

Meeting the needs of open schools

THIRTY teachers from open schools in Cape Town attended the introductory workshop of a new Idasa programme called "Open Schools - Managing the Change" in February.

They were taken through a series of discussions, games and role plays on the theme of "integrating new pupils" by facilitators Ruth Versveld, Emilia Potenza and Penny Berens, who all have extensive experience in dealing with the challenges posed by non-racial education.

"The aim of the project is to provide a non-directive forum to help individual schools explore problems of non-racial education and to find solutions for themselves," explained project co-ordinator

Silumko Mayaba.

"This year marks the beginning of a significant period of change in newly opened schools. This will involve rethinking

many aspects of school life, ranging from broad policy to the nitty gritty of classroom practice", he said.

"The "open school" models allowed by the government remain discriminatory and completely unacceptable," he added. "They do not begin to address the crisis in school education."

"But the extent to which open schools are able to meet the challenge of change will have an important effect and can be a significant sign of hope and non-racialism on the road to a new South Africa."

Possible workshop themes include how to make school structures participatory, language issues, reviewing the curriculum, evaluating the culture and ethos of a school and models of bridging programmes.

To arrange workshops or for more information, contact Silumko Mayaba at (021) 22-2150.



Johan du Plessis and Mike McCready of NCP Yeast chat to one of Bambayi's shebeen owners.

Brewing Christmas spirit in Durban's shackland

IT WAS not without warning of muddy and wet conditions that Shelley Gielink, presently running Durban's "Bambanani" township tours, took NCP Yeast managers on one of her specifically designed visits.

On this occasion it was to be to the shebeens of Bambayi, a densely settled shack community in Inanda, north of Durban.

In torrential rain the enthusiastic group crowded into Bambayi's "joints" to experience and learn about the unique brewing pro-

cesses that take place in these informal drinking houses. Looks of surprise soon became bemused smiles as the NCP men took a keen interest in the running of the shebeens and the brewing techniques under these particular circumstances.

Local shebeen owners were given fair warning of the visit when Shelly and Temba Zungu, a local community leader, laden with NCP T-shirts and yeast samples - an essential ingredient for brewing tshwala (beer) and gavine (pure spirits) - established links with the women brewers and gained their approval for the visit.

The NCP visit was a response to a call to the Durban business community to expose themselves to the desperately inadequate living conditions of most of their workers

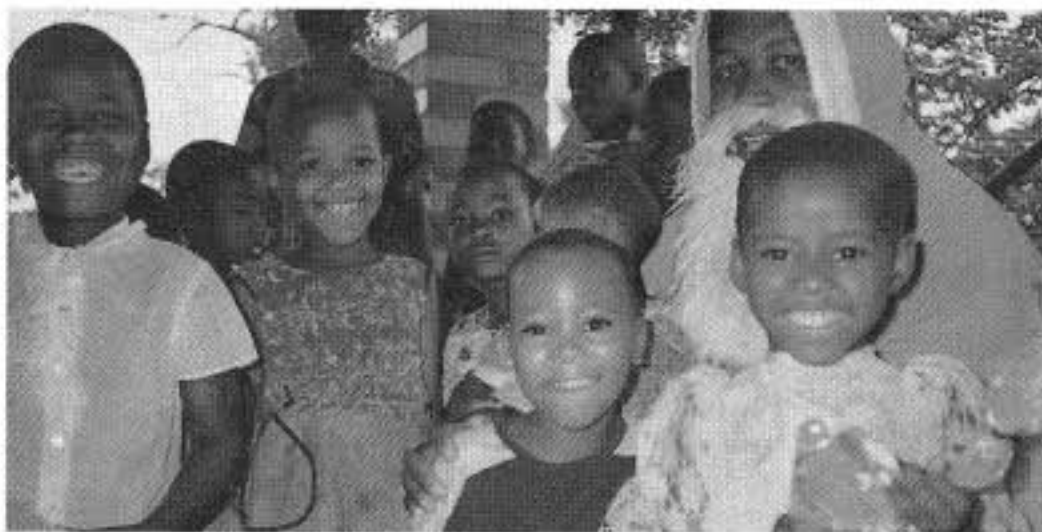
long as peripheral to the economy.

Bambanani Tours helped to facilitate first hand contact between NCP and the community, as well as giving both parties the chance to question each other about preferences, techniques and problems. The afternoon was enjoyed by all and the warmth generated by the communication dried out even the wettest feet.

AN additional special tour was arranged for Father Christmas to visit the shack settlements of Inanda and bring at least some joy and surprise to the children in the area.

Mandla Sibiya, driver for Bambanani Tours, braved a humid Durban morning to play the age-old bringer of gifts for the Bambayi Community Creche. Attired in the classic St Nicholas suit - much to the surprise of most of the children who were not quite sure who, or what he was - he gave out sweets and presents sponsored by a guest who had taken part in one of the tours.

NCP Yeast further responded to the needs of the Bambayi community by assisting the Bambayi Community Creche with toys and magazines and a cash donation of R1 000.



Mandla Sibiya spreads a little happiness at a Bambayi creche.

living in the city's overcrowded shack settlements.

Once on the tour, top management saw the opportunity of not only sensitising their staff to the frustrations of township life, but also of teaching them about the informal sector, neglected for so