

# OCCE annual update for 2010 Volume 5

Bridging the communication gap between traditional and western ideals through research and cross-cultural exchange

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**Brenda Gonzales** – Founder  
**Gretchen Davidson** – Director  
**Amy Krull** – Treasurer  
**Wendy Silverman** – Secretary  
**Ruthie Underwood** – Communication Director  
**Nosipho Mbanjwa** – South African Advisor,  
Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist

**The Organization for Cross-Cultural Exchange (OCCE), established in 2007, has been working in the village of Vukuzenzele, South Africa, on a pilot project to create a sustainable community.**

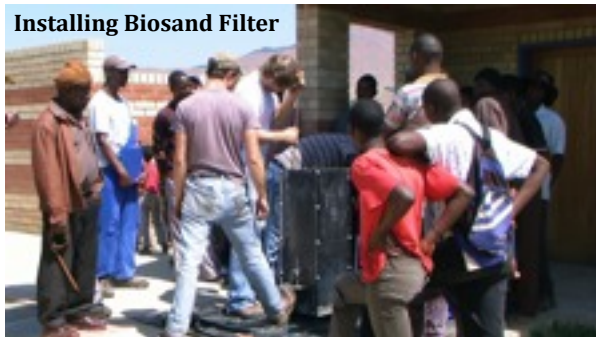
In early March 2010, OCCE met with Buhle Masange, program coordinator with CARE South Africa. The purpose of this meeting was to align the Vukuzenzele project with those who implement workshops intended for women and children concerning health issues and other poverty concerns. The meeting was successful and OCCE's local partner, the *Masizakhene Development Project*, is in direct correspondence with CARE and will initiate further dialogue.

OCCE met the Kettering University Engineers Without Borders (EWB) students in September 2010 and returned to Vukuzenzele to start the Phase II Pilot Project.

During this visit the EWB built a biosand filter at the Cetswayo Primary School. OCCE also intended this second EWB phase to instruct the students from the Lourdes Mission High School on how to build a functioning water purifier or biosand filter to clean the water gathered from the river and muddy basins. The EWB students were well received by Mr. Mbongozi, the principal at the primary school. His enthusiasm for the work of OCCE and EWB spread to the community as villagers arrived to watch the student engineers build the biosand filter.

After three days of construction the biosand filter was completed. The engineering students then built a *roof washer* on the school's roof to filter the rainwater into the school's cistern. The water collected in the cistern can now be safely used by the school children at Cetswayo. We await news from the Lourdes Mission High School students regarding completion of their own biosand filter.

We are pleased with the work that OCCE has accomplished in Vukuzenzele and are happy to have Kettering University Engineers Without Borders on board and applaud the work they have done. The Vukuzenzele water project has reinforced OCCE's mission to aid and promote sustainable solutions to problems stemming from poverty and inadequate access to primary resources.



Thanks to the EWB members who traveled to Vukuzenzele: Sydney Berry, Elizabeth Casci, Nurudeen Huthman, Zach Hurst, Derek Lavender, Calvin Nichoson, and Andrew Zandler, and mentors Basam Alzahabi and Nadine Thor.

\*\*\*OCCE is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all contributions are tax deductible. No administrative costs are used from the

## OCCE UPDATES: conferences and events:

### May, 2010

The OCCE Team traveled to Washington DC to attend CARE 2010 National Conference where they met with Members of Congress and their legislative staff.

### June, 2010

Ruthie Underwood and Brenda Gonzales traveled to Montreal to attend World Water Summit III 2010 research in developing and implementing clean water and sanitation for third world countries.

OCCE delegate Wendy Silverman will travel to Washington D.C. for the RESULTS Conference.

### September 18, 2010

Brenda Gonzales returned to Vukuzenzele to meet with translators and a school principal to work on the biosand project. Brenda also met with the EWB students.

### October 1-6 2010

Brenda Gonzales met with with CARE's Sylvester Kalonge and Vukuzenzele's CBO regarding the Village Savings and Loan program in Durban, South Africa.

### October 2010

The Kettering students successfully implemented the biosand filter and roof washer system at Cetywayo primary school. The Masizakhene Community Development Project (CBO) along with OCCE met with Buhle Masange, project coordinator, with CARE-South Africa regarding a Village Savings and Loan program for the women in the village.

## Vukuzenzele "Wake up and do it yourself"

The village of Vukuzenzele is located in the Eastern Cape (now part of Kwa-Zulu Natal), 60 kilometers east of the town of Umzimkulu. It was established 50 years ago during the apartheid regime and is now home to 200 families in need of running water, electricity and clean hygienic toilets. The residents subsist mainly on corn, which surrounds the village.

## Vukuzenzele Pilot Project

OCCE began its pilot project in the village of Vukuzenzele in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, in an effort to assess the effects of poverty on disease such as HIV/AIDS and TB. Since poverty is a factor for the incidence of disease and developing countries, OCCE has taken in a team to assess the village for sustainable projects that will alleviate poverty.



The Village of Vukuzenzele



## OBJECTIVES

- Maintain cross-cultural exchange between western ideals and traditional principles.
- Preserve human dignity by promoting opportunities for cross-cultural collaboration.
- Conduct anthropological and open-ended ethnographic studies on traditional healer practitioners in urban, peri-urban and rural areas to understand their world-view on illnesses and traditional medicines.
- Provide research findings and data for medical personnel working in developing countries.
- Advance collaboration between traditional views and western views to better understand pragmatic ways to address health issues.
- Transform biased perceptions, via a continuing dialogue, among the differing philosophies of the western and traditional ideals concerning medical practices.
- Uphold the sharing of viewpoints to stimulate participation in understanding other philosophies with reference to medical treatment.
- Acquire and allocate resources that support healthy lifestyles in rural villages.
- Encourage capacity building in rural villages.