



## 2015 Educateurs sans Frontières Assembly – SUMMARY

**Date: 5 August 2015**

**Day 3**

The work of the heart of ESF was celebrated today from the Buddhist blessing by the Abbot in the morning throughout the day's proceedings. Eve Annecke presented Sustainable Initiatives that both enlightened and challenged participants. She outlined the history and the daily working of the Sustainability Institute, Stellenbosch University, South Africa. It started 15 years ago with 15 children in a Montessori 3-6 classroom and has now expanded to a school, training institute, University Post Grad diploma M/Phil and sustainable living projects. It is a story of disciplined growth, no "hand-outs" and community care at its' core. The day's theme came through Ben Okri's words "...to be greater than our suffering".

NAMTA DVD 'The Child In Nature' was screened and participants were encouraged to go outside and interact with nature. Christine Harrison's presentation "Volunteering for ESF Initiatives" focused on the characteristics, personal competencies and skills needed by volunteers. It also included discussion and personal traumas were shared with another participant. This focused the gathering on the potentially difficult situations volunteers face in placements around the world and the personal capacity needed to be a useful volunteer.

Cathy Swan shared her story of volunteering through the Montessori Children's Foundation at a remote Aboriginal community in Central Australia. It was a life changing experience for Cathy as she allowed herself to go beyond safe boundaries and experience living with Australia's First People. The two way process of learning is indeed a heart story.