ministry of Prisons and Correctional Services, HIV/AIDS support group facilitators and teachers, and others. Wherever possible, supervision and followup form an integral part of the training.

Psychosocial Projects Coordinator Monica Bandeira has been strongly involved in this part of PEACE's work. Her sharp intelligence, enthusiasm, sense of humour and capacity to connect with people went into the creation of good training manuals and excellent training workshops.

A big challenge PEACE faces is that of developing *appropriate* psychosocial interventions for trauma victims, in other words interventions that speak to and make sense to the potential beneficiaries. The vast majority of these (potential) beneficiaries would not think to seek support, counselling or psychotherapy from a professional person. Many cannot imagine that there could be solutions to their problems and resign themselves to living with these. Many potential beneficiaries would traditionally have sought help from family members, but nowadays changes in family structures often close this option off. In view of the above, PEACE decided to reach out to communities in which people are particularly vulnerable to traumatic experiences.

We started with the community of Freedom Land. The Centre's involvement in this community is aimed at creating opportunities for the community members to interact in constructive ways that build trust between them and between the community members

and the Centre. Our interventions in Freedom Land are also aimed at creating conditions that counter the potential for violence and create a buffer against traumatic stress.

PEACE assists Freedom Land Kindergarten.

The PEACE Centre was fortunate to get on board Ellen Kuenzer who has vast experience in developing and implementing interventions with marginalized communities. She is a volunteer with EED (Service Overseas), an organization based in Germany. Ellen joined PEACE in September 2004. Her capacity for sober assessment, her realism and her unwavering commitment to the well-being of children are indispensable in developing community interventions that are meaningful and sustainable. In addition, the PEACE training programmes have been strengthened due to Ellen's training and experience in adult education.

The PEACE Centre received an added bonus in the form of Thomas Kuenzer, Ellen's husband, who volunteered to work with young children in Freedom Land. Twice a week Thomas provides soccer training in Freedom Land to seventeen children aged between seven and thirteen years. He is ably assisted by Chris Goraseb and Sheila Butkus. Apart from soccer practice, the children have had opportunities to be spectators at important soccer matches and to participate in other activities such as the SOS Villages Open Day on 23 July 2005.

Sheila Butkus, assistant to the Psychosocial Projects Coordinator, has been a key figure in the work in Freedom Land. Sheila first became involved with PEACE as a participant in a certificate training course, "Training in Trauma Treatment and Prevention through Community-based Interventions". She then worked as a volunteer for PEACE, and thereafter (from November 2004) on a part-time basis until being appointed on a full-time basis in July 2005. Sheila's commitment to the work in Freedom Land, her determination and her ability to relate well with people at all levels of society are indispensable to the progress of work in that community.

With the appointment of Jacky !Owoses as Office Administrator in August 2004, the professional staff members were freed of unnecessary administrative burdens. Jacky's friendly demeanour, patience and enjoyment of administrative tasks are real assets to PEACE.

In September 2004 the Centre obtained generous funding from Bread for the World to conduct a research project aimed at gaining an understanding of the current circumstances of ex-fighters in Namibia. This funding enabled PEACE to recruit a highly experienced researcher, Dr Debie Lebeau, who together with Monica Bandeira and a research team completed the empirical work by March 2005.

**PEACE teaches teachers about trauma.**

In December 2004 PEACE became part of the International Capacity Building Programme of the Centre for Victims of Torture (CVT) based in Minneapolis, USA. By being included in this programme PEACE not only receives generous funding from CVT, but also is integrated into a network of similar service providers world-wide. Internationally PEACE has also developed and renewed relations with the Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (now integrated with Healthnet), the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) based in Copenhagen, the South African Institute for Traumatic Stress (SAITS) and the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, both based in Johannesburg.

During the past two years the Centre has made numerous attempts to establish links and cooperation with other NGOs and government ministries. This work has been arduous and sometimes frustrating. At times these attempts bore no fruit; at times they resulted in PEACE undertaking just a single activity with another organisation. But it has been possible to build more intensive, long-term working relationships with a few organisations. A clear sign that we are succeeding in our efforts to make our organization and services known is that more and more organisations have requested our services (e.g. counselling and training) since the latter part of the period under review. This increase in requests for services is a source of pride for the Centre, and it has motivated all staff members to re-commit ourselves to the work.

PEACE contributes media articles to raise awareness about violence and trauma, and joins national and international efforts to prevent and deal with violence and trauma.

# THE PEACE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The **PEACE Board of Trustees** consists of seven members.

**Mr Danie Botha** has served as Chairperson of the Board since 1998. His experience as a lecturer at the Academy for Tertiary Education and as a member of the first Namibian Parliament, and his consultancy work for the programme “Free to Grow” have given him a wide connection to people in different fields both nationally and internationally.

**Dr Hetty Rose-Junius** was one of the Board’s first members. She holds a doctorate in Social Work and has more than 25 years of experience in this profession. She taught Social Work at the University of Namibia (UNAM) for many years, has extensive research experience and has been involved in numerous community projects over the years.

**Mr Hans Pieters** was one of the first Board members along with Mr Botha and Dr Rose-Junius. He has a professional background in journalism and has worked in public relations for many years. He has strong links to some of the PEACE target communities.

**Mr Helao Shityuwete** was actively involved in Namibia’s struggle for independence and was imprisoned on Robben Island (South Africa) as a result. His political experience and knowledge bring to PEACE valuable insights and other crucial contributions.

**Dr Kazuvire Vei** holds a doctorate in Developmental Psychology. He works as a lecturer in the UNAM Psychology Department.

**Ms Marianne Erastus** holds a BA degree in Labour Relations as well as a post-graduate diploma in Labour Law. She has been actively involved in Namibia’s labour movement and community projects for many years, both prior to and after independence. Since 2003 she has served as National Coordinator of the Namibia Women’s Network.

**Mr Onni Iithete** holds a Bachelor of Laws degree. Apart from his legal knowledge, he brings to PEACE his experience in rural areas of Namibia as Legal Officer in the Ministry of Justice and as Senior Legal Officer in the Office of the Attorney-General. He has also worked as a legal advisor in the private sector.

## **PEACE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF**

**Gudrun Kober** is the Director of the PEACE Centre. She has practised as a clinical psychologist for the past 16 years. She obtained a doctorate in Social Psychology while working as a lecturer in the UNAM Psychology Department. She has 12 years of teaching experience in both under- and postgraduate Psychology courses and headed the UNAM Psychology Department for five years. Since 1997 she has been closely involved in the professional training of psychologists in Namibia. She has advanced professional training in family therapy, narrative therapy and Gestalt therapy. To further prepare for providing training as part of the PEACE team, she completed a certificate course in “The education and training of trainers” with the South African Institute for Traumatic Stress (SAITS) in 2003/04.

**Monica Bandeira** is the Centre’s Psychosocial Projects Coordinator. She is trained as a Community-Counselling Psychologist, and received the Certificate of Achievement in the course on “Trauma Treatment and Prevention Through Community-Based Interventions” offered by SAITS in 2003. Before joining PEACE she worked for the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV) in Johannesburg, where she counselled victims of trauma (individuals and groups) and trained other service providers in trauma counselling. She also has experience with and a strong commitment to community-based interventions. Has worked in public relations for many years. He has strong links to some of the PEACE target communities.

**Sheila Butkus** is PEACE’s Assistant Psychosocial Projects Coordinator. She completed her BA degree with Psychology and Sociology as major subjects in 2003. Thereafter she undertook training in “Trauma Treatment and Prevention through Community-based Interventions” with SAITS. She is particularly interested in working with orphans and vulnerable children.

**Vicky Festus**, PEACE Operations Coordinator, is a registered nurse with 20 years of experience in her profession. She went into exile as a young nurse during the liberation struggle, underwent military training and worked as an instructor at the Tobias Hanyeko Military Training Centre in Angola. Thereafter she worked at the Peter Nanyemba Military Hospital in Lubango and the Ongulumbashe Rehabilitation Centre, both in Angola. Upon her return to Namibia she was employed at Katutura State Hospital in the Head Injury Unit and the Acute Care Unit.

**Ellen Künzer** was seconded to PEACE by the EED (German Church Development Service). She holds a Masters degree in “Educational Sciences” / Adult Education from Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe University, Frankfurt, obtained in 1976. She undertook special training in “Children and Sexual Violence” and has 20 years of experience in working with sexually abused and traumatized children. Having served as Adult Educator, Supervisor and Managing Director in different youth welfare institutions, leadership and management form part of her experience. She undertook two years of advanced training in systemic counselling.

**Jacky !Owoses** is the PEACE Office Administrator. Before joining PEACE she was employed at the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) for 10 years. At NIED she gained experience in office administration and also served as a library assistant.

**Salomon Uirab**, PEACE Janitor, left Namibia in 1974 while in Grade 10 to fight in the liberation war. He underwent military training and in 1976 was sent into combat. In 1977 he continued with his secondary education at Nyango Education Centre in Angola. There he initiated a kindergarten with the assistance of Dr Libertina Amathila (then SWAPO Secretary of Health and Social Welfare, today Namibia’s Deputy Prime Minister). In mid 1977 he did six months of training in Auto-Mechanics and subsequently was appointed as SWAPO Transport Administrative Secretary and Workshop Director in Lusaka (1978-1982). He returned to Namibia in 1999 and has since served as the PEACE Janitor.

## **CAPACITY-BUILDING AND DECENTRALISATION OF PSYCHOSOCIAL INTERVENTIONS**

To ensure that victims of trauma have increased access to psychosocial services, and that there is an increased understanding in the country of the impact of trauma, the PEACE Centre worked towards decentralized support and involvement in trauma intervention through other service providers. More specifically PEACE provided training to the members of partner organisations to enable them to work more effectively with trauma victims. By conducting training with members of related organisations the Centre enhances the chances of trauma victims being counselled in their home language, and increases the number of persons able to provide assistance to trauma victims at a basic level.

The following PEACE training courses were developed during the period under review:

### **1) Trauma Awareness, Referral and Care-of-Carer**

This course is aimed at developing participants' ability to:

- a) define trauma;
- b) understand the symptoms of trauma;
- c) understand the normal course of trauma;
- d) understand the phases of trauma and what assistance is appropriate in each phase;
- e) know at which point to refer a client; and
- f) care for themselves so as to maintain psychological well-being.

#### **Length of course:**

1 to 1½ days.

## 2) Introductory Training in Trauma and Trauma Intervention

This course is aimed at developing participants' ability to:

- a) define trauma;
- b) understand the symptoms of trauma;
- c) understand the normal course of trauma;
- d) understand the different phases of trauma and what assistance
- e) is appropriate in each phase;
- f) draw on and develop existing skills and experiences;
- g) Understand concepts in basic counselling (e.g. empathy and active
- h) listening);
- i) provide basic counselling to trauma victims;
- j) use problem solving as a tool for counselling;
- k) be aware of the importance and impact of environmental and individual
- l) factors in the counselling situation;
- m) reflect on their own behaviour, limitations and motives in counselling;
- n) know at which point to refer a client; and
- o) care for themselves so as to maintain psychological well-being.

### **Length of course:**

5 days (or 3½ days if participants have done Trauma Awareness,

Referral and Care-of-Carer training with PEACE)

2 x ½-day follow-up sessions

### 3) Advanced Trauma Counselling and Care-of-Carer

This course is aimed at individuals with some training and experience in counselling who wish to develop specific counselling skills relating to trauma.

The course is aimed at developing participants' ability to:

- a) define trauma;
- b) understand the symptoms of trauma;
- c) understand, in depth, the normal course of trauma;
- d) understand the phases of trauma and how to assist in each phase;
- e) implement a specific model in trauma counselling;
- f) be aware of the typical issues that a trauma victim will present with
- g) in counselling;
- h) deal effectively with the most basic of those typical issues;
- i) be aware of the importance and impact of environmental and individual
- j) factors in the counselling situation;
- k) know at which point to refer a client; and
- l) care for themselves so as to maintain psychological well-being.

**Length of course:**

5 days (3½ days if participants have completed Trauma Awareness,

Referral and Care-of-Carer training with PEACE)

2 x ½-day follow-up sessions

#### 4) Setting up and running support groups

This course is aimed at individuals with some training and experience in counselling who wish to lead support groups. It is aimed at developing the participants' ability to:

- a) take into consideration a range of factors and practical matters relevant in starting a support group;
- b) recognise and understand the healing factors present in support groups;
- c) make use of or implement some of the healing factors in leading a support group;
- d) facilitate support groups, i.e. direct group processes by e.g. ensuring participation of all group members;
- e) develop activities/exercises in support groups based on different methods used in group work;
- f) use the knowledge, experiences and skills of group members to solve problems; and
- g) care for themselves so as to maintain psychological well-being.

#### **Length of course:**

3½ days

2 x 2-day follow-up sessions

Members of nine organisations (government ministries and NGOs) participated in training courses offered by PEACE during the reporting period. Among these were LifeLine, Catholic AIDS Action, New Start, the Ministry of Prisons and Correctional Services and the Khomas and Walvis Bay Women and Child Protection Units. Training was provided to a total of 153 persons from different locations including Rundu, Katima Mulilo, Oshakati, Walvis Bay and Eenhana.

## **FEEDBACK FROM WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS**

It was a job well done!!! Everything done was simplified. They used simple language, and we managed to handle issues in a professional way. Normally I am somebody who does sometimes fear, but this workshop really gave me confidence. Thank you so much!"

### **– Workshop on “Setting up and running a support group”, 11-14 October 2004**

“This workshop was a dream come true but it was rather short. Most of the things were covered but I just felt that I needed to practically learn more. If this can be done with all the people that work with other people, then the working environment would be safe. If it is possible, it should be done involuntarily.”

### **– Trauma Awareness, Compassion Fatigue and Burn-out: Work-related Risks for Human Services Workers Workshop, Oshakati, 6-7 September 2004**

“I enjoyed role plays. It was difficult at the beginning but at the end it was enjoyable and gave one confidence that with enough practice I can do it.”

### **– Advanced Training Programme in Trauma Intervention for LifeLine counsellors, 18-22 July 2005**

“Being my first time attending a workshop this was fantastic. I wish this could be repeated for us to overcome the trauma that we have been through. The bad thing is repatriation (from Osire to Angola). Perhaps some day you will offer us a workshop like this in our own country where a lot of trauma happened.”

### **– Trauma Awareness and Management for Portuguese Language teachers, 27-28 October 2004**

In addition to the training courses, Monica Bandeira has been teaching Community Psychology to nine Bachelor of Psychology students at UNAM since March 2005. Capacity-building at this level is vitally important because once fully qualified the students will work in different parts of Namibia. Furthermore they will be able to pass on their skills to others, including lay counsellors.

Apart from presenting courses, PEACE organised workshops conducted by international experts from the Netherlands and South Africa:

**Introductory and advanced workshops in Psychiatry and Traumatic Stress, offered by Dr Jaap Meijer.** Many people's symptoms (e.g. alcohol and drug abuse) and physical complaints are misunderstood and not seen as being connected to traumatic experiences. As a result many people receive treatment that is inappropriate and perhaps even harmful. These workshops are invaluable for making workers in the mental health field aware of the consequences of trauma and enabling them to ensure that patients receive appropriate assistance.

**Introductory and advanced workshops in the use of art therapy with traumatised and bereaved clients, offered by Ms Fiety Meijer- Degen.** These workshops provided caregivers with tools that empower them in their work with clients who are culturally different and with children. This is particularly important in a context like Namibia where psychosocial interventions that rely heavily on verbal communication are often rendered ineffective due to the great language diversity in the country.

For the workshops presented by Dr Meijer and Ms Meijer-Degen there were 36 participants in total.

**Training in Trauma Treatment and Prevention through Communitybased Interventions,** presented by Craig Higson-Smith, a member of the Board of the South African Institute for Traumatic Stress (SAITS). Nine people completed this demanding training course in which, among other things, participants were required to conceptualise their own community intervention project.

## **PROVISION OF PSYCHOSOCIAL THERAPY TO TRAUMA VICTIMS**

The PEACE Centre provided 122 individual sessions of counselling and/ or psychotherapy to trauma victims free of charge. Staff members of the Centre conducted some of these sessions, but members of the PEACE professional network conducted the lion's share. The network consists of seven psychologists and a social worker, who conduct up to three sessions per week at no cost or a very low cost to the Centre. Clients were referred to PEACE by a number of organisations including LifeLine, the Khomas Women and Child Protection Unit, New Start, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Welfare, and Catholic Health Services. As its service has become better known to the public, the Centre has received an increasing number of self-referred persons.

The referral procedures developed in collaboration with members of the professional network have proved to work effectively.

The Centre strives to provide psychosocial services mainly to those trauma victims who do not have means to pay for such services. The Centre also helps clients who cannot afford transport to get to their appointments.

Besides providing individual and family counselling and psychotherapy, PEACE works with groups. Intensive group counselling was conducted at Okonguarri Therapeutic Centre near Outjo on 22-25 April 2004 with a group of 17 direct and indirect victims of organised violence. The group activities included creative work with different art materials such as oil pastels, charcoal and material collected from the environment (e.g. stones and seeds), as well as music. The creative work was done either individually, in small groups or as a whole group. While the creative work was being done, three psychologists conducted individual and small group psychotherapeutic sessions with the participants.

On the whole the participants' assessment of their time at Okonguarri was very positive.

“I enjoyed the therapy, I feel relieved. This is what I needed, now that I went through this therapy I realise that I physically abuse my family because of my terrible experience ...”  
– **Intensive group counselling session at Okonguarri on 22-25 April 2004**

All the participants who reported to have benefited from the group psychotherapeutic experience have subsequently accessed further psychotherapeutic services. This is significant considering that persons who have been victimised by other persons, especially for an extended period of time, often find it difficult to seek professional assistance due to the fact that their trust in their fellow human beings has been severely undermined and they fear the intimacy that is part of psychotherapy.

On the weekend of 15-17 July 2005 a workshop on “Coping with loss and bereavement” was conducted with 38 learners and 6 adults. All had lost a teacher or a loved one and for some the loss was severely traumatic.

On 29-31 July 2005, two PEACE staff members conducted a needs assessment workshop with 20 children whose parents had undergone very traumatic experiences during the struggle for Namibia’s independence. On the basis of the assessment findings further psychosocial interventions will be conducted with these young people.

## COMMUNITY INTERVENTIONS

Violence is an important cause of trauma in the Namibian context, thus it is important to prevent the occurrence of violence. For this reason PEACE initiated two activities aimed at primary prevention in an impoverished neighbourhood, namely Freedom Land.

An important buffer against violence is the involvement of children in activities that expose them to role models who deal with children in nonviolent ways. Also, offering children positive forms of recreation lessens the chances that they will be exposed to dangerous situations. In view of these considerations PEACE, through two volunteers, initiated soccer training for children in Freedom Land. Since February 2005, 17 children (boys and girls) have met for an hour and a half on Tuesdays and Thursdays for soccer practice. In addition the volunteers have accompanied the children to activities such as important national soccer league matches. These experiences are especially important for children who hardly ever have an opportunity to leave their own neighbourhood.

Apart from the soccer team, the Centre in cooperation with several community members started a kindergarten in Freedom Land. The aim of this activity is to give the children a safe environment that is also conducive to their development and education. After protracted negotiations the Windhoek City Council agreed to lease a small building in Freedom Land for use as a kindergarten. Volunteer teachers, all members of the Freedom Land community, attended a three-day basic training workshop conducted by a retired kindergarten teacher. Thirty children attend the kindergarten regularly. They receive a late morning meal prepared by a member of the community who lives close to the kindergarten.

PEACE faces several challenges in Freedom Land. One is that the women in the community currently looking after the children do so on a voluntary basis, which is untenable as they have no source of income. The future of the kindergarten depends on our ability to obtain funding, not only to pay the women for their work, but also to give the children a meal at school. Another challenge is that the kindergarten building is dilapidated and lacks a fence.

## **INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS ON THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA AND THE BENEFITS OF INTERVENTION**

Various activities contributed to the PEACE goal of raising public awareness.

In the media, since November 2004 the Centre has contributed to *The Big Issue* magazine a monthly column entitled “Talk it out”; it has presented trauma-related topics on the Katutura Community Radio programme called “Carousel”; and staff have written articles for newspapers on issues relating to the Centre’s work.

A flyer was developed for distribution in places such as clinics where people who are likely to benefit from PEACE services are bound to congregate.

To produce this flyer, PEACE first undertook a small study to assess people’s perceptions regarding counselling.

Two staff members underwent training in the development of websites and then created one for PEACE (see address under contact details, page 2).

PEACE closely assisted the UNAM History Department in organising a conference entitled “1904-2004: Decontaminating the Namibian past”, which took place on 17-20 August 2004.

The conference was held in commemoration of the German-Herero and German-Nama wars of 1904. It served as an important forum for discussing, among other matters, the long-term consequences of these and other wars that have shaped Namibian society, and what ‘reconciliation’ means in such a context. PEACE assisted with budget planning, the conference programme development and logistics. Also, PEACE Director Dr Gudrun Kober opened the art exhibition that formed part of the conference, and served as a panel discussant and as one of three conference rapporteurs. The conference afforded the Centre opportunities to establish links with other organisations (e.g. Mennonites in South Africa) and to strengthen existing links (e.g. with South Africa’s Centre for the Study of

Violence and Reconciliation). It also served to make the PEACE Centre known to local and international scholars.

A new PEACE information pamphlet was designed to reflect the current emphases in the Centre's work.

## **RESEARCH**

PEACE is conducting a research project entitled “An investigation into the lives of ex-fighters, fifteen years after independence”. The main factors that led to the decision to conduct this study were:

- 1) meetings that PEACE staff held with two groups of ex-fighters, namely Footprints of Robben Island and veterans in Oshakati, in which much was learned about their situation;
- 2) the realisation that much of the existing information on ex-fighters was outdated – most research was conducted around 1992; and
- 3) counseling had been recommended in a few of the earlier studies on ex-fighters.

Funding for this PEACE research project was secured from Bread for the World. Questionnaires were completed with 590 ex-combatants in Katima Mulilo, Rundu, Windhoek and Oshakati. Twenty-eight in-depth interviews were conducted with key informants and eight focus group discussions were held with their families and/or friends.

The final draft of the research report has been completed and the report will be launched in the last quarter of 2005. Hard copies will be available at the PEACE Centre and a digital version will be posted on the PEACE website.

## NETWORKING

PEACE is a member of several *related* national, regional and international networks. These networks are valuable for advocacy and sharing information. The local networks were strengthened by means of training activities and meetings to (re)introduce the Centre's work. Locally PEACE has established sound relations with NGOs such as Lifeline/Childline, Catholic Health Services, the National Society for Human Rights and the Legal Assistance Centre. The Centre also has good working relations with the Khomas Women and Child Protection Unit, the Mental Health Unit of the Ministry of Health and Social Services, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security's Vocational Counselling Services and the UNAM Psychology Department. As PEACE staff members have extensive knowledge and experience in their fields, they are often asked to assist other organisations. Some specific networking activities in the reporting period were as follows:

The Namibian Police invited Gudrun Kober to become a member of the Women and Child Protection Unit National Coordinating Committee.

The NGO Safer Africa worked out a national action plan for Namibia in accordance with its mission to "serve the long-term security and development needs of Africa ...". Dr Kober was one of the civil society representatives at the consultative meetings convened to thrash out the details of the plan.

Internationally, PEACE has developed a strong relationship with the South African Institute for Traumatic Stress (SAITS).

PEACE and the EED have strong links. EED volunteer Ellen Kuenzer has been with PEACE since November 2005.

Links have been built with the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) in Johannesburg. As the CSVR and PEACE do very similar work, the exchange of information and ideas with the CSVR is of great value to PEACE.

Other international links are with the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) in Denmark, and Healthnet/Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO) in the Netherlands. These links give PEACE good access to training opportunities and literature on trauma.

## **BUILDING PEACE STAFF CAPACITY**

**T**he type of work done at PEACE, especially training and psychotherapy, requires the professional staff members to enhance their knowledge and skills regularly.

**Vicky Festus**, a registered nurse, participated in several training activities:

Four-day workshop offered by IRCT in Nairobi.

Financial Accounting and Reporting course offered by !Nara Training

“Community interventions in the prevention and treatment of traumatic stress” offered by SAITS.

**Gudrun Kober** participated in the following courses:

“Governance Training for Board and Management” offered by !Nara.

“Training and Education of Trauma Practitioners” offered by SAITS.

Both **Ms Festus and Dr Kober** participated in a two-week training course offered by the Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation (TPO) in Nepal. The focus was on “Narrative Theatre”, a psychosocial intervention method particularly suited to working with communities and on “Conflict Management”. The trip to Nepal, sponsored largely by TPO, gave the staff invaluable opportunities for networking.

**Jacky !Owoses** improved her knowledge and skills as office administrator through these courses:

“Critical skills for the executive secretary” offered by Green Leaf .

“Effortless Filing” offered by Corporate Training Solutions.

“Web Development” offered by the Institute of Information Technology.

**Monica Bandeira** also did the “Web Development” training, and completed the bulk of a certificate course in Advanced Trauma Counselling with SAITS.

**Salomon Uirab** participated in the “Personal Growth” course offered by Lifeline/Childline.

Existing job descriptions were reviewed and new ones, as well as key performance areas, were developed for all positions in the organisation. Existing policies were reviewed, and a Financial Policy and Procedures Policy and Human Resources Policy were newly developed.

## **PEACE IN THE FUTURE**

**T**he Centre intends to offer psychosocial services beyond Windhoek, and is currently conducting a needs assessment in the north to ascertain where it should provide these services. Two psychologists and a psychiatrist will provide these services on behalf of PEACE. They will visit a town in the north on a monthly basis for five months starting in January 2006.

PEACE intends to undertake several activities that will make the Centre more accessible in the eyes of potential users. This will include using PEACE facilities to benefit children in the neighbourhood.

The research report titled “An investigation into the lives of ex-fighters, fifteen years after independence” will be launched in the last quarter of 2005, and the findings will be widely disseminated by various means. PEACE hopes to develop and find funding for at least one project proposal based on the findings.

With respect to capacity building in other organisations, PEACE will make every effort to be involved in a holistic way, e.g. by providing follow-up training and ongoing support to trainees. This will ensure that trainees can learn from their experiences while implementing their newly acquired knowledge and skills.

As part of our efforts at primary prevention of violence, we will expand and improve on our activities in Freedom Land. The success of the activities in this community depends on the continued involvement of volunteers, the willingness and ability of community members to become involved in projects, and the availability of at least two PEACE staff members to put some time and energy into the activities on the Centre’s behalf.