



Training for Transition
(TfT)



Community Systems Strengthening Project

**FUNDED BY THE
EUROPEAN UNION**

PRESS RELEASE – NO EMBARGO

“Now is the right time to do it”

KLAPMUTS COMMUNITY DIALOGUE launches project that will build capacity in communities to take control of their environment and address inequities

10 November 2016, Klapmuts, Cape Town - Today, Women on Farms, in partnership with the University of Cape Town (UCT) and Training for Transition (TfT), launch the Community Systems Strengthening (CSS) project with a dialogue in the Klapmuts community. The CSS is a three year European Union funded project that will train community-based activists to take control of their own environment and provide interventions to alleviate the burden of social dysfunction in under-resourced communities.

In South Africa, there are dramatic differences in health based on who you are and where you happen to live. These inequities in health are largely avoidable. They arise because of the circumstances in which people grow, live, work, and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness. The conditions in which people live and die are, in turn, shaped by political, social, and economic forces. Social and economic policies have a determining impact on whether a child can grow and develop to its full potential and live a flourishing life, or whether her life will be blighted.

Prof Leslie London of the School of Public Health and Medicine and CSS project leader says : “This is a project about social justice, about turning the commitments in our Bill of Rights to a range of social and economic entitlements, into reality. That is the only way we can achieve good health. We watch in wonder as life expectancy and good health continue to increase for some people and in alarm as they fail to improve for others.”

The dialogues will create a platform where community members can engage with the CSS project, partner organisations and other stakeholders, in order to collaboratively create the best possible interventions. The World Health Organisation (WHO) Commission on Social Determinants of Health believes this is possible:

“Achieving health equity within a generation is achievable, it is the right thing to do, and now is the right time to do it.”

The objective of the project is that the Klapmuts community as a rural area, along with two other urban areas, will demonstrate that communities can build their own systems to address violence, food insecurity, child abuse and chronic illness. The programme will be running training with community members, building knowledge and skills amongst activists selected by communities, facilitating access to local government and provincial resources, assisting and supporting the setting up of safe child care and local food security initiatives, working with youth in schools around peace building, strengthening community leadership through health committees and other networks and creating an enabling environment for community members find their own solutions.

"We need to be sure that everyone in our communities is protected from violence, that children have a chance to grow up to realise their full potential, that families do not suffer hunger or exclusion and that those who do have chronic diseases, are able to access care and the services and resources that will make them healthy," says Prof London.

Funded by the over three years, the project is also made possible by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, who created the programme under which this project is supported – the programme for Socio-Economic Justice for All (SEJA).

The Klapmuts dialogue will be held from 18h30 this evening at the Klapmuts Clubhouse.

For further information, please contact Sharon Messina on 021 8872960, or send an e-mail to sharon@wfp.org.za.

ENDS

Issued by:

Linda Rhoda, Marketing and Communications Manager, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town, **on behalf of the project partners.**