

Ulwazi News



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Review of April and May 2005

Ulwazi Manager, Yanga Depha

The need for the establishment of an Information Management Unit in the Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation was identified during the restructuring process in 2003. This became a reality with the launch of the *Ulwazi Information Centre* on 8 April 2005. The key note speaker at the launch, Glen Arendse, of the University of the Western Cape, highlighted the importance of information in the age of globalization and the challenges of information management in the context of a developing country. A special thanks to all staff members who

attended the launch despite their busy schedules, especially the Head of Department and senior managers.

The Ulwazi Information Centre

The first two months since becoming operational, has been highly successful for Ulwazi. The main service that was introduced, was the request for information service. More than 70 requests for information, mostly from external stakeholders, were received within this period. Most of the requests were for Census data, maps and as well as information regarding a wide range of social issues. The Directorate that made the most use of the Information Centre, is the



and Evaluation Directorate. Several requests for information were received through the Information Centre website, hosted by Cape Gateway. Feedback that was received about services, were on the whole, positive and indicated a high level of user satisfaction. The Information Centre will however continue to refine and improve its services in order to provide the best possible service to its users.

Focus on Social Capital

By Melissa Johannes

In an attempt to raise awareness of topical issues, the Information Centre will highlight a different theme every two months. The first theme focused on was social capital. A discussion group on social capital, held on 26 April 2005, was attended by representatives of

Directorates in head office. Mike Abrams from the organisation 'Change Moves' facilitated the discussion. Officials at the session understood social capital as a concept that represents happiness, interconnectedness, collective action, support, purpose, trust,



Social Capital: Help Building networks in communities

WHAT'S NEW IN ULWAZI?

SABINET ONLINE

This is an online service that enables users to access full-text databases like Government Gazettes, Research Projects done by Universities and technikons and Policies and Bills tabled in Parliament.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

- ☛ **HIV/AIDS and Democratic Governance in South Africa**
Published by IDASA
ISBN: 1-919798-80-3
Author: Kondwani C et al.
- ☛ **Defining orphaned & Vulnerable Children**
Published by HSRC
Author: D. Skinner et al.
- ☛ **Nelson Mandela/ HSRC study of HIV/Aids**
Published by HSRC
Author: Shishana O et al.
- ☛ **Poverty-Eradication and Sustainable Development**
Published by HSRC

COMING SOON!!

The Information Centre will introduce an online book club for those challenged for time. You'll be able to sign up online or via e-mail and receive a 5-minute sample of a book. In no time you would have finished a few chapters... Keep watching this space.



Plug into our new Online Book Club

...cont/ Focus on Social Capital



Here Yanga & Mike are exploring the social capital concept of sharing...

unity and bonding. The group highlighted the need for greater tolerance in order to bridge the distance that exists between citizens of a divided society such as South Africa.

It was felt that a social capital approach would have positive outcomes such as regeneration and cohesion. This would in turn result in increasing opportunities, an

awareness of information and a more equal distribution of resources which would contribute to community empowerment.

The discussion session made a significant contribution to greater social cohesion in the Department as it provided an opportunity for interaction between officials who do not usually work together.

Genesis of the Ulwazi Working Group

by Alma Crotz



The Ulwazi Working Group:

Back from L to R :

A.Crotz, N.Nqentsu, T. Ajouhaar-Hamdulay

Front L to R:

S.McKenzie, Y.Depha, D.Calitz

Absent:

P.Mimosa, X. Mayekiso

The Information Centre recognizes the importance of collaboration with all Directorates in head office. This gave rise to the establishment of the Ulwazi Working Group. It is a forum that provides for ongoing consultation between the Information Centre and head office staff. The group consists of

representatives from each Directorate in head office. Group members assist with the identification of information needs, collection development and the marketing of Ulwazi's services and activities. Members also play a vital role in the planning of the two-monthly themes of the Information Centre. Manager of Ulwazi, Yanga

Depha, sees the Working Group as the wheels that drive this vehicle of knowledge. "They are the drivers that help move us faster to reach more destinations at the right time". The level of participation and enthusiasm at meetings have exceeded all expectations. A special thanks to head office staff who have made their time and talent available to the Working Group!

Work: A Blessing or A Curse

The work paradox by Sharon Mckenzie

"To work – to work! It is such infinite delight to know that we still have the best things to do." –

Katherine Mansfield (1888 – 1923)

The largest segment of our waking hours is devoted to work. Work may determine where we live and what kind of life-style we have.

Work is the single pursuit that most dominates our lives. It affects people's attitude toward work,

motivation is dampened and desire for excellence is quenched.

These results breed a dislike for work and in turn making a person hate their job.

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

A wise man once said that there is nothing better than that a man should see the good because of his hard work. Let's start by examining our attitudes. We cannot

always change our circumstances but we can adjust our attitude.

Focus on today's problems and not tomorrow's. Thus we will avoid blowing our troubles out of proportion and reduce our stress levels. Some find solace in religious values to give them contentment at work. So ... after some reflection how would you view work ... as a blessing or as a curse?

QUIP / FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

Parenting is the single-most challenging role at leadership most people will ever have.