

RUBERT VAN BLERK

Telephone: +27 (0)21 593 8486 / + 27(0) 83 384 0510

E-mail: rubert@cdra.org.za

South African

CORE COMPETENCIES / COMPETENCY SUMMARY

Rubert has accumulated over 30 years of experience in the social development and education fields. His career started in teaching and after further studies qualified as an educational psychologist. He has worked as a social development professional over the past 13 years in the Community Development Resource Association (CDRA). Over these years he has accumulated significant experience in the field of organisational development consultancy, programme evaluation and research. He has worked with many organisations across a wide field including; community development and advocacy, youth, agriculture, climate change & environment, health, gender and human rights. He also facilitates qualitative and participatory evaluation processes working with a range of organisations and programmes in development. The scope of evaluation practice includes organisational reviews of smaller organisations working in both local and regional sub-Saharan contexts to larger impact evaluations of national and international programmes. His work in the CDRA has also involved the facilitation of numerous training and capacity development events and initiatives. He also has extensive knowledge of the education sector after spending a significant part of his career working in specialised education support services in the Western Cape Education Department.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Community Development Resource Association (CDRA)

(March 2004 to 2013 as full time employee, and from 2014 to present as an independent contractor)

As a Senior Practitioner, my current programme and consultancy activities for CDRA include:

- Facilitation of self-evaluation and strategic planning processes which focus on the whole organisational system, including its practice in the field largely within the civil society sector.
- Supporting organisations and individuals to build their capacities to learn plan and do.
- Coaching
- Designing and facilitating developmental training courses in the fields of Leadership, Monitoring & Evaluation, OD, and organisational learning capacity
- Research and report writing

Examples of organisations worked with:

Media Diversity Development Agency: CDRA Project manager of grant to conduct action research of project using community radio as a platform to promote social integration in the communities living in the Khayelitsha and Gugulethu areas of Cape Town (Sept 16 to present)

Usiko Stellenbosch: Mid Term Review and OD accompaniment for organisation involved in court diversion and youth development (Oct 14 to Dec 16)

Medicins Sans Frontieres Southern Africa (MSF-SA): rendered OD support to develop more conscious processes for addressing issues of diversity that is sustainable and leading to a more inclusive organisational culture (Jul to Aug 15)

Treatment Action Campaign (TAC): Member of programme evaluation team (May to Jul 15)

Danish Church Aid: Facilitation of two multi-stakeholder workshops with civil society, traditional leadership and local civilian authorities in rebel held territory of Nuba Mountains in Sudan (May 15)

Sustainable Energy Africa (SEA): Evaluation of 2013 – 2015 Cities Energy Support Unit project cycle (Sept 14 – Dec 14)

Habitat for Humanity South Africa: Training and accompaniment of programme team focussing on community development practice and M&E (2014)

New Life Community Projects: Evaluation and capacity building of project targeting street-involved children in Beaufort West and Uitsig in Cape Town (Nov 13 to Feb 16)

Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (CTA): Provided project management and facilitation for an initiative which brought together 22 partner organisations from Africa and Caribbean in a process aimed at building organisational learning capacity for effective project cycle management (Nov 13 to Feb 14)

Programme for Institutional Learning and Exchange (PROFILE) in Zimbabwe: Team leader in an impact evaluation of a long term capacity building initiative involving a network of 25 Zimbabwean NGOs (May to Jul 12)

Justice and Women: Provided OD and capacity building services to the NGO in its work with rural women involved in the formation of a home-based care network in KZN (2010 to 2012)

Impumelelo Social Innovations: Provided facilitation and consultancy service for increasing its capacity for organisational learning and results based monitoring and evaluation (2012)

Self Help Manenberg, Cape Town: Provided organisation accompaniment (OD) through facilitation of its organisational review and strategic planning, over an extended period (2008 to 2011)

ZOA Refugee Care, Northern Sudan: Evaluation of a humanitarian aid peace building programme in South Darfur (2010)

SAGE-Net Germany: Impact Study. Member of the Research Team: *'Learning Lab SAGE Net on weltwärts. International Volunteering in Development. Experiences, Interventions, Exchange and Impact Analysis for sustainable secondment of volunteers in development programmes. SAGENET/BMZ, Berlin/Bonn* (2009 to 2010)

CORDAID, Netherlands: Co-facilitation of partner consultation process feeding into the development of its 3-year strategic planning over a period of a full year (2009)

Surplus Peoples Project, Cape Town: Evaluation of its programme in building farming and organisational capacity with emerging farmer cooperatives in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa (2008)

Department of Social Development (Western Cape): Project for capacity development of community based organisations in Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain. (2006 – 2007)

Western Cape Education Department

(January 1983 to February 2004)

Deputy Chief Education Specialist (Senior Psychologist) in Metro South District from 2002 to 2004,

- As a member of the SLES management team, I was responsible for coordinating psychological services in the District Metro South. This involved the management of 14 professional staff
- Coordinated psychological services in the early identification, assessment and support of learners experiencing barriers to learning in the district, within the inclusive paradigm

- Had responsibility for the continuous professional development of psychologists in the district, through the provision of further training and supervision including that of intern psychologists
- Worked in multi-disciplinary interventions within the District focussing on schools requiring high intensity support
- Fostered multi-sectoral partnerships with other government departments through the Health Promoting Schools Initiative as well as other NGOs working in the education sector
- I initiated as well as became involved in several programmes responding to key challenges such as HIV AIDS and positive behaviour management. During this time as well as preceding it, I was also involved in starting and sustaining an initiative to address issues of diversity across 'racial' divides within the school district to support integration efforts during this period

Head of School Clinic (Philippi East) in the Metro South District during 1999 to 2002,

- I was instrumental in establishing the centre (school clinic) tasked with providing specialised support services to the surrounding school community
- I coordinated a team of 5 professionals rendering specialised education support services to the surrounding 46 schools which included school psychology, social work and learning support
- As part of a European Union funded National Dept. of Education project (conditional grant), I was closely involved in a comprehensive initiative to train and equip all teachers to deliver the HIV AIDS sexuality and life skills curriculum in the area over a period of 2 ½ years. Aspects of the good practices developed over this period were sustained and scaled up in the provincial education department post 2004

School psychologist in Mitchells Plain, during the period 1994 to 1999

- Responsibility for providing specialised support to a school circuit including teachers, learners and their families
- Responsibility for assessment and placement of learners experiencing barriers to learning
- Provision of school based support for inclusion of learners with low to moderate special education needs
- Provided facilitation in conflict mediation in schools, and psychotherapeutic support to teachers, learners and families subjected to traumatic events
- Provision of organisation development services to schools i.e. facilitation of whole school assessment / diagnosis and strategic planning

Head of Dept. Psychology at Porter School, a special school (reformatory) for male juvenile offenders during 1993 and 1994

- Intake assessment and placement of court referred youth
- Provision of counselling support and liaison with academic, technical and child-care divisions to ensure ongoing healthy adjustment of youth referees

Educator at Kensington High School from form 1983 to 1992

- Teaching geography, as well as performing in the role of school counsellor from grade 8 to Matric.
- Served for 3 years as standard leader for Grade 9 classes
- Active in extra-mural programme at school

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

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| • M.Psych | University of the Western Cape | 2001 |
| • B.A.Hons (Psych) | University of the Western Cape | 1990 |
| • B.Ed | University of Cape Town | 1986 |
| • B.A. | University of the Western Cape | 1983 |
| • S.T.D. | University of the Western Cape | 1982 |
| • Matric | Kensington High School | 1978 |

GEOGRAPHICAL EXPERIENCE

South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Malawi, Congo, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya, Madagascar, India, Germany, Finland, Sweden.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Fluent in written and spoken English and Afrikaans

RELEVANT CERTIFICATIONS/ DESIGNATIONS

- Psychologist (Educational Psychology)
Registered practitioner with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (PS 0073644)
- Member of the Society for Industrial and Organisational Psychologists South Africa (SIOPSA)
- Teacher (SACE Registration No. 187416)
- Board Member of Persona Dolls Training (PDT), an NPO from 2006 and at present in the capacity of chairman.
- Member of Board of Directors of the Centre for Creative Education in Cape Town

OTHER INFORMATION

Research, Publications and Conference Presentations

- Reeler, D & Van Blerk, R (2017). *Theories of Change, Concentrating on the Truth of the Work*. CDRA publication.
- SAMEA Biennial Conference: Presented paper titled *Evaluation – Innovative Approaches from a Civil Society Perspective* in Johannesburg (2015)
- Van Blerk, R (2012). *Organisational Development in Civil Society in Poor Communities*. Published in 2012 as part of collection of articles.
- Westoby, P and Van Blerk, R (2012). *An Interpretive and discursive analysis of training of Community Development Workers within RSA* (Development in Practice journal, Volume 22, 2012 - Issue 8).
- Van Blerk, R and Whande, U (2010). *The Quest for Healing and Transformation, an unfolding and deeply rooted relationship between two countries (South Africa and Germany)*, published in the CDRA annual digest for practitioners 2010/2011. This was also presented as a conference paper at the SAGE-Net conference 'Footprints in Social Development' held in Cape Town, Nov 2010.
- Van Blerk, R (2005). *The Arrogance of Giving*. A reflection on giving in the development sector published as a CDRA nugget.

Other courses completed

- Attended a 5-day Facilitator training course in Race, Diversity, Social Justice & Transformation: Practitioner Training at Wits Centre for Diversity Studies (Johannesburg, 2016)
- Attended a 4-day course in The Art of Stakeholder Collaboration – Key concepts & competencies for achieving common goals presented by the Collective Leadership Institute (Cape Town, 2015)
- Attended a workshop on Authenticity in Ethics: Having my own voice in relation to ethics, power and professionalism presented by Dr. Linda Price (Cape Town, 2014)
- Attended a 5-day course in Project Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting for development projects presented by Southern Hemisphere Consulting (Cape Town, 2014)

- Attended a 2-day advanced course in Understanding Legal-ethical Practice in Psychology by Alfred Allan (Cape Town, 2013)
- Attended a workshop on Ethics in Multi-Disciplinary Health Care by Prof Claire Penn (Cape Town, 2013)
- Attended the Proteus Leadership Programme for South African NGO leaders over 6 modules (each of 4-day duration) facilitated by the Proteus Initiative between 2010 and 2012.