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#### PRESS ARTICLE ON THE INSTITUTE:

The ANCWL has established a National Women's Institute in Stutterheim which is 80 km from East London in the Border region. The name of the Institute is the Malibongwe National Development Institute (MANDI).

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The idea of the Institute originated from the ANC Women's Section, while still in exile, when they wanted to build a Multi-Purpose Women's Development Centre in Lusaka for the training and development of South African women, especially those from the rural areas. This was further endorsed by the women from inside the country, at the Malibongwe Women's Conference in Amsterdam. Furthermore, a resolution was passed at the first National Conference of the ANCWL in Kimberly in April 1991, urging the ANCWL to set up a national institute to facilitate skills training, women's development programmes as well as research on gender issues.

With the unbanning of the ANC and other liberation movements in 1991, the ANC Women's Section decided to establish this centre inside the country where it would be more accessible to more South African women.

It is against this background that the ANCWL bought an old convent in Stutterheim, early this year, which they are now converting into the Women's Institute. The institute has the capacity to accommodate 80 residents at a time. The ANCWL will use the institute as a training centre for women, but also as a conference Centre to community organisations, churches, women/youth/students and teachers organisations, etc. The institute stands on land of about ten acres.

#### TRAINING PROGRAMS IN THE INSTITUTE:

Our major focus in this respect are the rural disadvantaged black women, who are the most disempowered and underdeveloped sector of our communities. In the past women's participation in development has been directed more at the level of being mobilised to provide labour for development, as well as reproducing the cheap labourforce rather than at the fundamental decision - making processes. The aim of the institute is to

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empower women with developmental, organisational and leadership skills in order to assist them to shape their own development according to their particular circumstances and needs.

This was a conscious option by the ANCWL, in order to address the backlog caused by decades of apartheid and our patriarchal society. The League had to take this option to prioritize the poor and underprivileged women in this country, especially those in the rural areas.

A number of activities have already been carried out at the institute this year. These include two pre-school teacher training courses, project planning and management course by PALD-ESA from Zambia, a workshop on women and a workshop on the Charter for Women's Rights and Elections.

We hope to facilitate the following programmes next year at the Institute:

- Adult Literacy Training - two weeks in January
  - Revision of the Project Planning and Management Course - two weeks in Jan/Feb
  - Women and Health workshop with an emphasis on PHC - three weeks in March
  - Pre-school Teacher Training course - two weeks in April
  - English Literacy Training course - 2 weeks in May
  - . Gender and Development course - 3 weeks in June
  - Pre-school Teacher Training course - 2 weeks in July - (follow-up to April)
  - Project Implementation, monitoring, budgeting and Financial Management - 4 - 6 weeks in Aug/Sep
  - Evaluation workshop - November
  - Ongoing research on Gender and Development issue - throughout the year
  - Environmental issues as they impact on women.
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#### PROJECTS:

The ANCWL has initiated a number of projects in the institute this year. The first project to be initiated is the production of traditional South Ajiican attire for income generation. A group of women has started making Xhosa attires (imibhaco ne qhiya), which are being sold all over the country and overseas.

We hope to expand this project next year to include Sotho, Venda, Ndebele, Zulu and other attires. We are also planning to mondenise these attires to make them more marketable and stylish for todayis market.

Presently, an Agriculturist (who is a woman) has been engaged to develop agricultural programmes in the institute. The institute has fertile fannland of about eight acres which has to be developed. Poultry farming and vegetable/crop production will be our major projects in this area, both for servicing the institute so as to cut expenses on buying food, but also to generate some income by selling the surplus to the local communities. A small orchard is also being developed. Hopefully, a small daily project might be started later. The institute will also address environmental issues. Another popular project to be initiated next year is the Malibongwe Childrenis Centre. This will serve as a teaching model for the Pre-school Teacheris Training course, for demonstrations and practicals. It will also serve as a Pre-school for the local community. More-over, it will provide child-care facilities for women who have come for training for van'ous programmes at the institute. .

On the whole, all these projects will serve in training women in project management, planning, marketing and running small business enterprise. The women working in these projects will also serve as resource people in our training programmes.