

CARE AFRICA NETWORK

A report of the training courses given in

Lesotho and Eswatini

during

February 2020

in

**Methods for meeting the needs of orphans and other
children in need by empowering community supported
family care**

and

**The treatment of children with Post-Traumatic Stress
Disorder (PTSD)**



CAN course objectives

The CAN aims and objectives are to benefit children in need and promote the support and development of African community care systems for future generations. Its courses are designed to empower community supported family care for children in crisis, including children orphaned by AIDS. This is achieved by disseminating innovative and successful ideas that have been employed elsewhere for the benefit of orphans and other children in need. CAN seeks to promote community development of culturally appropriate methods that meet the needs of children. It will also undertake international advocacy for the needs of children in Africa, and campaigns for the support of community development projects for their benefit. In some instances CAN has provided modest initial funding for income generating projects that will enable the future self-sufficiency of local communities.

The CAN training courses are designed to meet these aims and objectives. CAN also provides needs led training specifically requested by some organisations in Africa. Training in the treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in children has been requested to address the significant number of children reported to be suffering this condition, predominantly as a consequence of having lost their parents to AIDS. This training is provided in addition to the main training course which is relevant to all children in need.

The framework for the courses undertaken in 2020 followed the dual workshop format adopted for previous courses. The first of these workshops qualifies individuals to treat children suffering from PTSD through the use of Children's Accelerated Trauma Therapy (CATT). This is a methodology that was developed and patented by Carly Raby. As a consequence it can only be taught by a licensed trainer, who for CAN is CAN's founder, Francesca Simms. It has been successfully used in Britain and elsewhere especially Rwanda, where it has been adopted as the official method for treating PTSD following the genocide.

The second of the workshop courses teaches methods to meet the needs of children through the maintenance and development of the African system of community supported family care. The teaching draws on CAN's research of successful projects across Kenya, Uganda, Lesotho and Swaziland. The guiding philosophy is to build on the established system of family and community care with a view to sustaining its functionality in established communities. This approach recognises the success of the African community care system in meeting the needs of society. This system is now threatened with destruction by the unprecedented pressures placed upon it, particularly following the AIDS orphan crisis. The destruction of this beneficial and cost effective care system would result in millions of children and vulnerable adults becoming destitute, and the reversal of all development aims. CAN's work endeavours to reverse this destruction by disseminating effective methods of meeting children's needs by empowering community supported family care, and providing course participants with a capability to develop projects using these methods.

CAN has previously trained around 360 CAN Extension Workers in Lesotho and Eswatini. They have planned their own projects during the courses and some have already started projects to benefit children using ideas taught in the courses. By the end of the 2020 teaching programme a total of 551 CAN Extension Workers had been trained. It is hoped that this will have a significant impact on reversing the destruction of the beneficial African extended family and community care system and the disastrous results this would have in terms of thousands of destitute children and adults with all

development aims reversed. Instead by spreading successful innovations and methods and developing projects for children in need, which they have planned on the courses; they will be empowering the African care system to continue to benefit future generations. In doing so they will be helping develop the care system to meet new challenges, and ensure that well cared for children can contribute positively to the future of their country.

The courses given in February 2020 again focused on Lesotho and Eswatini; these being two of the poorest countries in the region that have suffered cruelly from the AIDs epidemic of a decade ago. After training the government social workers and some participants from NGOs, the focus in Lesotho has recently been to provide courses that are now integrated into the fourth year curricula of the relevant undergraduate courses at the National University of Lesotho at Roma. This is now seen as being one of the most effective platforms for disseminating the methods and treatments to the widest proportion of the population in need.

Unfortunately there are few employment opportunities for graduating social workers in Lesotho at present and the students are enthusiastic to use the skills they learn on the CAN courses to develop their own projects to benefit children in need in their country and then possibly apply for funding to develop their projects further. In Eswatini since 2016 members of NGOs have been provided with the CAN training courses, and from 2019 third year social work undergraduates at the University of Eswatini have also received the training together with some representatives from local NGOs. This approach has proved successful in enabling an exchange of ideas and learning between NGOs and students.

The development of the work of CAN has followed a number of phases. The first phase involved establishing the CAN project in partnership with those in a number of countries concerned. With their assistance research was undertaken over a number of years into successful innovations and methods deployed in those countries to meet the needs of children in their families and communities. In the second phase these ideas were drawn together under different categories and linked to theory to form the main CAN methods training course. A second course was designed in response to the specific request for the treatment of PTSD in children. The two courses have been delivered in Lesotho and Eswatini to government social workers, members of NGOs and university social works students now for a number of years.

Since the courses have been reported as being invaluable for the future development of children's services in these countries, CAN has been asked to provide the capacity to continue to teach them in the future. Accordingly CAN has entered the third phase in its evolution by transferring the teaching of the courses to suitably qualified persons in the countries concerned. It retains an objective of extending its geographic coverage by introducing the courses elsewhere in southern Africa.

In addition to its 2020 programme of teaching for university students, provision was also made to provide seminars for members of university staffs, and of NGOs who were interested in joining with CAN in the delivery of the CAN courses. This should ensure the continuation of the courses in the future; particularly CAN's core course of developing services for children in need. As well as being in line with CAN's transfer policy it should also free CAN so that it can deliver the courses elsewhere. Lecturers at both the National University of Lesotho and the University of Eswatini expressed an interest in attending the training seminars and joining the 2020 courses so they might provide the teaching in the future.



Care Africa Network Evolutionary Phases

The 2020 courses were planned at a time when CAN is moving from Phase 2 to Phase 3 and embracing the third stage in its evolution so as to make the CAN project sustainable. This principle had been agreed with the universities in Lesotho and Eswatini, both of which had expressed a desire to see the CAN courses continue after the present lecturers were no longer able to deliver them. The plans for 2020 also contemplated engaging with the University of Botswana to investigate if that institution would find the material useful. Unfortunately difficulties in communicating with the University of Botswana, travel difficulties, and the arrival of the Covid-19 virus meant that part of the plan could not be pursued in 2020.

One of the visiting lecturers at the University of Eswatini who is from Zambia, following discussions with colleagues in Zambia, reported that the University of Zambia was also keen for CAN to deliver its lectures there. He suggested that in return for CAN providing the courses without charge, they could provide transport for the CAN lecturers to and from the airport, together with accommodation at the university without charge. The arrival of Covid-19 virus has put this on hold, but it is hoped that this generous offer might be pursued in the future.

Course preliminaries

The 2020 programme was again delivered by Francesca Simms as the principal lecturer for both courses. David Tolley would lead the seminars for the university lecturers and representatives from NGOs concerning the handover of the courses to them, as well as assisting in the course workshops and student presentations, and the associated programme administration. Funding of the programme costs in southern Africa was once more supported by a generous grant from Festival Medical Services, and the cost of the international travel was covered by contributions from other CAN donors. Printing of the 100 page booklets provided to each student attending each of the two courses was undertaken by commercial printers in South Africa on grounds of economy. The National University of Lesotho advised that 122 students would attend, and the University of Eswatini expected there would be around 70 students. A total of 192 new CAN Extension Workers therefore would be trained to develop culturally appropriate projects for children for the future.

Feedback from previous courses had suggested that providing some sustenance during the course would help the students concentrate during the intensive four days of training. FMS generously agreed to provide funds for an allowance of £2.50 (45 rand) for each student day of teaching. The large number of students dictated that this single provision would account for almost a quarter of the overall programme budget. Although this was very much appreciated by the students, who felt it aided their concentration, it did prove somewhat difficult to administer with the student numbers involved.

The 2020 programme was almost put in jeopardy when the principal lecturer was admitted to hospital in late December with viral pneumonia. Although not fully recovered she was advised that she was well enough to proceed with the programme if she had the energy to do so, and flew to Johannesburg on 10 February 2020.

Phase 3 of CAN's evolution required establishing a training capacity at each of the universities and it was decided to spend longer than usual on each campus so that in addition to the four days required for the training workshops, at least one day could be dedicated to discussing with university staff and NGOs how the courses could be run by them at some point in future years. It was stressed that the university staff nominated for this should participate in the training sessions and then be prepared to undertake the lecturing, possibly jointly with CAN in a subsequent 2021 programme.

As in previous courses, students were invited to become CAN Extension Workers, committing themselves to benefit children where possible using the ideas and methods taught on the courses which were relevant to any particular needs and context. This is an important part of the CAN plan to promote the development of services needed for children and many of the CAN extension workers trained on previous courses are believed to be enthusiastically planning and developing projects to benefit children based on learning they received from the CAN courses. The students were generally eager to become CAN extension workers and then develop projects that could transform the lives of children in their countries. Their training might also offer possibilities for themselves to create a niche in the development of children services in their country, even if they are not initially successful in gaining paid employment.

Agreeing to become a CAN extension worker was also a prerequisite for attending the PTSD Treatment Course, in order to comply with the terms of the Licence held by Francesca Simms which permits the teaching only to members of CAN.

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO (NUL)

In 2019 Mrs Simbai Mushonga, lecturer in the social work department, expressed a particular interest in joining with CAN in delivering the courses with a view to continuing them in the future. She had hoped to see if she could arrange to receive training in teaching the PTSD treatment by Carly Raby, who is the patent holder for the CATT methodology so as to receive a licence to do so. She also offered to join CAN in delivering the courses in other countries. Unfortunately her other commitments were to prevent her from being able to join the pre-course seminar and attend the student training, but Mrs Pumela Mahao, another lecturer in the department was able to do so in her place. Two other social work lecturers also attended this seminar, but were unable to join the student training workshops as we had hoped.

During the initial CAN training courses at National University of Lesotho both the lecturers and students had reported that they found both courses particularly helpful filling much needed gaps in the curriculum which had contained nothing similar. However, during the 2020 pre-course training seminar we learnt that the university had now incorporated much of the content of the CAN Methods course into the university curriculum delivered to second year social work students who now receive a course on community development. This of course was excellent news as the aim of CAN is that these topics should be taught to all social work students, so they are empowered to develop culturally appropriate methods of meeting the needs of children in their own families and communities, as is the African culture. We also learnt that Mrs Mahao had the previous term taught the content of the CAN Methods course to the 122 students who would be attending our courses. In the previous year we had provided the university with the CAN manual on this course. Whilst it was encouraging that the university had adopted the material, we were concerned that its repetition would lead to the students becoming disinterested.

In the pre-course seminar key issues concerning the delivery of the courses were discussed and the way paved for a post course seminar when a plan could be made as to how to proceed in the future. As the number of students will be smaller in the following year it was agreed that the university should invite participants from relevant NGOs to attend. Although this would increase the class size it would provide an opportunity for students to hear directly from practitioners and for the NGO experiences to update the CAN research undertaken previously. Involvement of NGOs may also enable the development of joint projects and possibly provide employment opportunities for students in the future. It is hoped that when the course teaching is passed to the universities, representatives from NGOs should become part of the local delivery plan for the courses so they might contribute their practical experience to complement the academic teaching of the lecturers. In the future, students might be provided with the CAN Methods course manual to read in advance so that sessions can be more interactive, as the students should have already assimilated much of the information.

122 students registered for both the PTSD treatment course and the CAN Methods course, which was a 50% increase on the numbers in the previous year. Whilst an encouraging vote of confidence in the CAN programme the size of this class presented major logistical problems for the university which only had two rooms capable of accommodating this number of students, and these were not available for all four of the teaching days.

NUL PTSD course: Treatment of children with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

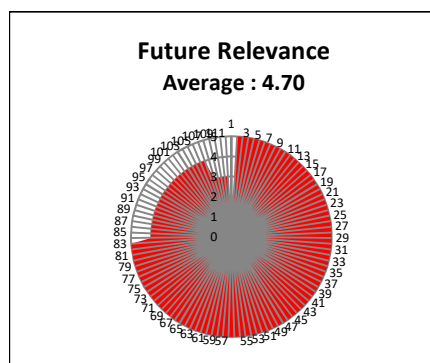
The training followed the format set by the licence but with significant additional input based on the trainer’s own experience of treating children with a wide range of severe mental health problems including PTSD. The workshop comprised a combination of lectures and role playing designed to enable students to practice the method and develop their skills, and provide an opportunity to devise their own projects for rolling-out the treatment their communities. Groups discussed aspects of how the methodology might be deployed within Lesotho and then fed back their conclusions to the plenary group. Once again the enthusiasm of these students was immensely encouraging. As in previous courses they had some exciting ideas for developing their own projects to treat children suffering from PTSD.



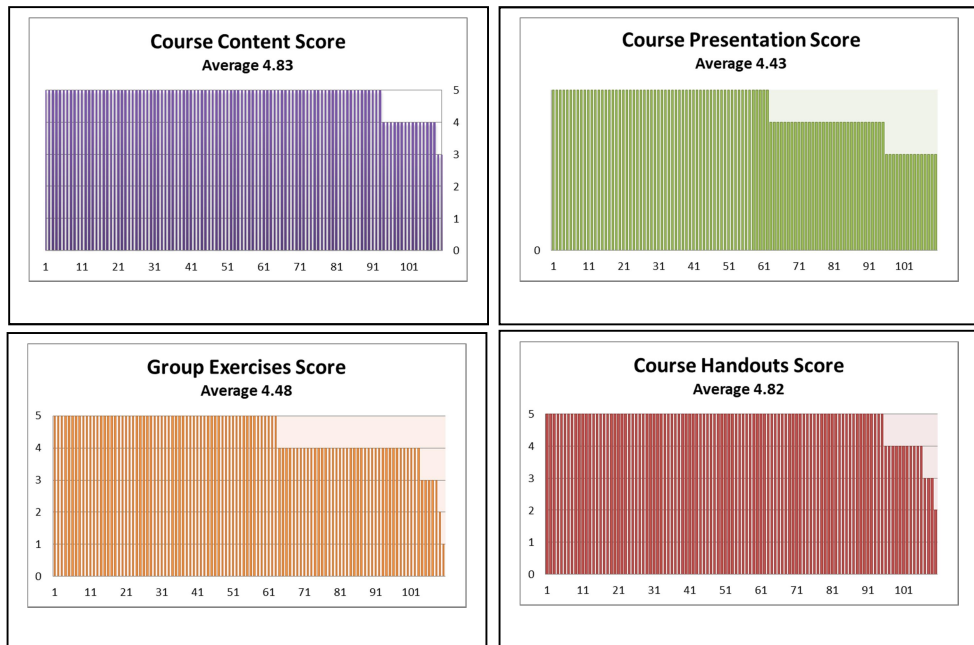
*Students’ role playing the PTSD treatment protocol and presenting group ideas to the plenary class
National University of Lesotho - February 2020*

NUL PTSD treatment course feedback

Students were asked to complete feedback forms that would indicate the relevance of the course and score each of four components of the training. Most thought the course would be extremely relevant to their future work.



As in previous courses students were also asked to score each of the four courses' attributes of content, presentations, exercises and hand-outs on a five point scale from not good to excellent. The average scores given by the students for each of the course components of content, presentation, group exercises, and hand-outs were between very good and excellent.



NUL PTSD course feedback scores

On a percentage basis an average of 96.6% was awarded for the course content, 88.6% for its presentation, 89.6% for the student exercises, and 96.4% for the hand-outs. These scores are similar to those in previous years despite the larger class size and the difficulties encountered with the rooms. The score of 88.6% for presentations was slightly lower than in the previous year when the score given was 92.6%. This might have been due to the trainer not having fully recovered her health after being ill.

Comments on the feedback forms were very positive. It is difficult to summarize 122 feedback forms adequately, but there was a general consensus that the course was successful in assisting them to identify children suffering from PTSD and to treat the condition effectively so as to enable the child to have a psychologically healthy future. It would also enable them to sensitise communities to the needs of children suffering PTSD, which they felt was needed since many people knew little of the condition. A general view was that the course would enable them to develop projects in their communities which could identify and treat PTSD. It was felt that the course gave them both the confidence and the skills to do all of that.

It was commented that it was the most relevant course they had received for their professional futures. It was appreciated that the method taught is child friendly and non-threatening and that the play method made it fun for children to participate, as well as enabling them to have a simple way to convey what had happened to them and how they felt without having to have the verbal skills to do that. There was a request that the supporting booklets might be made available to them

in advance, and that a longer time should be made available for the course. It was suggested that the course might be given in the third year, and then again in the fourth year for to provide a fuller understanding.

There was also the suggestion that students are required to go back into their communities and treat children as a practical part of the course and report back their results. This is an interesting suggestion. Where we have heard from students on an ad hoc basis who have tried using the method, we have been given reports of their dramatic success. For example a student reported to their lecturer that they had used the method to help a relative's child whilst they were still a student. It had cured him of his PTSD and solved his mental health problems.

If a follow up course in year-4 were possible then it could be a formal requirement of the course to report evidence of results of a number of cases. These would be accompanied by the before and after scores on the PTSD checklist and CRIES 8, both invaluable tools for measuring symptoms and indicating the likelihood of PTSD, a case description (albeit whilst protecting the child's identity), and a description of the degree of success in reaching the identified goals. Only by using the method does one discover for oneself how effective it is and realise the benefit it could provide if widely employed. Using the method would also enable the student to appreciate better the complexity of each child's situation and the skills needed to assess their needs and how these can be met, including the assessment as to whether it is appropriate to use CATT method for them. Their experiences of trying to make these assessments could lead to useful class discussions and learning.

Inspired by the evidence that the method is so dramatically effective at treating PTSD when used correctly for children who would benefit from the approach, they also were impressed that it provided clear easy steps to follow, whilst also being very flexible to meet different needs.

Some commented that the course was "*eye opening*" and that it "*would be of great importance*". It was suggested that the course should be made available to all students and to communities. One student noted "*The course was really helpful, I am so thankful*".

NUL CAN Methods course:

Methods for meeting the needs of children by empowering community supported family care

This course followed the same format as in the previous year. It started by describing children's needs including their psychological and social needs, and the theoretical basis for the community supported care of orphaned and vulnerable children in the context of the African extended family culture together with its ability to meet these needs. It went on to consider the destructive pressures threatening the collapse of this system before drawing on research in four African countries to promote ideas that will combat these adverse pressures and enable the system to be sustained and children's needs met.

The approach contrasts the differing conditions and challenges in the four countries researched before describing projects and ideas under ten headings that have been effective in restoring the care system and meeting the needs of orphans and other children in need. These include ideas for the economic empowerment of families and communities, income generating projects and savings and loans groups, community development and methods for restoring collapsed communities, child

protection and empowerment programmes, psychosocial support, rehabilitation of children to families and devices for rescuing street children, as well as alternative care of those children for whom it is impossible to return to a birth family or community. Access to education is also considered, together with catalyst organisations that can empower other organisation or individuals to meet children's needs.

The course was attended by the same group of 122 students and structured as a series of lectures punctuated by sessions in which the students in groups considered which of the ideas would be effective in the communities with which they were familiar, and how those ideas might be promulgated throughout their regions. Their ideas and findings were presented to plenary sessions of the course members.

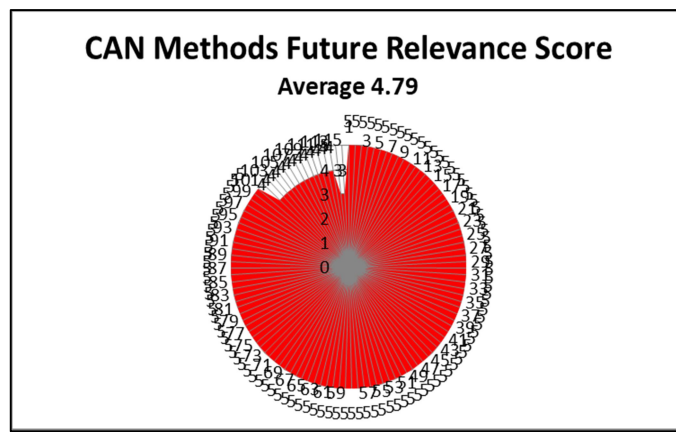
The final group exercise gave students the opportunity to plan projects which either individually or as a group, they would like to start themselves following graduation for the benefit of children in their area. Since the employment opportunities on graduation are sadly limited, there was great enthusiasm for this group exercise. It enabled them to think through specific project developments and how they might undertake them. Inspiration was provided by the numerous examples in the course that had been started by unemployed graduates. Many course participants resolved to undertake developing these projects for children in their areas. It was suggested that once some successful results had been recorded, they might apply for aid funding to further develop their project, and in so doing create a role and possibly a means of living for themselves; thus establishing their own self-sufficiency.



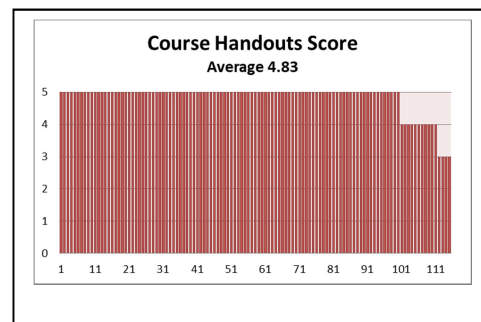
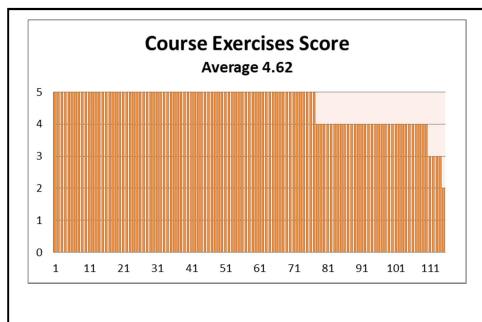
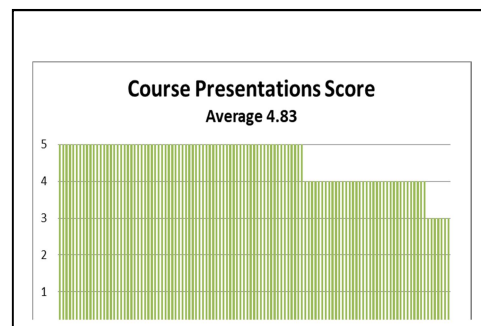
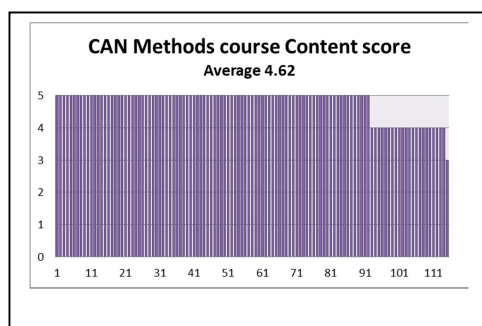
*Presentations by students on their ideas for developing their own projects for children
CAN Methods workshop - National University of Lesotho - February 2020*

NUL CAN Methods Course and generic feedback

The attendance at both courses remained consistently high throughout. The cooked lunch provided by an on-site caterer and made possible by the FMS supplementary grant, was greatly welcomed. Whilst providing 122 lunches extended the lunch break considerably, which proved somewhat disruptive to the teaching, we subsequently learnt that owing to difficulties with the distribution of student grants that month for some this was the only cooked food they received that week. It was much appreciated by the students who felt it did aid their concentration and energise them for the all-day teaching programme in the high temperatures which are normal for that time of year.



As in previous courses the average scores given by the students for each of the course components- content, presentations, exercises and hand-outs was between very good and excellent.



NUL CAN Methods course feedback scores

Perhaps unsurprisingly course members thought this course would be a little more relevant to their futures than the PTSD course, but scored the course content slightly lower at 92.4%. The presentation they rated more highly at 96.6% whilst they appeared to rank the exercises less favourably at 92.4%, although this might have reflected the disruptions and cramped conditions caused by the room changes. The rating they gave to the course hand-outs was similar to that for the PTSD course at 96.6%.

The course trainers greatly appreciated the high scores awarded to this course despite the difficulties involved. They felt this course was greatly affected by the last minute lack of availability of a suitable room for the 122 participants which resulted in a few hours delay to the start whilst desks and chairs were moved into a room that was too small, and a solution found to make the electrical equipment work for the presentations. It was felt that the initial part of the course, when students are usually inspired by the possibilities presented for changing the lives of children, was

jeopardised by a combination of a very late start, cramped conditions, interruptions whilst seating, electrical equipment being sorted, noise, and heat. The cooperation and help of the students, particularly the student representative who worked tirelessly to resolve the difficulties created by the unavailability of a suitable accommodation, was greatly appreciated. Notwithstanding these difficulties the students still awarded the course high scores and remarked positively in their feedback; although the inspirational remarks made by students in previous years were not so evident in this year's feedback, leaving the lecturer to wonder if in the circumstances she had not made the course as inspirational as she would have wished. The fact that the students had received the content of the CAN methods course in the previous term might have some bearing on this although many reported that it was still very useful to have received the information a second time and from a different perspective.

There was a general consensus that the course had been invaluable in equipping them with new skills to identify the needs of children and their families, and a diverse range of ideas and methods from other countries that would enable them to empower families and communities to meet the needs of children. They cited learning about the needs of children, including their psychological and attachment needs as being of particular value. Many noted the community development approaches and economic empowerment as particularly useful and drought resistant keyhole gardens and other conservational agricultural methods as being particularly relevant to Lesotho.

Learning about community child protection programmes particularly those from Eswatini was greatly appreciated. They found ideas about the rehabilitation of street children useful, and methods to rehabilitate children from institutions to families were seen as essential in Lesotho. They felt they had been equipped with the knowledge to educate communities about the importance of good family care for the development of a child and how to empower communities and families to achieve that as well as to access education. Some were interested in ideas for developing good formal adoption services for the children who really cannot return to families. There was general agreement that they had learnt how to develop sustainable projects which would improve the lives of vulnerable children and their families in Lesotho.

There was also a general appreciation that the course regenerated the African tradition of community care. One noted that *"It enabled me to revive the old tradition of the culture of Basotho of working together as unity is power, though empowering and imparting skills on how to develop community projects for orphaned and vulnerable children to enable them to have a better life"*.

Some said that that they had learnt about community projects of which they had been unaware and others said that everything they learnt on the course was new to them and they would look to apply all of it. Many commented that the course had given them the skills and empowered them to develop their own projects to improve lives of orphaned and vulnerable children in Lesotho. It also made them realise they were less dependent on the shortage of employment for social workers in the country: *"The course gave me a new perspective. I do not need a job from someone. I will make one for myself"*.

Ideas for improving the course included that it should have more videos and more time be made available for the course. A second presenter was also recommended. It is hoped to address this in the future by sharing the delivery of the course with lectures from the university until they take over the teaching and by including representatives from NGOs who would contribute their experience.

NGO staff could also assist in updating the CAN research with information on how some of the methods have evolved in practice. It was suggested that the students should be given more opportunity in describing what they know about the current circumstances of orphans and vulnerable children in Lesotho. In future courses some students might be asked to volunteer a short presentation from which we all could gain an up to date knowledge of the situation.

Some suggestions were that the interactive sections, such as the group work to plan and present their own projects ideas in each category was most beneficial. There was a general complaint that there was too much information to absorb in the presentations. So perhaps the course next year could experiment by the students being asked to read the manual in advance of the course and use the course itself to interrogate the data on projects against various criteria of success, with much of this being done in the group work by the students and followed by their presentations, as well as involving presentations from NGOs and university lectures wherever possible.

There was a suggestion that students as a practical part of their course should go into villages or schools and teach others information they had learnt on the course, and start projects they had planned and designed on the course. This is an interesting idea if time could be made available in the curricula for it. It might also fit with a follow up course where students reported back on the results of their endeavours.

A further suggestion was that the course should be made more widely available, including to the Department of Social Development, NGOs, and to high school children and to communities. It was suggested that it should be translated into Sesotho, so as to make it easier to disseminate the ideas to community leaders. Local radio could be used as a medium for disseminating the ideas and knowledge more widely. One student who is already presenting on Radio Lesotho to empower orphans and vulnerable children and their mothers, planned to use the course material to improve her contribution for that purpose, and to teach mothers about children's psychological and attachment needs and the importance of the family in meeting these, as well as giving them the skills to do so.

Overall the feedback remarks were appreciative and complimentary, which it was felt was generous given the setbacks of the year. One student commented: *"The course was excellent and the presentations could not have been better. Thank you for the time, care and aid. We will make Lesotho a better place with what we know today"*.

General Feedback about the work of CAN from the students of National University of Lesotho

There was a general consensus that the CAN Methods course was valuable as it empowered the continuation of the African community care system for the benefit of future generations despite the unprecedented pressures of the AIDS orphan crisis. Amongst the comments were:

- It is helpful because it tackles the problems of orphans and vulnerable children in Africa, by strengthening the community and extended family model. This makes it very efficient because it is relevant to African orphans and vulnerable children and their families' needs
- It is very helpful as it seeks to strengthen old practices in Africa which ensured child protection in all forms. For example share cropping has been practiced by chiefs together with villagers to ensure food security for orphans and vulnerable children and their communities. It also strengthens the caring within the extended family

- Due to CAN, I am ready to bring back the unity the Basotho culture had
- It strengthens extended families roles with children
- CAN adds African ideas to the traditional social work western perspective. This is needed in policies as well as in practice- such as developing relevant projects
- The work of CAN is very important and helpful as we learn a lot from them. It teaches us a lot about issues concerning children and how we can help those children and their families. It helps us learn about great projects and ideas which can help orphans and vulnerable children in our communities
- CAN's research, I consider important. Through this CAN came up with solutions to the problems facing children to enable them to have a better future
- It is helpful as it shares successful ideas from the 4 different countries in caring for orphans and vulnerable children. It helps us develop ideas which can strengthen the community and family system in Lesotho
- It is important as it addresses needs of orphans and vulnerable children and helps them in their lives socially, mentally, economically, physically and educationally
- There was particular appreciation that it promoted the importance of attachment and the extended families role in that
- ' It is of course very helpful because it is orientated to supporting and developing the African extended family and community care system, there by bringing up psychologically and emotionally fit individuals
- The community development and economic empowerment focus was particularly appreciated as being essential in enabling families to meet the needs of their children. The dissemination of successful community child protection projects was also highly valued and that it empowered children to enable them to have a brighter future. The knowledge of how to identify and treat children suffering from PTSD was also appreciated.
- CAN has shown us how we can change the lives of people around us by developing projects using the knowledge learnt
- It has motivated me to start my own project using the ideas learnt
- Care Africa Network is of great benefit to vulnerable children in Africa
- I think everything is perfect in these courses and I hope that CAN's education can be disseminated to all corners of the world

At the conclusion of both courses students were presented with a certificate acknowledging their PTSD training, their attendance at the CAN Methods course, and their willingness to be a CAN Extension Worker. The presentation ceremony is seen as an important feature of the week's training and appeared to be greatly enjoyed by all students.



*Students from National University of Lesotho - February 2020
With certificates awarded for each of the Care Africa Network courses.*

UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI (UNESWA)

The 640 km drive over remote rural roads to Eswatini was marred by mechanical difficulties. Two break downs resulted in our arrival at our initial overnight stay inside the border of Eswatini in the small hours of the morning, after hours of being stranded on remote roads in the dark. In the absence of any road rescue system, we were immensely grateful to local people in both South Africa and Eswatini for all the generous assistance they gave us. A further breakdown the next morning resulted in us unfortunately arriving some 2 hours late at the Kwalusani campus of UNESWA. We were amazed at being met by a welcoming committee of staff, all the students and NGOs, that had been waiting for us since our scheduled arrival time. The warmth of their welcome was greatly appreciated, although we were embarrassed to have kept them waiting by our late arrival.

The first day at UNESWA was occupied by a seminar to consider how the courses might be taught by university staff in the future. Mr Jotham Dhemba hosted the session which was attended by Lungile Mabunda, Fred Moonga (visiting from Zambia) and Prudence Hiatshuwayo from UNESWA's sociology teaching staff. Lungile Mabunda would be principal lecturer responsible for continuing the delivery of the CAN courses whilst Mr Jotham Dhemba is our principal contact for organising future courses. All these staff agreed to attend the four days of teaching so as to familiarise themselves with the course content. It was also attended by representatives from relevant NGOs in Eswatini, including World Vision, Bala Clinic, Bantwana initiative, and SOS Children's Villages. They kindly each agreed to provide a teaching session to the students during the course, concerning the work their organisations were carrying out, using many of the methods described in the course.

World Vision is primarily concerned with agricultural projects and research that can replace direct food aid, and its work is featured in the CAN Methods course teaching. Bala Clinic provides mobile health care to the poorer population, and the Bantwana Initiative supports a range of educational, health/HIV, and social protection projects. SOS Children's Villages offers help and support to children who have lost one or both parents. They have an established presence in the towns of Sitekei in the East of the country, Nhlanguano in the south, and in the capital city of Mbabane. The attendance of NGOs offered the potential for students to interact with their representatives and the prospect of gaining first-hand knowledge of their experience and perhaps even opportunities for future employment.

The NGO representatives are an important part of the CAN evolutionary plan since they can contribute knowledge and experience from their current practice of projects for children. This would not only update CAN's research into relevant methods of empowering communities and families to meet the needs of their children, but would also complement the academic background of the university staff with knowledge from their practical experience for future courses. Each of the NGO representatives agreed to provide a presentation on their work to the students in the relevant part of the 2020 course. These were to prove a valuable contribution to this year's training, as well as updating the methods taught for meeting the needs of children. NGO staffs were also helpful through their contributions in the student group discussions and project planning. This provided two-way learning between the students and NGO representatives, and paved the way for the development of joint projects in the future, or even possible employment opportunities for students following graduation.

There were a total of 69 course participants for each of the courses. The university again generously provided the large meeting room in the sports emporium for the workshops which proved an effective and much appreciated space for the large number of participants. The assistance of the students designated for the purpose of ensuring that the room was ready at the start of each morning session, was greatly appreciated.

The students had asked if they could receive their lunch allowance individually which created something of an administration challenge, as it was considered prudent to pay this on a daily basis. Since the lowest denomination notes in the Eswatini currency are 10, 20 and 50 emalangeni, providing 45 rand each day (rand and emalangeni notes are exchanged at par) would involve the use of coin which is not exchangeable outside the country. If CAN decides to adopt this practice in the future then the difficulties of managing the disbursement of sums that are not an integer number of notes should be considered carefully, although the contribution to their lunches was greatly appreciated and enabled the students to concentrate throughout the intensive all-day sessions.

UNESWA: Treatment of children with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Course

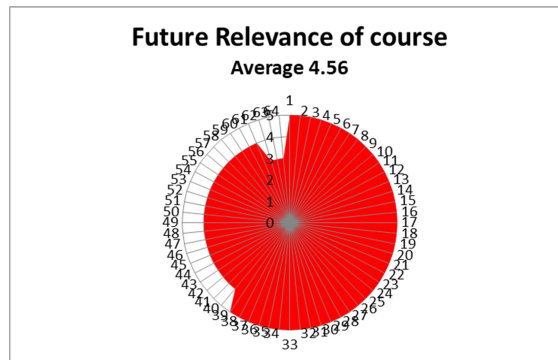
The PTSD course followed the same format as that delivered at the National University of Lesotho, although the layout of the room was more conducive to the group work that is an essential part of the workshop teaching. The lesser number of students also made the student presentations more manageable and effective. The experience of the NGO staff added significantly to the group work although this was even more notable in the CAN methods course that followed. During the group exercise on planning a project where they could identify and treat children suffering from PTSD, some useful ideas were presented including how to overcome the prospective difficulties with any scheme.



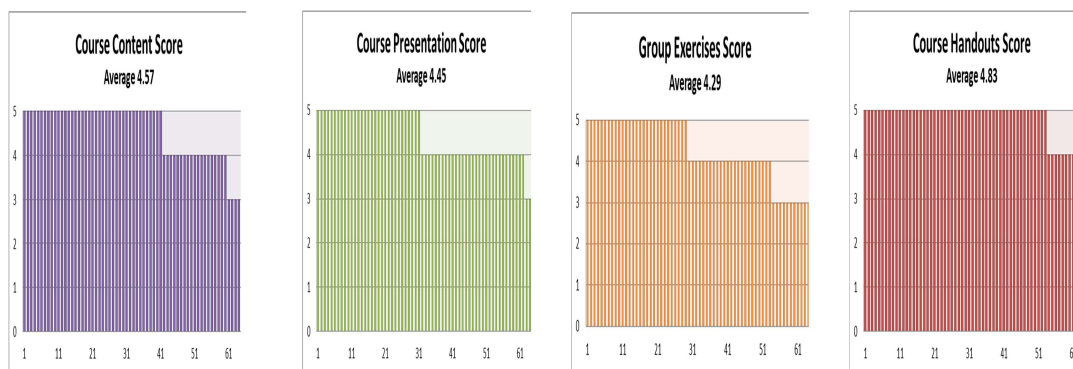
*Social work students and NGO staff actively engaging in the PTSD course
February 2020 - Kwaluseni campus, University of Eswatini*

UNESWA PTSD treatment course feedback

It is probably a mistake to infer too much from the very small variances in the averages gleaned from the feedback questionnaires, but the fact that one third of the course members thought the PTSD course would be only helpful to their future careers, rather than very helpful which was the view of the majority, may reflect that these were third year students rather than the four year students who comprised the NUL course registrants.



As in previous courses the average scores given by the students for each of the course components- content, presentations, exercises and hand-outs were between very good and excellent. Course members scored the content of the course at an average of 91.4%, ranked between very good and excellent, and likewise the course presentation where their scores averaged 89.0%. Curiously a significant minority rated the group exercises only as good although overall they gave an average score of 85.8% to this attribute. The course hand-outs again attracted the universally held view that they were either very good or excellent and were scored at 96.6%.



PTSD course feedback scores Kwaluseni campus, UNESWA – February 2020

Feedback provided on the course assessment forms by individual participants suggested that there was a general consensus that the course had made them aware of the issues for children suffering Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It would enable them to identify successfully which children suffered from the condition, and provided them with the skills to treat the condition successfully. It had also helped them to plan how they could develop their own project to treat PTSD in children.

Many had been largely unaware of the issues regarding PTSD and were encouraged by the realisation that it is readily treatable using the method taught. It was remarked that the lecturer spoke clearly and was easy to understand. The hand-outs were considered very useful. The training aims to simplify the steps so that anyone who undertakes the training can practice the method. A number of students commented that the course had helped them to deal with traumatic experiences they themselves had experienced. The child friendly procedures were appreciated together with the fact that the method did not rely on a child having to talk about their experiences. Many thought it was an important lesson, of which they had not previously been aware, that children should not be made to speak about traumatic events unless they were ready to do so.

The chance to observe and then practice the key treatments stages of CATT that required the child to make characters they would act through the traumatic experience, and then 'rewind' to transfer the memory to the thinking part of the brain, was particularly appreciated. However progressive de-sensitisation techniques and guided imagery was also valued and some said that the case studies helped to clarify how the method could be applied in real situations. Working in groups with professionals from the NGOs was much appreciated. It was recognised that the CRIES 8 developed by the Children In War Foundation and the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Checklist were both invaluable tools that not only helped assess whether a child suffered from PTSD, but also assisted in the measurement of success post-treatment.

Suggestions made for improvements were that the course should be longer and that manuals might be handed out in advance of the course; something which could be attempted next time. More than one presenter would be appreciated, but for CATT this would not be possible owing to the restrictions of the patent that limits its teaching to those who are licensed, although teaching of other parts of the course could be shared.

An interesting idea was that the PTSD course should be taught in year-2 before students undertook their placements in schools. Provided the relevant permissions were obtained, this might allow students to practice the method by treating children they identified as suffering the condition. Evidence could be collected on the successes, as indicated by the before and after CRIES 8 scores and PTSD checklist, and bring these to a follow up course in year-3, when issues arising could be considered. Evidence of five successful cases is required before an individual can be fully qualified to practice the method. Those who achieved that could be awarded a Certificate of Practice.

Those working in NGOs planned to use the method immediately for children they are aware need the treatment. Many students planned to use the method to assist siblings and relatives' children before they graduated, and then might start projects for treating children more generally. We have been informed by previous students of successes they have achieved in curing children of PTSD with the method. One suggestion made was that the course be made more widely available both in the university and also to school teachers and communities. Children could be taught about PTSD and how it can be treated as part of the school curriculum, so they are more aware when they need to seek help.

One student remarked: *"the course is an eye opener and I believe it has paved my way to help children with PTSD. I feel it should be spread throughout the world"*.

UNESWA CAN Methods course:

Methods for meeting the needs of children by empowering community supported family care

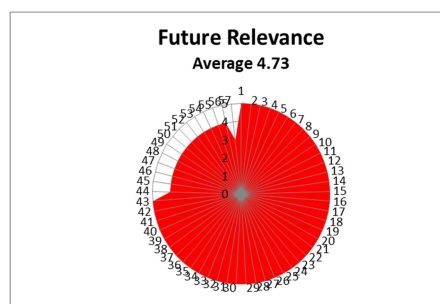
We believe that the Methods course benefitted greatly from the presence of the NGO staff who were able to both bring their experience to the group working, but also provide short impromptu presentation of their work and some of the issues they encountered in the projects with which they were concerned. The format followed the approach described in the 100-page booklet that was issued to each student.

Course participants in their groups came up with some excellent ideas for projects they planned to develop based on ideas from the course that included, food security and income generating projects involving training youth in appropriate farming methods including the drought resistant keyhole gardens. This method of growing vegetables using only waste water was introduced by CAN to Eswatini from Lesotho a few years previously and is now being developed in the drought ridden eastern areas. Other suggested ideas focused on girls’ empowerment clubs in schools. Many of the project ideas were multifaceted and included proposals for community development and economic empowerment as well as child protection, AIDs prevention, and youth empowerment. Some aimed to increase access to education and medical care amongst other matters.

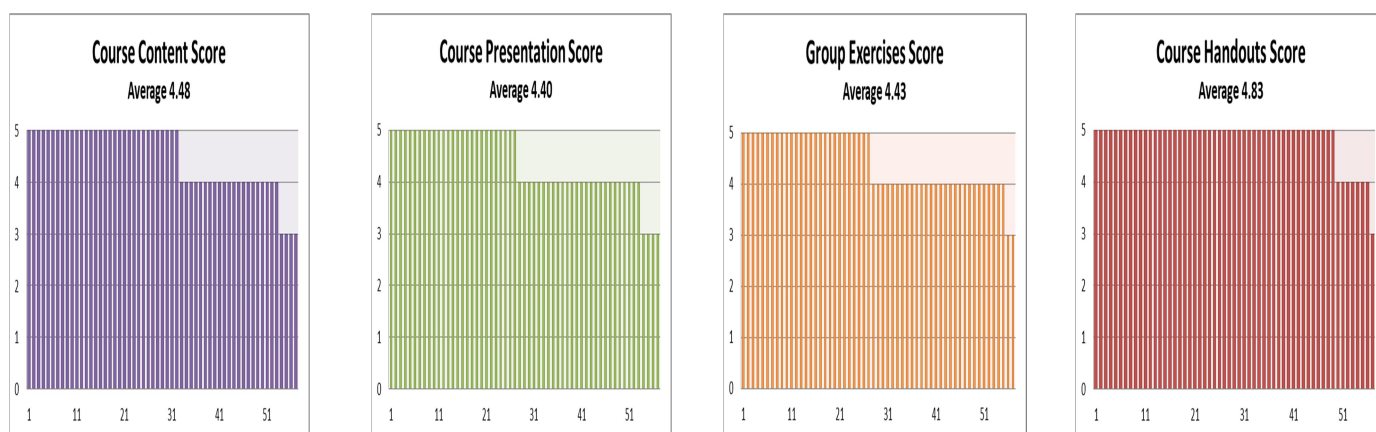


*A group prepares for its presentation and an NGO describes his work to social worker students
Kwalusani campus, National University of Eswatini – February 2020*

UNESWA CAN Methods Course feedback



This class generally found the Methods course somewhat more relevant to their future than the PTSD course. Once again the course content, course presentation, group exercises and course hand-outs were all rated as being on average between very good and excellent.



UNESWA Methods course feedback scores – Kwalusani, February 2020

This class generally thought the Methods course a little more relevant to their future than the PTSD course most giving it the maximum score. The three course teaching attributes were universally ranked at very good or excellent, and scored at almost 90% (89.8% for content, 88.0% for

The three course teaching attributes were universally ranked on average as very good or excellent, and scored at almost 90% (89.8% for content, 88.0% for presentation and 88.6% for the group exercises). The score given to the quality and of the hand-outs was 96.6%.

There was a general consensus throughout the feedback forms that the course had been extremely helpful in enabling them to develop their own creative projects or guide communities in doing so to meet the needs of orphaned and vulnerable children in Eswatini. The focus on income generation to empower communities and families to meet the needs of their children and creative ideas to achieve this was appreciated. One student commented: *“I now understand that you do not need money to bring about change, but a creative mind, for example in developing keyhole gardens”*.

The section on assessing children needs and in particular the importance of children’s attachment needs and the role of the nuclear and extended family in meeting those, was considered to be the most essential foundation to the learning that followed and it was appreciated that a community development and family care based approach was promoted. It was cited as very useful to learn ideas and methods which have been successful in the other African countries researched so *“there was learning from other countries successes”*.

The learning about successful child protection programmes, particularly those training carefully chosen village child protection volunteers for each house hold cluster, was considered valuable. Several reported that the presentations were excellent, well prepared and eloquent. The contributions from representatives of NGOs was also much appreciated as was the group work planning the projects they would like to develop. ‘Everyone had a chance to participate’.

Suggestions for improvements included that a longer time should be spent on the course and that it is included in each year group from the first year, and also delivered more widely in the community. It was suggested that a wider range of NGOs should be included in the training and make presentations, as well as government social workers so that there could be learning from them on recent practice and developments. CAN has trained government social workers in Lesotho but not in

Eswatini, so that might also be a consideration for the future. It was also proposed that students be given the title of a topic each day and asked to make a short presentation on it the following day.

Many said that the course had been so helpful since it had given so many new ideas for projects and they felt confident that the projects they had planned would be successful.

General comments about CAN's work by students of University of Eswatini

These included-

- The course is a brain opener in that it enlightened us on a number of projects which we can use to assist or help children or communities in need
- Enlightening! It empowered me to do more as an aspiring social worker to help the less privileged
- It gave me hope for the future of Africa
- The feedback suggested that it was generally felt that the research CAN has done in other counties in Africa is valuable, as CAN disseminated insights from these counties that can be used beneficially elsewhere.
- CAN spreads new innovative ideas of helping orphans and vulnerable children which may not be known elsewhere in Africa

It was appreciated that CAN enables care of orphans and vulnerable children in the community.

- CAN helps communities in Africa with providing care for orphans and vulnerable children
- It is very educational in terms of training to treat PTSD, and providing care and protection to vulnerable children

It was particularly applauded that CAN promotes empowerment not dependency.

- What is helpful is that it differs from other organisations in that it does not only provide aid to the OVC but also promotes empowerment to break the cycle of dependency
- It is very empowering and helpful as it enables OVC to acquire innovative life skills not only for themselves, but for the whole community, which helps sustain them for the future
- It empowers individuals to be able to care for their children
- As a result it enables the care of children in their families and communities - they report that CAN empowers community supported family care of children

It was felt that the CAN teaching empowered the course participants.

- It is helpful to be empowered, so that we can empower others in the future and they will empower the children'
- CAN has equipped me with skills which I will use to improve the lives of the children in my community and even at a national level

It was felt that CAN is having an impact on improving the skills of practitioners and improving lives of children.

- CAN plays an important role in improving the competence of students and practitioners and promoting interaction between students and NGOs
- CAN is making a huge difference to the lives of children and is also ensuring a better future for the children and the world
- CAN gives hope to children

Participants also remarked that they had felt inspired themselves by the CAN courses.

- The work that the individuals do is remarkable and is actually working alleviating poverty in the community. Knowing that there are people working towards eradicating poverty and HIV/AIDS, gives one hope to join and help make the world a better place
- CAN has inspired me to do my best in helping to change the world
- It was also recommended that the CAN courses are spread elsewhere in Africa.
- My wish is that the courses could reach all parts of Africa. I wish it could help to shape Africa as a whole



UNESWA Concluding speeches and certificate presentations – February 2020

Once again the certificate presentation formed an integral part of the proceedings. We judge it important for the students that the week of teaching should be a memorable experience.

The closing remarks by the Mr Dhemba and the support provided by other members of staff and the NGOs were very moving and much appreciated by CAN.



UNESWA 2020 Course members



UNESWA Teaching staff and CAN Trainers