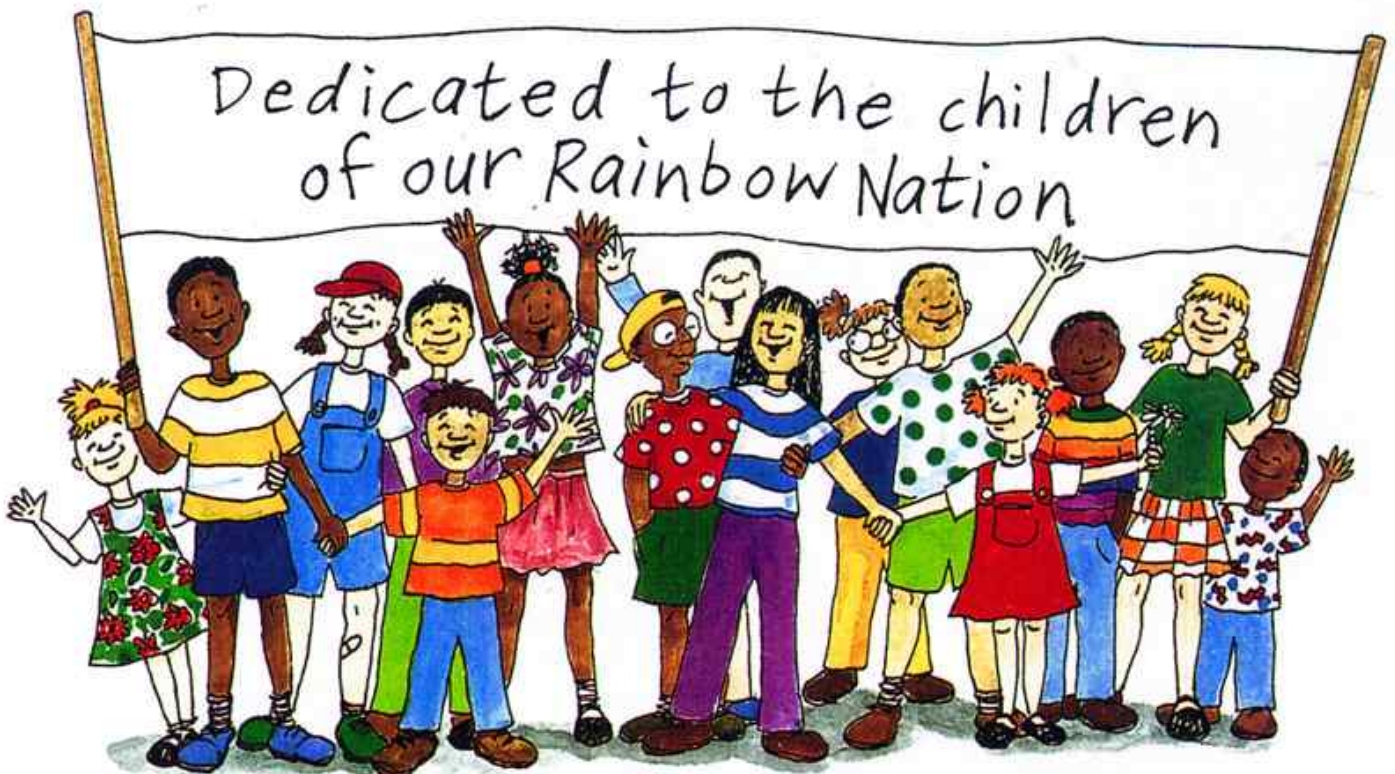




Edu-peg

THE SACTWU EDUPEG PROJECT

1st QUARTER REPORTS 2008



"The Youth of our country are the valued possession of the nation. Without them there is no future. Their needs are immense and urgent."

Nelson Mandela - From his address to the House of Parliament, Cape Town, 24 May 1994.

Compiled by: E.A. Swersky - Project Manager & National Coordinator



**THE SACTWU
EDUPEG PROJECT**

**1st QUARTER REPORTS
2008**

KWA-ZULU NATAL



Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Kwa Thambo Primary School	861	17
Sesifikile Primary School	485	11
Jaja Primary School	794	18
Enkanyisweni Primary School	495	16
Ohlengeni Primary School	237	7
Adams Higher Primary School	658	15
Ophapheni Primary School	1140	21
Sheshisa Primary School	210	9
Dlambula Primary School	433	9
Ithenjane Primary School	500	13
Inkwali Primary School	322	8
Mashiwase Primary School	370	9
Dabulizizwe Primary School	944	19
Sawpite Primary School	355	10
Mklomelo Primary School	948	20
Putellos Primary School	348	9
Kwa Gwegwe Primary School	398	10
Emangadini Primary School	329	11
Powerscourt Primary School	750	18
Maluphume Primary School	351	9
10928	259	



At the end of January, Phumzile resigned, and we have been most fortunate to engage the services of Ms. Sibongile Godlwana, a more mature, retired ex-principal, who promoted the use of Edupeg in her schools.



School visits into this cluster began well this year. Our trainers have been warmly received at all schools during this quarter and there has been obvious interest and enthusiasm displayed at the majority of schools. Principals have begun to take a keener interest in this programme, and a number of principals have involved themselves more intimately with our visits. At Mashiwase Senior Primary School, the principal, Mr. Khomo, observed the demonstration lesson and commented, "...the Edupeg books make integration easier and the pegboards make the lessons very interesting to the learners and make lessons learner-centred".



Many classrooms have been described as being neat, tidy and attractive, and lesson notes and preparation books were evident in the majority of classes where lessons were due to be observed. Some schools are undergoing renovations and classes are at times disrupted. The majority of schools are securely fenced and no incidents of vandalism were reported. Some schools have established flower and/or vegetable gardens at school.

All learners are beneficiaries of school feeding. Learners are described as neat, tidy and eager to learn. Although these children are not from affluent homes, they are all neatly turned out in clean school uniforms. Some schools indicated that they still required some demonstration lessons, to assist educators to consolidate their knowledge of Edupeg, and these were done by our trainers. Some schools also requested refresher workshops, which were also done by Nomvuzo and Sibongile.



Our trainers' feedback reports indicate that learners enjoyed completing Edupeg activities and indicated that pupils gained confidence while using Edupeg. Increased enthusiasm and excitement, were indicated, as learners found fulfilment from completing exercises independently. That learners are afforded opportunities to work alone, reading the questions posed, and working out how to answer, are valuable skills that learners need to master. Too frequently, educators take learners through all activities, step-by-step, robbing the pupils of using their own critical thinking skills, common sense and knowledge (to answer the questions posed).

Some teachers are still struggling to cope with the challenges of multi-grade teaching and these educators appreciated the valuable advice and support given by our trainers in this regard. In one school, two grades are sharing a teaching space, i.e. two teachers teaching different grades, which is far from suitable, as

both educators and learners find this environment very distracting. Some challenges are evident at a few schools, and I hope to travel to Kwa-Zulu Natal early in the second term to meet with our trainers, Kwa-Zulu Natal facilitator and the circuit managers. Generally I feel well pleased with progress made in this cluster this quarter.

Sincere thanks to SACTWU, Vukani Gaming/V-Slots KZN and The HCI Foundation, for their generous funding, which has made possible our support of these schools.



UMBUMBULU – CLUSTER 1

28 JAN - 28 FEB 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- Edupeg is very good in Maths style and is helpful to learners in activating their mind. (Adams Primary School)
- We have not received exercise books, record sheets and pencils for this current year – 2008. We would appreciate your consideration. (Putellos Primary School)
- We need demonstrations which will cover all Learning Areas on the 20th August 2008. We also need the supply of Edupeg teaching and learning material. (Powerscourt Primary School)
- We would appreciate it if the facilitators can visit the school regularly for a support. Thank you. (Enkanyisweni Combined Primary School)
- We, as the Kwathambo Primary would like to be given a workshop at our site, if possible. (Kwathambo Combined Primary School)
- Edupeg encourages grouping of learners – also encourages communication, thinking and calculation skills. Material supplied is user friendly. Edupeg consolidates Learning Areas. (Sesifikile Senior Primary School)
- This programme is very good in making teaching easy and effective. It helps educators to control learners. (Adams Primary School)
- Educators will be encouraged to use Edupeg as it is very useful. The demonstration by your staff was excellent. (Sheshisa Senior Primary School)
- We really appreciate the support that we are receiving from Edupeg and we know with certainty that it will go a long way in improving the performance of our learners. (Dlambulu Primary School)
- Edupeg material assists us a lot in terms of providing better education in our learner across all the Learning Areas. (Ithenjane Primary School)
- The pegboard makes the lessons interesting to learners and it makes it learner-centered. Edupeg looks to make integration easier. We request six Edupeg Resource Books, and Zulu and English record sheets. (Mashiwase Primary School)

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Mampugna Primary School	340	9
Isandlwana Primary School	558	14
Nhloya Primary School	300	9
Cebelihle Primary School	171	3
Buhlebamangwe Primary School	458	13
Mhlazane Primary School	358	11
	2185	59

Once again, we could dwell upon the over-crowded classrooms, the lack of resources in the schools, the poor storage facilities and the capacity of some of the educators, who may not all be trained teachers.

However, I feel that we need to focus on the wonderfully warm reception that we received at these schools, much due to the diligence of Ms. Elizabeth Dlamini, who did her best to timeously inform the schools of our altered visit dates, which were due to accommodation and flight limitations. We had planned to spend a full day at each school in 2008 during our visits, to maximise our time in the schools, and to thus better penetrate them - ie reach the majority of teachers. We will revert to this programme for the rest of the year, and we hope that our accommodation bookings which have been confirmed, will remain available.

It is not easy for many educators to change their teaching style, and to "relinquish" control over the class by instituting less teacher-centred activity and more learner-centred activity. Both teachers and learners can be intimidated by this method. Some learners appeared very nervous about actually answering questions posed, but once they were encouraged to think, to use their creative ability and knowledge to deduce/work out answers, they became very much more willing and quite pleased with their newly realised abilities and achievements.

The educators too, became less nervous, and less threatened about such an approach, and could see the benefit and merit of using such a teaching style, to maximise pupil participation, active learning and pupil confidence that such an approach encourages. Teachers were shown how to place the responsibility for learning, and the activity of engagement required, upon the learners, through questioning, reading, using practical method to gain clarity and understanding, and generally more fully engaging in the process. In most instances, the educators are keen to learn, they ask many questions and they have realised that they will not be judged or criticised when conducting lessons, but rather that the observed lesson provides an opportunity for greater understanding, growth and development. We have added this year, a written feed-back for the teacher, which they can place in their personal file and utilise towards their IQMS evaluation.

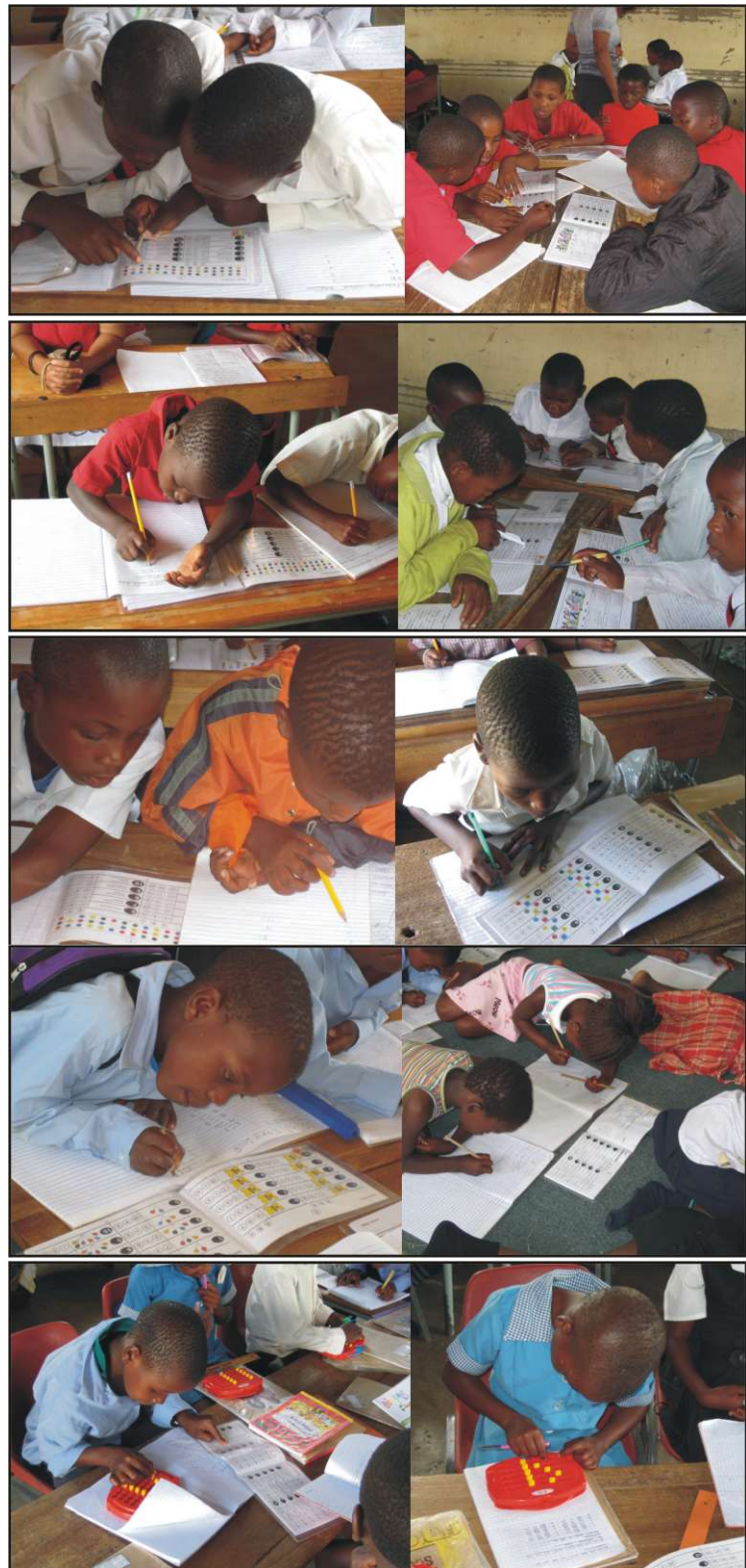
What was also rewarding, was to experience the pleasure that the learners took, in being involved in engaging activities. The lessons usually allowed for participation and feedback to many learners and the realisation that answers had been derived through their own effort and thinking, gave them pleasure and enjoyment and one hopes, improved confidence. Teachers were also encouraged to differentiate tasks, to allow the individual groups, to engage with tasks appropriate for their ability levels.

These schools are very isolated and the challenges here are great. Generally teachers appeared to become more aware of the opportunities for learning that are presented in the Edupeg workbooks. Unfortunately, all educators do not always exercise their common sense when planning and teaching, and this coupled with lack of capacity in some instances makes for a very challenging learning environment.

Teachers are grateful for hints and tips about general classroom teaching skills, routines, classroom management and strategy, etc. The challenges many of these teachers face, with often a long and challenging commute to work, poorly resourced schools, over-crowded classrooms, lack of essential teaching tools, etc. all take their toll on teacher morale. One school still has no toilet facilities for the learners, who are still forced

To be exposed to the indignity of relieving themselves in the surrounding fields. One school still lacks sufficient classroom and the children are taught in a church hall, of the school premises. One school still has a teacher who is usually inebriated, and one class in a school has no desks or chairs at all - the children sit, learn, write, etc on the floor!

We are grateful for the generosity of our funders, The Wild Foundation, SACTWU and Vukani Gaming/V-Slots, whose reliable funding and commitment enables us to continue to support the schools in this region. Special mention goes to Isandlwana Lodge, for their courtesy and generosity towards our trainers, and to Elizabeth Dlamini for her dependability, interest and support of her community. Thanks to The Isandlwana Tribal Trust who make us so very welcome, and finally, to our very special and dedicated trainers, for their sincere care, amazing dedication, enormous educational input and their reliability.



ISANDLWANA
FEB - 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- The visits help us a lot because they check whether we are still on the right track (Isandlwana Primary School).
- Edupeg is a very wonderful and interesting programme which encourages and motivates our learners more and more. I like and recommend it (Nhloya Primary School).
- Thank you very much for your support to educators and learners. Please, keep on monitoring us at least quarterly (Mhlazane Primary School).
- We highly appreciate your great support and input. We are a new school with little or no educational resources so your material and resources are useful to us (Cebelihle Primary School).

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Charles Memorial Primary School	559	13
Georgedale Primary School	1519	29
Ingede Primary School	776	19
Fredville Primary School	688	14
Intongela Primary School	507	14
Camperdown Primary School	173	8
	4222	97

It is very encouraging to read that all the schools that we visited, were fenced. This indicates that the schools are taking a pride in their environment and that the security of learners, educators, resources and the schools' buildings, are a priority. All schools are also reported to have gardens and the majority are commented upon as being neat and attractive. This too indicates a pride in the school and surroundings and is pleasing to see. Some schools are undergoing renovations, with Camperdown Combined Primary being presently unable to be used, as at the time of our visit, the school roof, which has undergone extensive repairs, had not been replaced.

At every school in this cluster, the principal was present, and greeted our trainers with warmth and enthusiasm. Many principals actively participated in the discussions and workshops, and it is noted that some principals strongly encouraged and motivated their staff.

The reception from the educators was also encouraging, and the trainers were welcomed back and thanked for their input, patience, friendliness and for the knowledge and information that they shared. It is pleasing to note that in all schools where lessons were to be observed, lesson plans were in evidence. Classrooms were reported to be neat and attractive, although some still required maintenance. Learners were said to be neat, clean and appropriately dressed, and all learners were enthusiastic and involved participants in the learner centered lessons that were taught (by our trainers) or by the classroom teacher.

Those teachers who observed lessons taught by our trainers, were delighted and excited to see how their learners were able to solve problems, fulfil activities and self-correct on their own, when given clear instructions, as these activities were appropriate for their developmental level. Expanded opportunities were demonstrated, to indicate methods to allow and encourage learners to be able to develop to their full potential. All learners were expected to succeed, but not necessarily all at the same time, in the same way, and through fulfilling the same activity. Differentiated activities were clearly indicated in many lessons and often included a number of Learning Areas.

Personally I am delighted, heartened and encouraged to be made aware of the complexity and creativity of some of the lessons. Many educators strongly indicate their willingness and desire to improve their skills and knowledge.

All of these often deeply rural schools, pupil: teacher ratios that are often unpleasantly high, with at times, over 70:1. Classrooms are described as being too full to allow the educator access to the pupils at their desks. There is no room for activity centres. Libraries have had to change their vital function, and become classrooms and generally the teaching and learning conditions are reported to be very challenging.

All teachers were pleased to have received support and many asked for more frequent visits and of longer duration. Educators asked for more workshops and demonstrations and shared that the knowledge and information shared and gained is very helpful.

We are well pleased with our visit to this cluster. Additional materials for all schools was delivered in mid March, but a problem with the container's arrival has resulted in the delivery of this material into schools only scheduled to take place in the first week of the second term.

Sincere thanks to SACTWU, Vukani Gaming/V-Slots KZN and The HCI Foundation, for their generous funding, which has made possible our support of these schools.



CAMPERDOWN
3-10 MARCH 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- Educators are using Edupeg material in this school. (Camperdown Primary School)
- We find the introduction of Edupeg in our schools very important. There is great learner involvement and learners are able to work in groups. (Ingede Primary School)
- Your Edupeg materials are so helpful to our learners and educators. (Fredville Senior Primary School)
- This programme is helpful for both learners with problems and the faster learning group. (Georgedale Primary School)

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Xoloxolo Primary School	831	16
Seven Fountains Primary School	1238	33
Nomzamo Primary School	982	19
	3051	68

Although the three schools into which we are working in Kokstad, are all individually unique, a common factor is that the enrolment at all schools is high, resulting in very large classes, across almost all grades at all three of these schools.

There are obviously daily challenges that occur in such conditions. In certain instances the educators are unable to move freely around the classroom, due to the number of desks in the room. This makes it almost impossible to fulfil the aspect of continuous assessment, when observing pupils at work. Placing learners in working groups is also very challenging, as the arrangement of desks required for this may just not be possible, due to space constraints. Students thus lose the very positive and beneficial aspect of working together in groups, where thoughts and ideas are shared, information is discussed, conclusions are reached, knowledge is gained and attitudes of acceptance and tolerance are promoted. This type of teaching approach does take pre-thought and planning by the teacher, but once in place, relieves her of the burden of being the one who imparts all knowledge to all students, which in classes often in excess of 50 and in some cases 60, is exhausting. An additional burden placed on the teacher is the necessity to maintain discipline in such a large group, which by its very size will result in learners of diverse ability levels.

Through force of circumstance, teachers often resort to a more classical teaching approach where talk and chalk prevail, and where the pace and content of the lesson is dictated by either the average or lower average student. In these circumstances, the brighter learners do not have their needs met, and they may become reclusive or alternatively, disruptive. So too, with the weaker learners, whose grasp of concepts is slower, and which group requires additional repetition of tasks and information to allow for the concept to be consolidated and eventually internalised. We are fortunate to have established good relationships at all schools, where our trainers are respected and trusted. The penetration of schools is a slow process which is often unique to each school.

The lack of staff development and planning meetings, phase and grade gatherings, etc does impact on the sharing of knowledge, methodology, the use of resources in teaching, etc. Some schools in this cluster have more highly developed internal communications systems than others and Seven Fountains Primary School obviously benefits from the external professional development that forms part of the initiative in this school, through The Oprah Winfrey Foundation.

It is my sense that all lessons that were observed had merit and that many educators are keen and enthusiastic to learn new approaches which will ultimately help and benefit both themselves and their learners. In all report feedback, it is clearly evident that learners enjoy the more active type of lessons that are planned when using Edupeg as a resource, across numerous Learning Areas. It is also evident that large numbers of learners are keen to participate, although some more passive students do exist, and who are carried by the body of the class.

Teachers too, appear to be energised, enthusiastic and optimistic when our trainers are present. However, how much the resource is utilised once our trainers leave, remains in the hands of the teachers. We realise that their circumstances and environment in which they work does create pressure and thus usage or lack thereof often depends on the encouragement of the school leadership, the commitment of the teacher and often also the capacity of the teacher.



The suggestion by our trainer, Ms Shirley du Plessis, to spend two days in each school, is worthy of further discussion. We do use this cluster as an interactive, cross-provincial interaction region, and this has proved to be beneficial to all involved.

Xoloxolo Primary will need a more formalised workshop, and following my discussion with the principal, we will look to put this in place. The seepage of paraffin onto the workbooks and their subsequent "drying out", leached valuable time from this school, who are presently a little behind the other two.

Sincere thanks to SACTWU and Vukani Gaming/V-Slots KZN and The HCI Foundation for the funding granted to fulfil our work into this cluster.



KOKSTAD
11-13 MARCH 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- A mini workshop was held so as to enlighten the staff in general as to how this intervention works. The said workshop was a success. We are ready for more visits. (Xoloxolo Primary School)
- I would like to express my gratitude about being helped by Edupeg assistants. They contribute a lot towards our teaching and learning. (Seven Fountains Primary School)
- Thank you for the support you rendered to our school and the developmental strategies you instilled in our teachers. (Nomzamo Primary School)

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Mgada Primary School	617	16
Esiphukwini Primary School	425	9
Engonyameni Primary School	278	7
Isinkotshe Primary School	330	8
	1650	40

There has obviously been a mixed reaction and impact in the four schools in this cluster.

It is fairly interesting that at the two schools where the schools are reported to be securely fenced, where neat and established gardens are in evidence, and where the school grounds are well maintained, we were expected and lessons had been prepared for our trainers to observe. Educators were reported to be enthusiastic and keen to develop their teaching skills and to learn new methods. The workshops were reported to be positive interactive sessions, where information was shared and gained, in a relaxed and fun-fill environment. Learners were reported to enjoy the activities set, and although enrolment at both schools is high, and classroom space is limited, a positive atmosphere pervaded the lessons.

At the two other schools, it is reported that the grounds were littered and that the gardens appeared to be poorly maintained and needed attention.

At Mgada Combined Primary, the learners were departing from school to attend a scheduled sport event, as our trainers arrived. When confirming the up-coming visit, this information had not been forthcoming. Some educators were to remain at school, but they were involved in a scheduled assessment workshop. The principal has been away on extended sick leave and all arrangements had been confirmed with the H.O.D. We were disappointingly unable to achieve anything at this school, which is annoying, as had we been advised of the circumstances, we could have re-scheduled their visit for a more suitable day. It is disturbing that it would appear that no functional school calendar is in evidence, for how can an H.O.D. confirm that lessons can be observed when learners will not be at school due to a scheduled sporting fixture and that teachers are also not available due to a workshop. This school was advised both telephonically and in writing, about the planned visit, in January 2008.

At Isinkotshe Combined Primary School, we were exposed to the situation of vandalism of the school and resources, including those of Edupeg. Had we been made aware of this, we could have advised teachers of how to best utilise what remained, to plan effective integrated lessons, using the workbook material as stimulation. Our trainers do not carry sufficient materials (particularly in this case, pegboards), for whole class usage. They have only their trainer kits. Things were further compromised by the news of the death of a close family member of one of the educators.

Our trainers, Sibongile and Nomvuzo, must be commended on their adaptability and patience, for they salvaged the training visit, and held an informative workshop session with the educators, which was very well received. They also passed on sincere condolences to the bereaved teacher, and to the school staff. It is of interest to note, that some educators complained that they had forgotten all that they have previously been exposed to, with regard to Edupeg, from classroom demonstration and workshop situations. As with all new knowledge and information, this needs to be utilised, so that it can be internalised and become part of the knowledge base of the individual. It also indicates the level of skill and capacity of some educators and also the level of confidence, competence and self-esteem.

I need to compliment our trainers Nomvuzo and Sibongile, who remain calm and professional at all times and who continue to encourage, support and assist the educators in our designated schools. Their friendliness, approachability, knowledge and patience are frequently commented upon during workshop feedback.

Thanks go to our generous sponsors, SACTWU, The HCI Foundation and Vukani Gaming/V-Slots KZN, for their support, which makes possible the work which we do in the schools.



UMLAZI
11-14 MARCH 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- We are using Edupeg, but we have a shortage of materials due to vandalism. (Isinkontshe Combined Primary School)
- We, the Engonyameni educators were pleased to be enlightened as to how the Edupeg programme operates. Superb work. (Engonyameni Combined Primary School)
- The teachers and learners find Edupeg very developed, interesting and easy to work with. Happy with the follow up and would appreciate more stationery to help us with this programme. (Esiphukwini Junior Primary School)



REPORT : FIRST QUARTER 2008

BY BRENDA VILBRO

Although we were visiting schools for observation lessons this term, and had reminded teachers of the dates and time of our visits, many teachers claimed that they were not ready, or were not sure of how to teach using Edupeg – even though they had previously attended the workshops and had watched the demonstration lessons by the facilitators. It took much persuasion and encouragement by the facilitators, to get the teachers up and running with Edupeg. However, once the educators tried it, and realised the benefits, they were very motivated to continue using the programme.

In Umbumbulu 1 where I observed lessons, the educators had many questions for the facilitators. In most cases, the facilitators had to co-teach the Edupeg lesson. Much progress was made in that the educators gained confidence and promised that they would continue using Edupeg so that on our next visit, we would be able to observe them.

In Camperdown and Umlazi, the visits to the schools ran smoothly. All the schools in these areas are still very committed to the Edupeg programme. The educators enjoy teaching Edupeg lessons and look forward to assistance from the facilitators.

The principals have remained positive about Edupeg, with many of them showing a keen interest in how to use the materials – especially the pegboard. The facilitators have suggested that we hold a workshop for principals, so that they can further encourage their educators.

During this term, the Foundation Phase facilitator resigned. We were fortunate in that Mrs Sbongile Godlwana, a recently retired principal, who had encouraged Edupeg in her school, was available to take up this position. Sbongile has fitted in very well with the KZN Edupeg team.

Unfortunately, I was not able to meet with DOE District Managers this term and have made it a priority for next term.

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