

Funding Proposal for Organic Classroom Program at Mdumbi Education Centre



Head of education: Marteli van Niekerk

Donors' Relations: Dominique Colonna-Cesari

The Eastern Cape Province is predominantly rural, with 72% of the 1.4 million households engaged in subsistence farming (statssa.gov.za 2002). Most farming families run small-scale crops less than two hectares.

Most farming operations in SA cultivate Maize for grain, in numbers; most of them are in the EC. Of 367 000 farms in EC, 89,6 % cultivated maize for grains. Although, most farms are located in the Eastern Cape Province, the highest quantity of maize is produced in the Free State. Eastern Cape produces only 9,0% of the total quantity. This means that their productivity is the lowest by far. The reasons are clear to us all, no resources to increase yield.

The local communities rely heavily on their environment for subsistence farming and for meeting their most basic needs. Faced with challenges such as poverty, unemployment, AIDS/HIV, poor farming yield, there is an ever increasing pressure put on their environment (including water supply). In this unsustainable situation, all are losing out at the end: Degradation of the environment, impoverishment of the local communities and therefore room for alternatives that may be not of the best interest for local communities in the long term.

Accessing information on farming techniques that enable families to increase their production of a variety of nutritious food and yet protect their farmland is now becoming a vital necessity in our rural community. Our education program is proposing the implementation of an Organic Classroom Program to enable the younger generations to learn and discover new farming techniques and provide nutritional food to the learners of the Mdumbi Education Centre.

The Organic Classroom Project that is a part of the Education in Mankosi Program aligns with TransCape's mission, and we trust that our project is in line with your funding criteria.

We look forward to further communication in this regard.

Yours in rural education,

Marteli van Niekerk,
Education Program director

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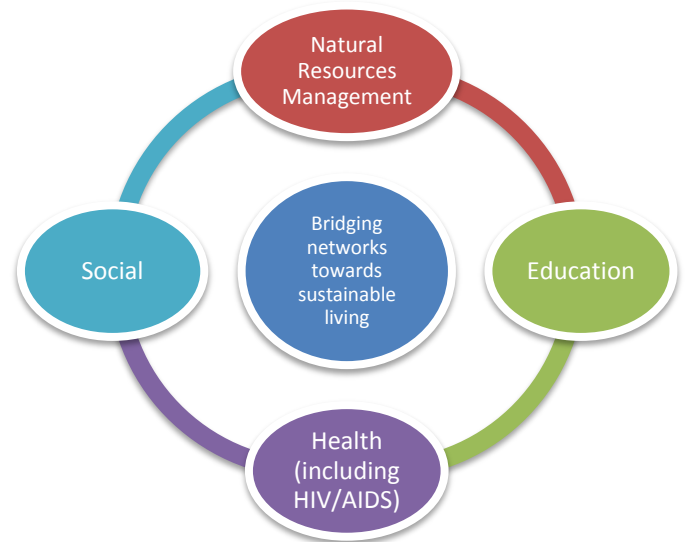
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About TransCape

TransCape NPO was registered as a Non Profit Organisation on 4 August 2004. It developed through a partnership with Mdumbi Backpackers' workforce and friends and the medical staff at local Canzibe hospital. It was founded in order to support the local hospital to improve its service delivery and to assist people to become active in their communities and works in the heart of rural South Africa, with and for the Xhosa people.

In the Mankosi Community, the role TransCape plays is to facilitate and help local residents to take ownership of their own resources to live sustainable livelihoods in harmony with their social and natural environment.

Since 2004, TransCape's activities have come to be divided into areas of Health and Social activities, as well as Business and Education. Social and environmental sustainability suffuse all aspects of the organisation's work. Based in the rural communities of the Eastern Cape, we are faced with a poignant context of poverty and poor health populated by the thriving energy of a people who want to live full and healthy lives.



Vision – people.comm-unity.earth

We are a connected community comprising of holistic, healthy and empowered individuals in an optimally developed and fairly managed sustainable environment.

Mission – Rural action for sustainable community development

To be an optimally informed, monitored, open and accessible hub with relevant examples, tools and networks for making positive choices about how to live.

Our approach

TransCape helps implement projects that respond directly to local needs in the rural areas, ensuring that community stakeholders participate in their creation and development.

“Promoting a self-sustainable development”

A few of TransCape's activities

A few of TransCape's Current Projects:

- **Natural Resources Management:** Village Based Accommodation Rehabilitation project. The beneficiaries are the community owners of the VBAs alongside the Wild Coast Hiking Trail between Port St Johns and Coffee Bay
- Community Restaurant. The beneficiaries are the business owners
- **Health:** Transcape runs many projects : AIDS/HIV support groups, Home Base Caring with various support groups; AIDS/Awareness project run by the Wild Coast Theater, OVC support group, Elderly support group, Nokhupila Malnutrition, Transcape ARV Clinic and down referral to feeder clinics. Infrastructure to feeder clinics and Canzibe Hospital (Complete upgrade of TB Ward, Creation of ARV Clinic, upgrading of nurses accommodation, etc)
- **Education:** Transcape runs four main strands within the Education Program (Early Childhood development, with 4 pre-schools), After-school enrichment, Adult Numeracy and Literacy (ABETS) with more specific courses (business course for rural business, computer literacy training)
- **Product and Service Sharing:** Transcape runs a very successful microfinance program over 4 wards.



2. Furniture for VBAs



1. ABET training for Adult Literacy and Numeracy



4. TB Ward renovation



5. After school education



3. A business course in Canzibe

The Team

Members and Managers:

- 10 Active Board members
- 6 Non Executive Board members
- 3 Volunteers
- 26 Employees of which 6 are board members

Our Board:			
Name	Country	Education	Position
Hyman van Zyl	(South African)	Hon Psychology	Chairperson, Treasurer
Marteli van Niekerk	(South African)		Secretary
Astrid Goehner	(German)	Phisio-therapist	Fund development, Job Creation
Johann Stadler	(South African)	Dip Nature Conservation	Social entrepreneurs, Construction and Vehicles
Thathishwa Masiso	(South African)	Grade 11	Social entrepreneurs
Kathryn Nurse	(South African)	PGCE (UCT)	Project Design and Proposals, Education
Lindelwa Portia Mkizwana	(South African)	Nurse	HIV Home Based Caring
Phindani Mafiyane	(South African)	Grade 12	HIV Support
Dominique Colonna-Cesari	(French)	Journalism and development	Funds and project design Natural Resources Management
Caroline van der Werff	(Dutch)	Medical Doctor	ART Coordinator and Health Projects Coordinator
Volunteers:			
Name	Country	Education	Position
Adski van Tonder	(South African)	Medical	General Implementation
Nancy Shore	(Canadian)	Development	HBC
Erin Stern	(Canadian)	Health, Community & Development	HIV Coordinator

Bank details

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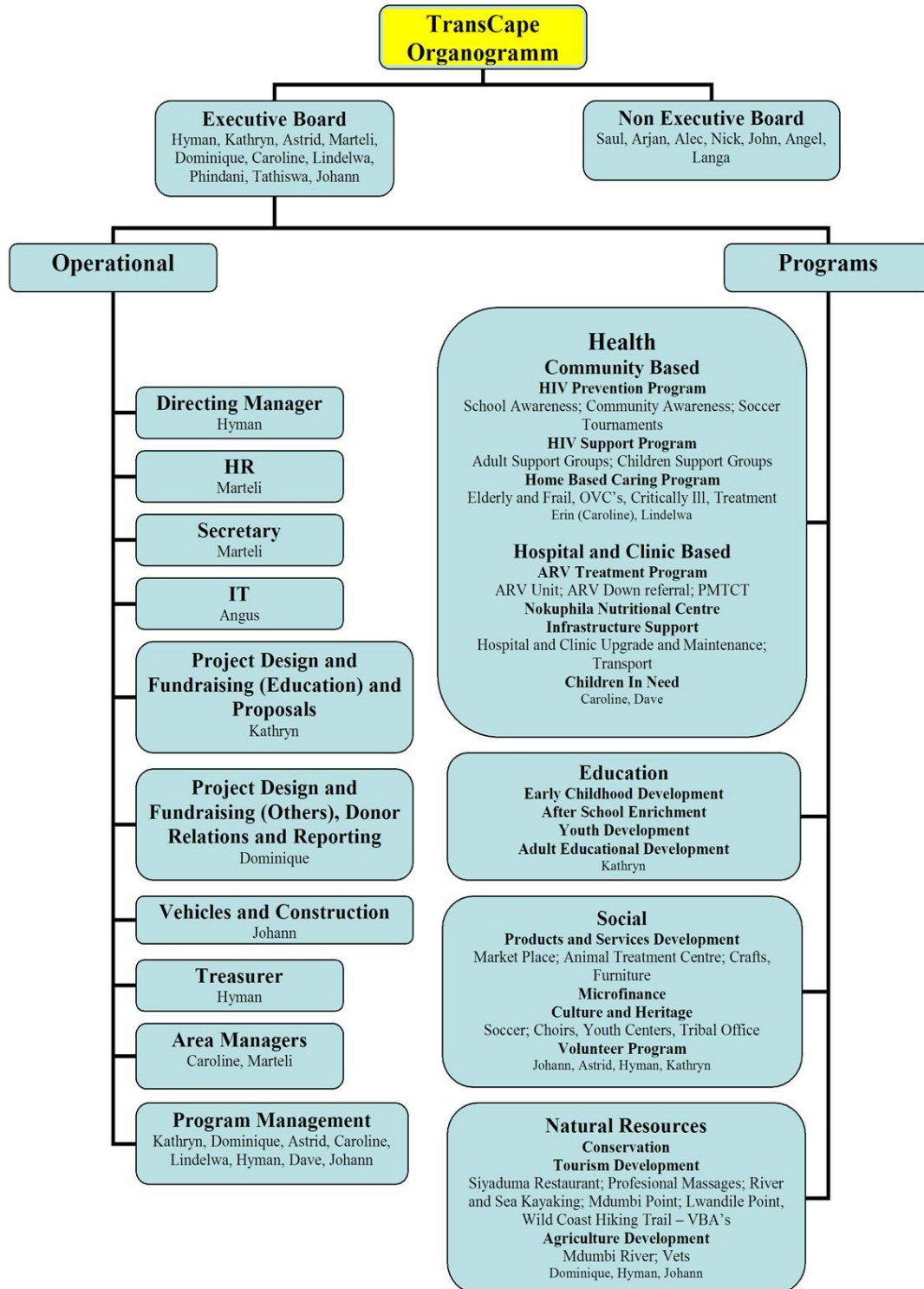
dominique@transcape.org

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0027 (0)83 458 0424



Governance Structure



About TransCape Education Program

Initially our work in the broader community was called MEC Outreach, but as the focus, need and funding grew MEC became more of a hub of networks, contacts and resources and we created Mankosi Community Education Projects with two main branches, namely; TransCape Mankosi Early Childhood Development Project (TMECDP) and the TransCape Mankosi Literacy and Education Project (TMLEP).

TransCape Mankosi Early Childhood Development Project



The idea for this project arose from discussions and meetings with parents of MEC Preschool children. As the end of a busy 2008 drew near, the MEC Governing Body and parents of children hoping to enrol in 2009, became anxious about numbers and space.

Would there be enough room at MEC for all the young children in Mankosi desperate for education? Why doesn't TransCape raise funds for another building? What about the long distances children have to travel?

It was difficult to remain true to our original objective, which was to be an example of what is possible with hard work and passion. From the outset we knew that if MEC became an accepted and successful part of the community, it was our intention to assist local initiatives in achieving the same. After much debate the parents decided to initiate and/or re-start other preschools in the area. On the advice of the amazing and wise MEC teachers; **Nolutho Hlohla, Kholiswa Masiso and Nokubonga Pitti Pitti**, we decided to leave it at that and see what would come of the discussions.

The Early Childhood Community

Mdumbi Education Centre: At MEC, we continued with the rest of our year and had a wonderful graduation ceremony, which saw us waving good bye to six little children ready for Big School. Early in 2009 we set about assessing and enrolling 13 new learners at MEC, which brought us to a total of 38 children. They continue to thrive and learn at a rapid rate.



Nonkqubela Preschool: In February, a Governing Body member and Adult Literacy learner, Lumka Magagu, came to MEC to report that three motivated women in her village had found a site. They were ready to start their preschool that week! It was such a reassuring moment for TransCape and MEC as we saw a group of people who were taking the initiative to fulfil a need. Presently we help Nonkqubela with supplying nutritional ePap to the children, while their three teachers take turns to visit MEC three times a week to observe best practice and then implement what they've learned.

Nceba Preschool: About two weeks after meeting with Nonkqubela, the head teacher from a village called Nceba came to ask for advice and support for her Preschool. She had been operating for about 5 years with no support from government and no funding from parents or other organisations.

The Nceba Preschool teachers visit MEC on Tuesdays and Thursdays and enjoy learning songs and games, borrowing books and making resources.

Manageni Preschool: The momentum continued to build. In an effort to work together and share resources and knowledge, we had just formed the Early Childhood Development Project when mothers from Manageni village came forward for help in developing the Manageni Preschool in their village. With support and advice we are sure they will do really well as safe and educational place for young children from Manageni.

Challenges

What an affirming experience it was seeing women in communities taking action to help educate and support the young children from their own villages. The talk in one village lead to action in another, and so the ripple was felt, even as far as 40kms away. But with all new development and growth come a new set of challenges. Now we find ourselves working as a cluster of preschools with inspired and motivated women, most of whom are working with little experience, no training and no financial support. Raising funds for buildings is relatively easy, but raising funds for operational costs is much more difficult.

Securing government funding is even more complicated and it is a constant struggle trying to get people from relevant departments on the phone. Stories also circulate about mis-spending and lack of government funds for preschools, but we continue to phone the numbers and knock on the doors in the hope that one day we will have the funding to pay salaries for all teachers and for food for all the children.



Celebrations

There is also so much to be thankful for and many other small successes to celebrate. We received much needed funding to buy nutritional ePap for Mdumbi Education Centre. We have noticed a difference in the growth and energy levels of the young preschoolers and have begun to share our supply with the preschools in our cluster. We are currently looking for financial support to afford to feed all the schools in our area as well as provide a small meal for the younger learners in our After School Enrichment groups.



Spending money can be fun (!) and the MEC teachers enjoyed shopping for toys and educational equipment for our new Toy Library and Toy Rotation we are starting with the preschool cluster. We 've introduced a rotation and lending system up and running since May 2009 and owing to the success of the MEC Library, we hope to acquire enough young readers' books to rotate a small library together with the toys.

What's coming

The cluster of Mankosi Community Preschools is currently applying for training with the ETDP SETA. When our proposal to the SETA is approved, we will receive sponsored training for over 20 adults interested in working with children in Early Childhood Development. This will radically improve the quality of education and care offered in Mankosi Community.



Working with Preschool and Grade R curricula it soon became clear that most workbooks and teachers guides are not designed with rural children in mind. It was also difficult to adjust what was written in the books to suit our daily schedule. Therefore, we have taken it on as a project to combine numerous teaching techniques and

lesson plans and compile them in one easy to follow curriculum. In the future we hope to be able to work with many more preschools in the Transkei and train them in using the curriculum and teaching schedule.

We are also very excited about the number of English and Xhosa Preschool songs we have composed or re-written and translated. We hope that when the time is right we will be able to raise funds to record and then share a CD with songs and rhymes in English and Xhosa. So, watch this space...

Our ECD project proposal is currently circulating among potential funders, friends and corporates. We are optimistic that we will receive government funding within the next two years but in the interim are raising funds to equip and improve four Preschools in the Mankosi Community Preschool Cluster.

TransCape Mankosi Literacy and Education Project

Context

The Mankosi Community is part of an area formerly known as the Transkei, an Apartheid 'homeland' which was deliberately kept undeveloped by the Apartheid Government in order to ensure a constant supply of cheap, exploitable labour. This has had an extreme effect on the current situation.

The Mankosi Community is one of numerous communities with high unemployment, numerous poverty indicators, soaring HIV infection rates and poor natural resource management. Population statistics for the area reveal that the majority of the people receive no income and rely heavily on government grants. More than 50% are under 20 years of age and have had no schooling, while a negligible percentage has received a higher education.

Owing to poverty and lack of opportunities, overwhelming trends of movement occur from areas such as these to the cities, where uneducated people escape rural poverty to live in urban squalor. Yet there exist abundant reserves of untapped human, social and natural capital in rural villages like Mankosi.

The TransCape Mankosi Literacy and Education Project was established as a way of accessing the potential of the youth and adults in the area. Through education, and with increased opportunity, it is our belief that more young people will have more choices available to them. Whether they choose to leave to work in the cities, or to start their own business in Mankosi, as an education project it is our duty to improve literacy levels and provide better access to high quality education.

The TMELP Community

In 2006, the local High School Principal came to MEC to ask for our help in teaching English at Ntshilini Senior Secondary School. Owing to dismally low literacy levels, it soon became apparent that cramming before exams was not going to be a helpful learning experience for anyone. Since that time, Mr Mlisa and MEC have been communicating and trying to think of ways in which to improve literacy levels and the quality of education at the High School.

We then created TMLEP as a way of raising funds for all literacy and education projects in Mankosi. The High School was to become an important part of that, as we went back to basics with helping the school raise money for furniture and a new classroom. Furniture is an essential requirement, but in terms of literacy there was so much more we could do.



Owing to the great success of the Adult Basic Education and Training programme offered at MEC, we decided to replicate the programme at the High School itself. Our ABET course is run through Media Works and so our Media Works Monitor and Trainer, **Sonwabo Notshulwana** visited Mankosi for a four day training of four new facilitators for the High School. This ABET programme will run as an extra-curricular programme for High School learners in their new prefabricated classroom. We look forward to seeing an improvement in basic literacy levels of High School learners.

ABET

The ABET programme at MEC also forms part of TMLEP and it continues to produce amazing results. **Thathiswa Masiso** and **Masbulele Siya** remain patient and dedicated supervisors and facilitators of the learning process. Congratulations to our other facilitator, **Andisiwe Masiphula**, who was recently married, but has sadly moved to another village to live with her husband. We are currently interviewing for new ABET facilitators. The original “old-school” Mdumbi Education Centre was founded on the great success of the After School Enrichment Programme. **150 children** of Mankosi still race home after school each day to visit MEC on their specific day in their specific group. It has been such a privilege to witness the learning and growing experience of these young Mankosi children. They are the inspiration for all that we have achieved.

Challenges



150 children visiting after school is still not enough. It is our hope that one day we will be able to work closely and have a trusting relationship with the local Primary School. There are numerous reasons why we have not enjoyed such a relationship until now, but we are committed to the process and have no doubt that by working with the Preschools and the High School, eventually the Primary School will open themselves up as the institution sitting in the middle of positive developments around them.

Celebrations

Our heartfelt thanks go out to Dutch Company **PRIVA** and trusted supporters Ganzen and Transned in Holland, with whose generous help we were able to much needed desks and chairs for hundreds of learners who had never sat at school before. We also had the pleasure of buying and erecting a neat prefabricated classroom to accommodate two hundred new Grade 10 learners, who had been without a classroom.

We are proud to celebrate the **100 adults** enrolled in the ABET programme at MEC. The learners write an external exam at the end of their course and to date the vast majority of learners receive **MERIT**, which is the highest result. We are due to have our first big prize-giving soon, and we are assured that this will encourage even the reluctant learners to press on and complete their course.



Wilde
buy
down

MEC.



Nine new laptop computers funded by the **Australian High Commission** arrived in the early part of the year. Adults and children alike are learning their way around the new machines with great skill and alacrity. We are always upgrading our programmes and are currently looking out for new, exciting educational software for the After School children to learn Literacy and Numeracy.

We are lucky enough to have technology available at MEC and the High School (they recently had electricity installed!) Thanks to a donation from **Kevin Kelly** at the **Centre for AIDS Development Research (CADRE)**, we received the complete series of an educational programme for Youth, called Tsha Tsha. The series deals with issues surrounding sexuality, relationships and family. The youth are certainly hooked and we use the opportunity to generate debate and discussions around pertinent issues. For the young ones we regularly tape Takalani Sesame from SABC 1 and they enjoy learning in their home language along with all their favourite furry friends.



What's Coming

Our adult learners are also beginning to communicate with MEC about what skills they would like to acquire. We are looking into offering a more in-depth business training course, as well as introduction to computers. Anyone with information on such courses is encouraged to inform us, so we can use tried and tested courses at MEC. Other skills we are looking into developing are carpentry and woodworking. We have developed a proposal for a carpentry workshop and training centre that will educate community members in furniture making and will develop into a much needed furniture making business.

Gardens

Escalating food costs, low levels of nutrition in rural areas and pressure on the environment has made MEC and Mankosi Community in general, keenly aware of taking radical steps towards self sufficiency, environmental understanding and food production.

We hope to have abundant food gardens at all the preschools in our cluster as well as at MEC. The hands-on learning that the children will experience will benefit them in holistic ways. Learning about nature and gardens and applying the skill to feed oneself and one's family is a priceless life skill.

There are many dreams we have still to realise and it is our goal to have an activity to offer every child, every day of the week at MEC and the High School. Other avenues we are exploring include soccer and netball. We hope that 2010 fever will catch on even in the remote Wild Coast and with some collaboration and sponsorship we are convinced that after school sports will be one of our most successful programmes yet!

About the Organic Classroom Project

The key objectives are to create a school garden that will enable young children to learn about growing food, nutrition and agriculture in a sustainable and organic way.

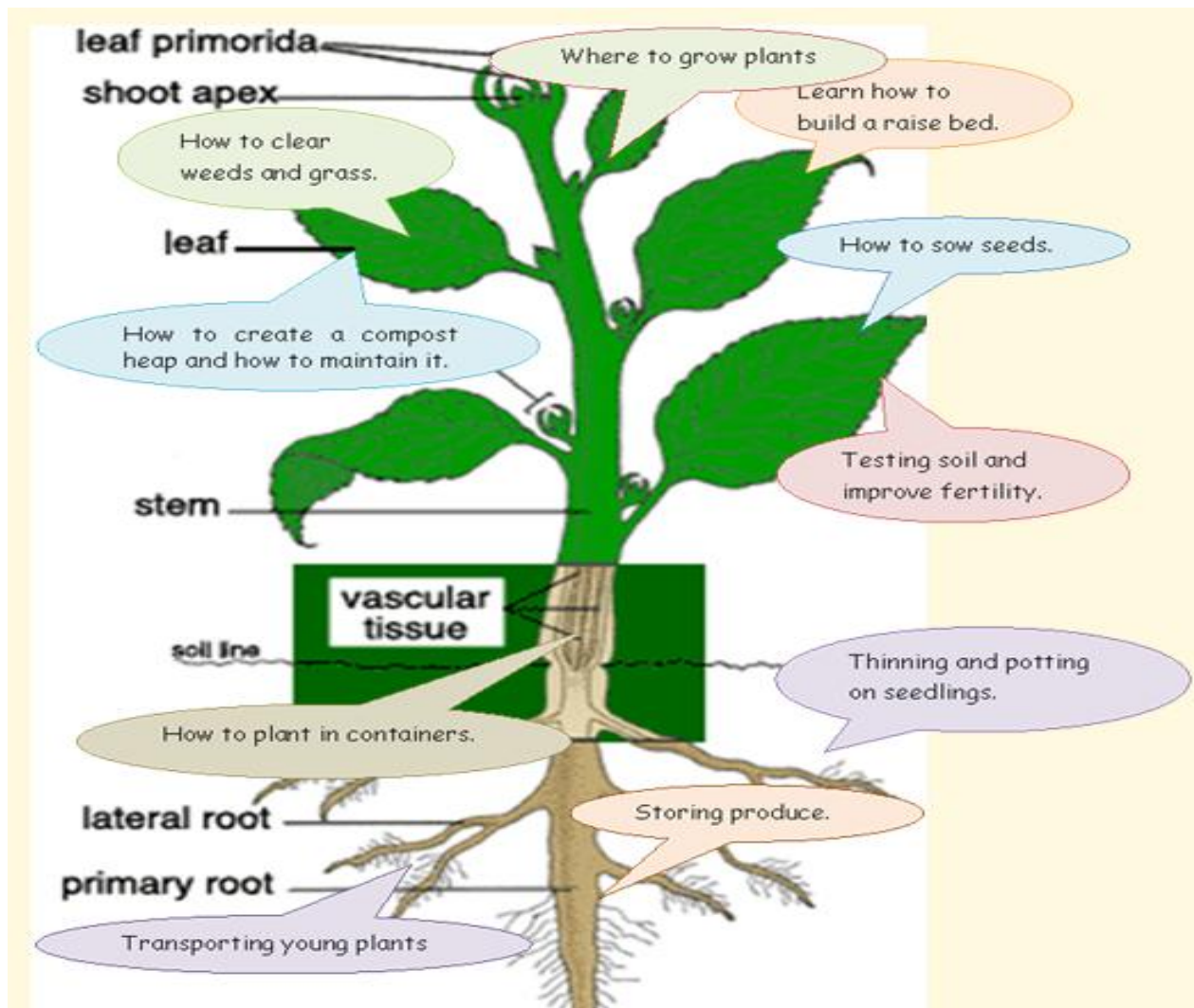
The Garden

It will be located next to the Mdumbi Education Centre Pre-school building to ensure easy access by all the learners, teachers and facilitators. It will be enclosed by a fence and shade-cloth to ensure that the cows, horses and goats that roam freely in our community may not be tempted by a 'free-lunch'.

It will have containers/beds and will follow the principles of crop rotation. There will be a section dedicated for an organic compost heap. We will grow seasonal vegetables, as well as herbs, berries and fruit.

About farming

The learners will learn some of the following skills:

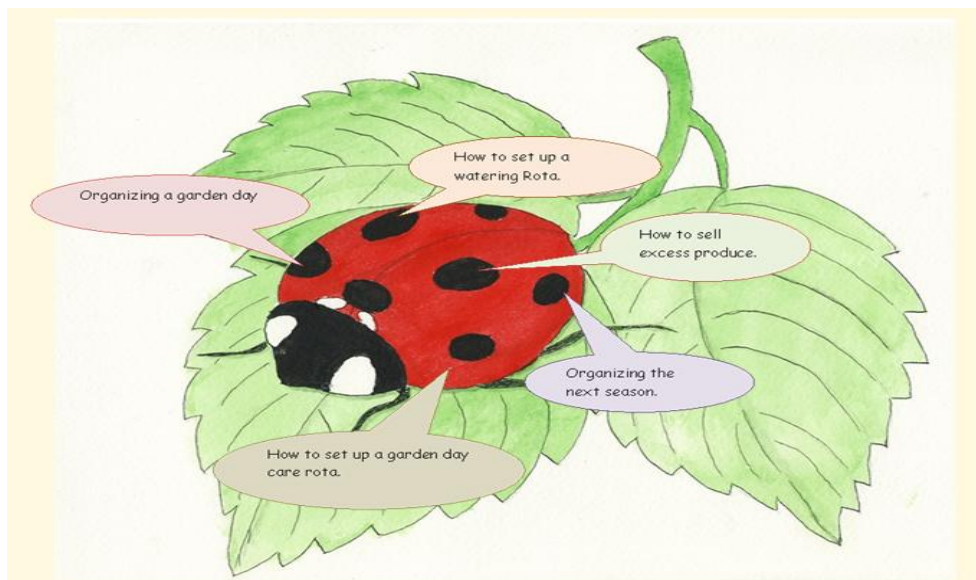


Working with the environment – basic principles to organic farming

Through games and activities, we will teach key organic concepts such as:



Planning skills



The beneficiaries

- The Pre-school learners
The harvest of the Mdumbi Education Centre garden produce will be used for the preparation of their daily meals
- The Learners
The learners of the Organic School program will learn about organic farming and organizational skills
- The educators
They will gain training in organic farming and new teaching skills

The Budget

Infrastructure	
Materials	R 8,000
Builder	R 2,000
Gardening tools	R 3,000
Staff	
Gardener	R 6,000
Educators	R 54,000
Operational (8%)	R 5,840
Total	R 78,840 € 7,435.93

Conclusion

Hereby we, as TransCape, are requesting 78840 (€ 7435.93) to undertake this programme over one year. We will ensure that the programme creates a positive impact in the lives of patients and community members and develops a successful model for rural communities. We will account thoroughly for our inputs and outputs and tediously monitor and evaluate the progress of the project.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you require any further info.

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