

Ari.-1.. _-...-vi::iv;- . V
,, aw. a _ .5..... _ - ,..... Mamie . i
- 1 (Wow 070/2;
.i....-.-,W

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

GEM BOARD MEETING

24 July 1992

1. ADMINISTRATION

1-1 STAFF

Since April 1992, David Cooper has been employed as a researcher, on a half time basis, with his time divided equally between Gem and EDA, as it was felt that EDA still needs his skills and expertise. This arrangement is due to be reviewed at the end of September. It was agreed at the time that his main commitments to Gem would be continued involvement with the UNCED process; the World Bank visit to South Africa; and the Sustainable Land Use Project.

In order to free David from the running of the organisation, Bev Geach took over the coordination of Gem, including liaison with funders, and the Community Education project.

Refiloe Letlabika was employed as an administration assistant, working half-day, from the beginning of May. Her 3-month probation period ends at end July, at which point a decision will be made as to whether she will be employed on a full-time basis. She is an excellent typist, and is currently being trained so as to take over as many administration tasks as possible.

Mpho Mogomane's 3-month probation period ended at end May; and the management committee agreed that he should be employed on a permanent basis, that his salary should be upgraded, but that he should continue with a training programme for a further 3 months, after which his position would be reviewed again.

Phillip Masia will have completed his 3-month probation period at end July, after which his salary will be reviewed.

David Fig will be joining Gem from the beginning of September as a full-time researcher, which will boost Gem's capacity tremendously. We hope he will be happy in Johannesburg, having moved here from Cape Town. He is currently doing research on the Nuclear Energy Option for South Africa, which will be published in book form by Raven Press. He is also responsible for the section of the Conservation project which deals with the Richtersveld.

1.2 AUDIT AND FINANCIAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS

There has been a considerable delay in finalising Gem's audit for 1991, because so many of the financial transactions were done through EDA, and because of delays in finalising EDA's audit. The audit is now virtually complete, and a draft financial statement has been issued by the auditors, Douglas and Velcich.

.n

-1.

Because of these delays, and several missed deadlines, a decision was taken at a management committee meeting to appoint new auditors for 1992, namely Cyril Fisher Auditors in Rosebank. Callie Trafalis, who is handling Gem's affairs, is currently going through Gem's accounts, and will assist us in setting up a proper accounting system. Refiloe has spent some time learning a computerised accounting system, Pastel Accounting, which has been installed on the computer. As soon as the new auditors are familiar with the organisation and have discussed an accounting system with us, a workshop will be arranged with a representative of Pastel, to assist with setting up the system on the computer. This is regarded as a priority for the near future. In addition, Refiloe will be attending a Bookkeeping course at Damelin, in her own time, during August/September. A financial statement for the period ending June is attached. A lawyer, Kathleen Satchwell, has been appointed to look into Gem's legal standing. In addition, aspects such as payment of tax (with respect to both Gem as an organisation and employees) is being looked into. As far as the organisation is concerned, options available appear to be the formation of either a Trust, or a Section 21 Company. The Board needs to actively involved in this discussion.

1.. 3 OFFICE SPACE

Gem's current offices are fast becoming too small. For a time, the option of moving to 41 Pim Street together with EDA was seriously considered. However, it was felt that there may not be enough room there for Gem, and in any case, it was felt that for Gem to maintain a separate identity, it was desirable to have separate offices. Another problem is the rather isolated locality. One option that has not yet been followed up, is to get office space donated in a more central location, such as the GED or Braamfontein. However, there is a lot of discussion with respect to Gem's involvement with, and potential contribution to, the EDA Resource Centre, and this obviously impacts on where Gem is located physically. The matter is under consideration at the moment.

2. FUNDING

The following sums have been deposited into Gem's account so far this year:

FUNDER AMOUNT (SA RANDS) PROJECT

Novib 92,996 General

Novib 15,000 UNCED

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust 12,616 General

JRT 13,109 General

JRT (promised, still to come) 24,675 General

Ford Foundation 55,504 Conservation

ICFID 60,119 General

Total SA (Pty) Ltd 5,000 UNCED

Danish-Embassy 5,600 UNCED

SUB - TOTAL (received 1992) 284,619

Brought Forward (includes

funds from Christian Aid) 85,626

TOTAL 370,245

Some interest has been expressed, but final word is awaited from:

Ford Foundation Conservation

SANF . Conservation

Canadian Embassy Community Ed.

IDRC Mining

Buntstift General, Nuclear?

In addition, an amount of R40,000 was promised from Interfund, which had been allocated to the Environmental Film Workshop Group. At the end of last year, a verbal commitment was made to transferring this to Gem for the Community Education project. According to Interfund, the transfer was made, but we have not seen the funds. All attempts to follow this up have drawn a blank.

The situation with regard to funding is fairly worrying. A proposal for R25,000 for the Nuclear Project was sent to FREESA, Buntstift, Swedish Legation, Danish Embassy, etc., but no response has yet been received. The Militarisation project proposal was sent to the Ford Foundation, Novib, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, IDRC, MacArther Foundation, amongst others. While strong support has been expressed for the project and the need for it, no-one so far has been willing or able to fund it.

A meeting was held recently with our principal funders, Novib, and the question was raised regarding the appropriateness Of the current method of raising funds - i.e. some core funding, and seperate project proposals. This was obviously appropriate for start_up funding in the formative stages of the organisation, but is no longer efficient or desirable, because so many of the projects overlap, and require considerable administrative back-up. They did express a lot of interest in Gem, and hinted that they may be willing to provide more substantial support for Gem as a whole. C

The time is fast approaching for a coucerted fund-raising effort for next year, and this issue is a critical one.

3. PROJECTS

3.1 WORKERS' BOOKLET,

The Workers' Booklet - an introduction to the connection between the working environment, health and safety, and the environment generally - has been on hold since the beginning of this year. It was felt that it needs more work, and wider comment, before a decision was taken as to whether it should be used as an internal training document, or upgraded. Comment is awaited from several Board members, particularly Pelelo, Humphrey, and Peter. Incidentally, Nicci Young, who worked on the booklet, has returned to South Africa, and is planning to-stay and work here for some time.

3.2 PESTICIDES

The paper on Pesticides and Farmworkers is complete and is currently being distributed. Since it is so long, copies have been printed in A5 format. A new set of A5 green Gem covers have been ordered in order to accommodate this change. Phillip and Mpho have approached unions to discuss the issue, and a workshop is being organised for August.

3.3 i SUSTAINABLE LAND USE

David is busy with the last leg of this project, the biggest and longest running of Gem's projects to date. He is currently writing up the research which will be printed as a Gem discussion document by ' the end of October, after which a seminar will be organised.

3.4 CONSERVATION

The project is running well. Eddie contracted malaria on a recent trip to Mozambique, but thankfully has recovered fully.

A workshop will be held on Sat 25 July, with all those involved in the research, to finalise the research methodology, after which consultation with affected communities will begin in earnest. The research method, which involves participation of local communities at all stages, and especially feeding back of research findings, is very new in South Africa and will provide important material for future research projects undertaken by Gem.r

3.5 UNCED

Following on from the successful workshop organised by Gem in Durban at the end of February, David attended the New York Preparatory Committee meeting held in April. Report back meetings were held in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town after PrepCom IV.

4.

'Wiw "7:; 2;; swag? ,. .WW ,

'u,.ng.:':rmr.ea-awr - V. WWW i Yhanth-wm

The meetings in Jhb and CT were fairly well attended, while the Durban meeting was badly organised and poorly attended.

David attended UNCED in Rio, from S - 15 June, as an NGO representative under the Environmental Monitoring Group (Cape Town)'s accreditation. He also attended the Global Forum, a massive get-together Of NGOS from around the world, held in Rio de Janeiro at the same time. He has brought back a huge amount of published material, which still needs to be sorted and filed.

After returning from Rio, David took a month's leave.

A report back meeting on UNCED has been organised in Johannesburg for 31 July; and meetings will be organised in Natal during August.

Several people from the Western Cape attended UNCED, and have already reported back, so it may not be necessary for David to do the same.

David will be reporting back at the Earthlife conference to be held in Pietermaritzburg in September, which promises to be a very important and well-attended conference. '

A written report on UNCED will be available next week.

3.6 WORLD BANK

A follow up workshop on the World Bank Visit is planned for 11 August, after which a Gem discussion document on the subject will be made available.

3.7 NUCLEAR

As mentioned earlier, no funds have been received for this project.

It is however a small budget, and some funds have been made available to David Fig, in the hope that some funding will still be forthcoming, possibly from Buntstift.

The project will be complete at end August, after which the report will be published by Raven Press, at their expense.

3.8 MINING

Advertisements have appeared in the Weekly Mail and Sunday Times, for 2 researchers to investigate the impact mining has had on the environment of South Africa. Zav Rustonjee, who is leading the project, will be responsible for interviews of candidates. The response to the ads has been fairly good, although there are a lot of "chancers", as always. i

s_w -._v._.r...w _w ..._wlr_ -rn amw q'qg , , , , , , , , , , 9...

With regard to funding of the project, the IDRC is very interested, but will only approve full funding when they are happy with the quality of the researchers appointed. They have, however, agreed to provide some support for advertisements, etc. in order to identify such people.

3.9 MILITARISATION

Once again, funding is a limiting factor. Jackie Cock, the project leader, has already put a lot of time into preliminary research. It was envisaged that David Fig would concentrate on this project from September, but if no funding is forthcoming, the scale of the project may need to be cut back considerably, which will be a real pity.

3.10 COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

tho Mogomane has been undergoing an extensive training exercise since he joined Gem in March. This has included readings on environmental issues, meetings with environmental organisations in the Johannesburg area, visits to communities such as Mafefe, attendance of conferences, and attendance of courses such as the IFAA course on Development Studies.

Although he still needs some more exposure to certain issues and ideas, the training now needs to become more practical, with involvement in organising and running of workshops.

Phillip Masia is very able to take the lead in organising and running of workshops, and his experience in this regard will assist Mpho greatly. At the moment, the focus is on setting up meetings with unions, with the view of organising a workshop in August, to discuss the issue of pesticides, and other areas where Gem may be able to assist unions with their work, and role in environmental education. The relationship of Gem with EDA's Resource Centre has not yet been finalised, but it is clear that the arrangement would be mutually beneficial. On the one hand, the Resource Centre needs more environmental materials, while the community education project would benefit greatly from this resource.

An ongoing internal education programme has been set up, so that we, the staff of Gem, can debate certain environmental issues amongst ourselves and thus increase our understanding of these issues. The idea is to look at a different topic every fortnight, prepare a reading list, come together to discuss the topic, and possibly prepare materials to be used in workshops. While there is a lot of interest, the programme has been difficult to get off the ground, due to the heavy work-load of all staff members. However, the commitment is there and this will undoubtedly improve as time goes on.

-6-

'lWF71".?V-'N a w":- ,. .' .A, t ,._. , .x.k_ ; ,V

4. GENERAL

Apart from the above-mentioned activities, Gem staff and management committee members participate in countless "networking" activities. While time-consuming, this is nevertheless necessary in order to increase the knowledge and understanding of staff members of environmental and development issues, as well as to improve contact and cooperation with other organisations, and raise awareness generally about these issues.

This includes interviews with and preparation of material for journalists on issues ranging from militarisation to the drought, articles for publication, talks and debates at conferences, schools and workshops, participation in campaigns such as raising of public awareness of the planned plutonium shipment around the Cape, and responding to requests for information from the general public.

REF: REP-7-92