



Edu-peg

THE SACTWU EDUPEG PROJECT

2nd 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. Swerky - Project Manager & National Coordinator



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EDUPEG PROJECT**

**2nd QUARTER REPORTS
2008**

KWA-ZULU NATAL



REGION: **Kwa-Zulu Natal - Kokstad**

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Seven Fountains Primary School	1238	33
Nomzamo Primary School	982	19
Xoloxolo Primary School	831	16
	2220	52

We travelled to Kokstad in possibly the worst driving conditions that I have ever experienced. The roads were unable to deal with the quantity of water that was on them due to the driving rain, and run off from the surrounding landscape. Visibility at times was often down to ± 1 meter, and swirling mists accompanied the very heavy rains. Following this deluge on Tuesday, the South Coast of KZN was declared a disaster zone, with rivers in flood, road collapses, mud slides and loss of life.

At Nomzamo Primary School, we all clustered together in the administrator's offices and after some time, the Deputy Principal was sent for, to attend to us. Although the principal was present, she made no attempt to greet anyone of the team, or to assist with any arrangements. Although confirmation had been received from the school with regard to the day's proceedings, there appeared to remain confusion in the Foundation Phase with regard to lessons to be observed, and no lessons had been prepared in the Intermediate/Senior Phase.

I accompanied Ingrid, Sibongile and Hluma to their respective classes, assisted Vuyo and Kiviet with making arrangements to see lessons and then spent some time with the principal and deputy principal. "Heart sore" and/or "Desperate" are both apt descriptions of how I felt when in this school. Up to 70 learners are in a class, with one educator. Some educators have to share classrooms, as they have insufficient classrooms and two grades are taught simultaneously, by two separate teachers with in excess of 100 learners in the classroom. In one class, 60 learners shared, 12 desks, and in another children sat on the cold, damp and muddy floor, trying to write a mid-year evaluation test, pressing onto the bucket-type seat of a plastic chair, as they had no desks. In another class, almost half of the class was seated with their backs to the chalkboard, upon which was written their tasks for the day. (These Foundation Phase children could only view the activities by twisting themselves about time and time again, to copy their activities from the board). The school grounds were a muddy morass. Almost all of the Foundation Phase learners had an additional pair of oversized socks with them, which they pulled on over their muddy shoes, when entering the classroom (and removed them when outside). This is obviously in an attempt to keep the classrooms as clean as possible). Some educators were stoically silent, some blatantly rude and disinterested. Some were keen, willing and desperate to learn and some mildly interested in the day's proceedings.

Our incredible trainers coaxed lessons out of two Intermediate Phase/Senior Phase teachers and five Foundation Phase teachers, all of whom reported back to the phase group, on what a rewarding and growth opportunity they had experienced. One Senior Phase teacher said he felt completely supported by the presence of the trainers and added that through using the pictures from Edupeg for his Arts and Culture lesson, he experienced an involvement and level of enthusiasm and engagement from his learners as never experienced previously.

This school needs urgent departmental support to assist with the poor state of the school - both classrooms and grounds; the lack of furniture, the lack of motivation of many of the staff, the poor working conditions of the educators and the poor learning conditions of the pupils. I observed some very aggressive behaviour in the playground, including the throwing of very large stones. No playground supervision was evident. Also, a stampede for food was observed in the Foundation Phase classroom, where children climbed onto and ran over the desks to



get their food - something I have never seen in the 37 years that I have been involved in primary school education. Some more functional plan needs to be made to address the challenges faced in schools, where teachers are on study leave. Learners are involved in crucial mid-year assessments at present, and teachers, and in this school the deputy principal and principal have been/are absent on their own study leave/absence to write examinations. I passed numerous classrooms where no educator was evident. In one Foundation Phase classroom, at 11h50, the children were all sitting restless, with absolutely nothing to do, while the teacher completed her mark schedule. Surely teachers are advised that they need to teach during allocated teaching hours, and that clerical work is completed once the children go home.



We were warmly welcomed at Seven Fountains Primary School, and all was in readiness for our visit. 3 Lessons had been prepared in each phase and the interaction in the classes was very positive. All the classrooms that I visited were neat, clean, tidy and attractive. Storage areas, including cupboards and bookshelves were available, and in almost all instances, these are new and carefully packed. Attractive wall charts, children's work and teaching resources are displayed artistically on many of the classroom walls.



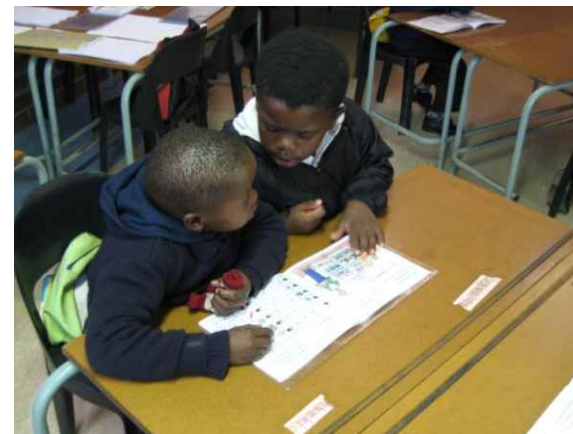
Although the school has tried to limit the enrolment this year, and although they have fewer pupils than last year, the classrooms are still very full, and at times it is quite challenging to move between the desks. In the classroom in which I observed, children were seated in groups, but no real group work took place. All learners are taught the same lesson, at the same pace and at the same time. It is also disturbing that in this school too, in some of the classes that I visited, children are seated in groups with their backs to the chalkboard (where the major portion of teaching takes place and where frequently the activities are written). It was most encouraging to see an attempt to utilise concrete equipment as an integral part of the lesson. As the number of objects with which the learners were dealing, was with multiple decades, Unifix blocks would have been a far preferable resource, but the school does not have this equipment. We did talk to Ms Jafta about Unifix and demonstrated the use of these resources to her. She is very keen to try to get this equipment which is very useful for teaching and making mathematical concepts more clear. (I have found a source for this equipment in Kokstad, and will discuss this with Claire).



Ingrid ran a very informative informal information session for the Foundation Phase teachers and Vuyo and Kiviet did the same in the Intermediate Phase. I attended the former. The range of interest wavered, from those who were keen and enthusiastic, to those who appeared disinterested and bored. Resources are not part of the teaching culture in many of the schools in which we work. I noticed that much of the attractive equipment in the LSEN class, in which we met, was brand new and unused, where some of the items were still sealed in their plastic bags. The children could make great use of these valuable teaching aids, and through use, could develop concentration, thinking skills, understand and consolidate concepts and get valuable practice in perceptual development.



We noticed much aggressive behaviour in the playground at all schools, and when discussing this with teachers, they cite television as the culprit. Apparently the children watch wrestling on tv and I observed much very rough and potentially harmful "play". Perhaps some "hopscotch" type games could be painted onto the paved areas, and skipping ropes, balls and more constructive types of recreational games could be introduced. The communal skipping games using elastic might also find favour here. It is disappointing to continue to see learners struggling to



record a written activity with a tiny hub of a pencil. All the schools that we visit are eligible for basic teaching and learning materials to be requisitioned. It is hoped that the quantities required are requested and also that not the cheapest options are ordered. Cheap pencils often work out more "expensive" in the long run, as they continually break, when being sharpened. Teachers often continue to need to be reminded to sharpen pencils provided (a box of unsharpened pencils, secreted in a cupboard is of little use when one is deeply involved in a lesson and a pencil/s is needed). Having a classroom sharpener and monitors is still foreign to many of the teachers with whom we work, and once again we encouraged this practice.



Ingrid and I spent some time at Kokstad Junior, the ex model C school. We hoped to try to encourage some type of mentorship for the large township schools and also to enquire if they, or any schools in the wider circuit, might have some spare classroom furniture. Unfortunately the principal was away on a course, but we had a very valuable interaction with the two deputy principals, Michelle Barker and Louise Kluike.



We also visited an inspirational little primary school, being run in the Presbyterian Manse. Children at this busy little school are getting a wonderful education, by totally committed and caring teachers. The intention is to create this "bridging school", which will bring children up to an acceptable standard, whereby the learners will be able to enter high school with the necessary skills to succeed. I would like to try to support this little school, as the contribution that they are making is very evident and they are working in very challenging conditions.



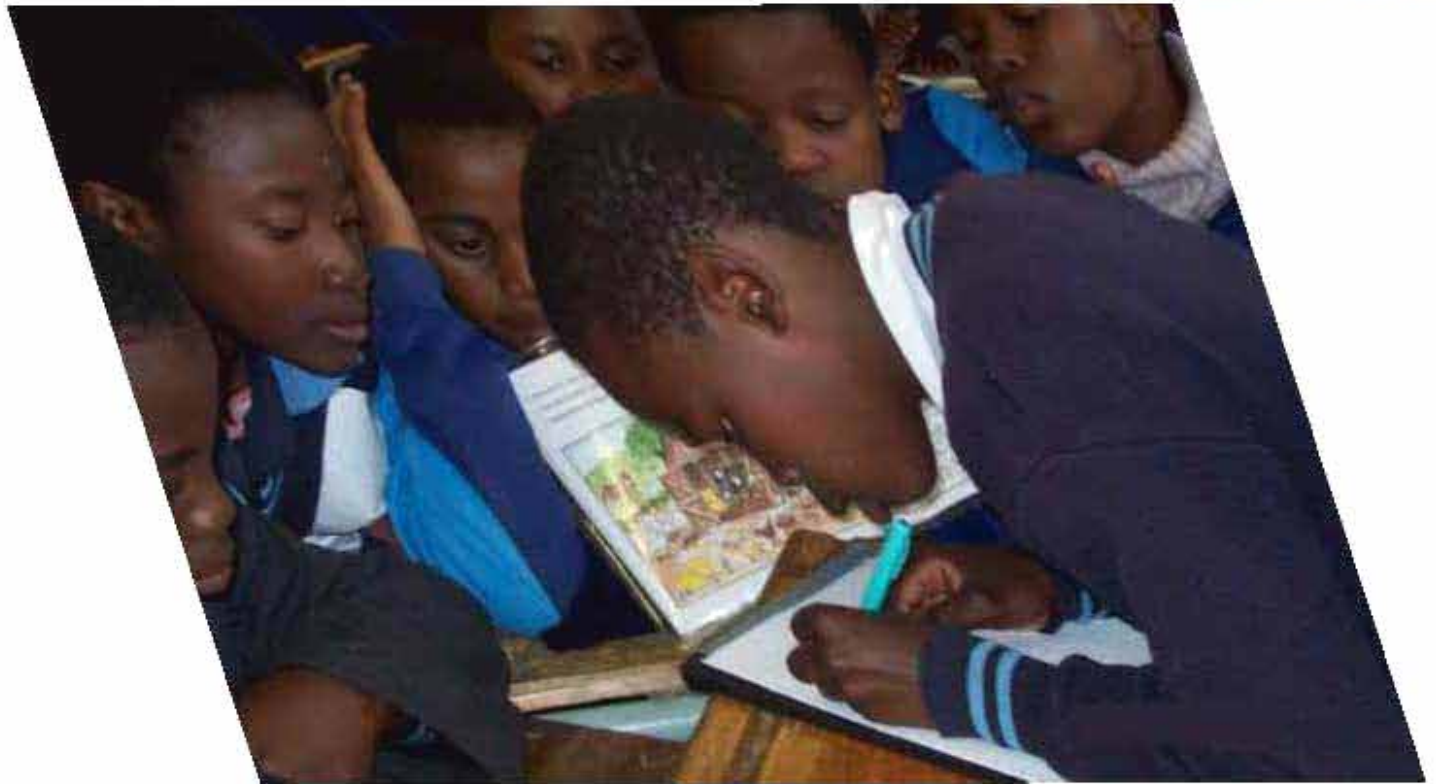
The township area of Kokstad where we work, Shayamoya, is very bleak in mid Winter. The roads are a series of potholes and vehicles drive on the pavements where possible. The majority of houses are the small RDP houses and the community has grown enormously due to those who have left their more rural surrounds, to travel to an urban area where they will qualify for an RDP house. Many are in a poor state of repair and one wonders how these small structures house all the inhabitants of a family, as from the number of children in the schools, there must be multiple children per family. Some teachers report that with the high level of unemployment, parents do have many children and the families live off the social child grants.

This trip, I included our KZN trainers, and we thus had a full integration of all training teams. Next year, I will withdraw our Western Cape team and keep the other 4 trainers in this cluster.



We thank our generous donors, SACTWU, The HCI Foundation and Vukani Gaming/V-Slots, for their generous funding. We thank too, our dedicated trainers, all of whom travel long distances to support the educators and learners in this area.





KOKSTAD
17-18 JUNE 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- This has been a very helpful and stimulating experience for learners as well as educators. We would like more of these interactions with Edupeg. (Xoloxolo Primary School)
- We appreciate the support and advice provided to us by the Edupeg trainers. Edupeg has really taken our teaching and classroom to a better level. Thank you Edupeg. (Seven Fountains Primary School)
- We are very much pleased to use your resources as they form integration for all Learning Areas, and are used by all grades. We also appreciate the follow up workshops that are done. (Nomzamo Primary School)

REGION: **Kwa-Zulu Natal: Umlazi**

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

Our previous visit to Umlazi was not that successful. Some schools, although they had acknowledged the receipt of their training information, and had indicated that all was in order for our visit, had made no preparation for our visit and lessons had not been planned for our trainers to observe. This visit was by comparison, highly successful.

All principals were present at school, and they welcomed the training team with warmth and appreciation. All principals acknowledged the receipt of additional materials with gratitude, and also voiced their appreciation for the resources, and for the valued support from the trainers. In two of the schools, the schools and surrounds are reported to be fenced, neat and tidy and with flower gardens and vegetable gardens that are well maintained.

At Mgada Lower Primary, the school yard is reported to be very much improved. Isinkontshe Combined School is reported to need maintenance, and many classroom windows are reported to be broken. Lessons had been prepared in all the phases, and the educators in all schools showed a willingness and eagerness, to demonstrate what they have learnt. Pupils were reported to enjoy the Edupeg activities that were set, and that the pictures promoted language use due to the interest and detail contained in the pictures. Educators were expecting children to answer questions posed in full sentences, which is encouraging to note. Learners were reported to be active and communication between educators and learners was good. What is also pleasing, is that in almost all instances, the Edupeg resources were used in such a way as to encourage varied activities in the classroom. Teachers welcomed the support of our trainers as they tried this method of teaching. Educators were all very pleased with the outcome of having different activities for the various groups.

Some classes are still very large, and overcrowding of the classrooms makes it very challenging for teachers to move around between the desks, assisting learners and assessing their work. With less discipline problems to contend with, teachers were more visibly relaxed. At one school, it was remarked upon that the teacher took time to praise the efforts of the children, and how the learners greatly appreciated, and positively responded to this recognition.

There was a very much more positive atmosphere during this week of training. Although we visited close to the end of the term, we were well received. Special thanks to our donors, SACTWU, Vukani Gaming/V-Slots and The HCI Foundation, who make possible this training through their reliable funding.

Thanks to our very dedicated KZN training team. Their wisdom and sensitivity are much appreciated.

Interactive gatherings were held at all schools, and feedback was given as stated below. (Trainers did not ask just for positive feedback, but this is what was volunteered).

Some successes from the educators:

Mgada Lower Primary

- Learners have learned to work on their own.
- It is so educational and enjoyable.
- Learners are able to solve the problem sums whilst enjoying and playing with the pegboards.
- We are able to attend to the weak groups whilst the intelligent groups are busy doing more advanced activities.
- Thank you Edupeg manager, our learners are always occupied, and active in their groups in a relaxed atmosphere.

Esiphukwini Primary School

- Learners enjoy Edupeg.
- They are able to work in groups, thereafter as individuals.
- It promotes reading, creativeness and develops concentration, perceptual skills and critical thinking skills.
- It is suitable for all learners.
- It creates a love for Maths.
- The workbooks' colourful pictures attract the learners.
- In Grade R's up to Grade Three's, perceptual skills are developed when using the Edupeg material

Engonyameni Senior Primary School

- Edupeg workbooks are excellent in promoting reading to the learners.
- The language in the Edupeg workbooks is at the learners' level of development.
- Edupeg material makes it easier for educators to teach all the themes with ease, in a playful way.
- Edupeg integrates with all Learning Areas.

Isinkontshe Senior Primary School

- In my capacity as an HOD in the Intermediate and Senior Phases, I hereby testify that the use of Edupeg material is a success, ever since we started to use it.
- The lessons or activities in each book are learner-centred whereby the learners themselves have a task to build or collect information or knowledge.
- Though Edupeg material has been previously judged as more of Mathematical support, with help from Edupeg facilitators it has been discovered that the material embraces all Learning Areas with all its Learning Outcomes as tabulated in the New Curriculum Statement (NCS).
- As much as this Edupeg material is helpful, its success also depends on educators being well equipped and informed on how to use it. The resources are very flexible.
- We request more workshops and school visits. We even would like to see Edupeg providing some sort of formal Assessment Test, to ensure its effectiveness.





UMLAZI
9-12 JUNE 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- On behalf of our school we appreciate and thank Edupeg for assisting our school in the daily teaching and learning process. Thank you (Isinkontshe Combined Primary School)
- Edupeg is within the standard of learners in any environment. Learners display enjoyment and are excited when using the programme. It is integrated with any learning area. (Mgada Lower Primary School)
- Thank you very much for the empowering and developing programme you gave us. Learners and educators find it very interesting and look forward to hearing and getting more from you. (Esiphukwini Junior Primary School)
- Learners progress, attitudes, performance has changed, due to Edupeg's educational resources and the assistance that is offered by Edupeg trainers. We still need your service. (Engonyameni Senior Primary School)

REGION: **Kwa-Zulu Natal: Ndwedwe**

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Amatata Primary School	363	11
Ingcukwini Primary School	324	7
Hawa Primary School	168	4
Emakheni Primary School	294	9
Kwajessop Primary School	479	13
Umsunduze Primary School	327	7
Ubuhlebemfundo Primary School	355	8
Mqedi Primary School	402	10
	2712	69

Most of the schools in this cluster are situated in fairly rural surroundings. Many of the schools are reported to be neat and tidy, although some do need physical, building maintenance.

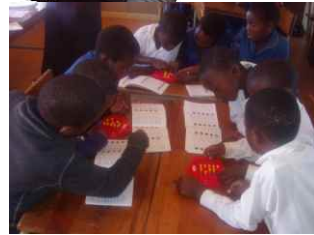
The educators and principals at all the schools were warm and welcoming, and pleased to see the trainers. Lesson notes were evident in almost all schools, and teachers were prepared and willing to teach lessons. The educators in this cluster show a keenness, and willingness to improve their teaching skills, which is most encouraging.



Almost all the classrooms are described as being neat and tidy, with attractive educational charts displayed on the walls. Learners' work is also displayed. Educators with whom we interact in Kwa-Zulu Natal, almost all seem to be concerned about the learning environment in which they teach their learners, and try to make this conducive to the uptake of information. The children at these schools all benefit from school feeding. The learners are described as being attentive and very keen to participate in lessons. They engage readily in activities and are becoming more conversant with working in small classroom groups. Most classes that we visit are arranged in groups, but this physical lay out of desks does not always equate to group teaching.



Many teachers indicated that they still required additional support with understanding integration, and in many schools, small informal workshops followed the school visits. These were well received and teachers were grateful for the time dedicated to this. Some positive feedback from the workshops was that after using Edupeg:-



- Reading and spelling shows improvement
- Thinking and reasoning skills are developed
- Improvement of motor skills
- Enjoyment and competitiveness amongst learners
- Integration of Learning Areas better understood
- Additional activities are available for quick learners
- Concentration skills are developed
- Edupeg is good for reading and sentence construction
- Edupeg caters for all Learning Areas
- Development and improvement of Perceptual Skills



One is humbled by the generosity of spirit of so many of these schools. The feeder schools for the Higher Primary Schools were alerted of our visit, and came to the informal workshops to find out about the programme/system of teaching that has been causing a positive stir in the community. We have decided that it would be valuable and sensible to resource these Foundation Phase feeder schools, so that when the children arrive in Grade 4/5 (at the Upper Primary Schools), they will have a solid foundation re the use of Edupeg.



Poor roads plague this area, and our trainers needed to walk the final 2 km to reach a school, as the road was not able to be traversed by car.

I pay great tribute to the dedicated Kwa-Zulu Natal team, who take all that they come across, in their stride. They motivate, support and encourage the educators with whom they interact, with warmth, sensitivity and genuine concern.



Sincere thanks to our generous donors, SACTWU, The HCI Foundation and Vukani Gaming/V-Slots Kwa-Zulu Natal, who make possible the work that we do in this cluster, due to their generous sponsorship.

NDWEDWE

21 APRIL – 8 MAY 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- Edupeg material is kept clean and stored safely. The school has received the new material and thank you very much. (Amatata Primary School)
- Our school is very thankful of the material. We hope it will be used to help learners to achieve Learning Outcomes in different Learning Areas. (Ingcukwini Primary School)
- Thank you for the material brought to us by Edupeg. We would like to have a new workshop because we are totally new to this. Teachers who were at school are no longer serving in our school. (Hawa Senior Primary School)
- Dear Sir/Madam. We request you to provide M.I. Paruk Primary School with its own materials please. (M.I. Paruk Primary School)
- Evaluators were good. Educators gained a lot from them. We wish that the Edupeg programme to be implemented continuously in our school. (Emakheni Primary School)
- The programme was to perfection. It is (a programme of) quality, high standard, and interesting to educators and learners as well. If possible, please align the programme by drafting some NCS Lesson Plan. (Kwa Jessop Primary School)
- We appreciate your support. The material is of great help. We promise to take good care of them – suggesting regular monitoring. (Umsunduze Higher Primary School)
- The material provided will be very much useful to our teachers and learners as it can be used in every subject. Thank you. (Ubuhlebemfundo Primary School)
- We are very glad about the programme Edupeg is offering. We would like Edupeg to offer this programme to our feeder schools. (Mqedi Senior Primary School)



What is very encouraging is that in this cluster, virtually all principals were at school, in their posts, during our school visits. One principal was away at a principal's meeting, and one was absent due to a workshop. Even though principals have multiple functions and responsibilities, almost all principals took the time to greet our trainers, and to share with Sibongile and Nomvuzo, their appreciation for the educational resources, as well as the school training support. Both trainers particularly mentioned the warmth with which they were received, and the sincerity of their interaction with the school management.

Lessons had been prepared at almost all schools, and teachers showed an increased enthusiasm and willingness to do lessons for our trainers to observe. Educators have become increasingly aware that they gain valuable experience, feedback, support and input through hosting one of the Edupeg trainers.

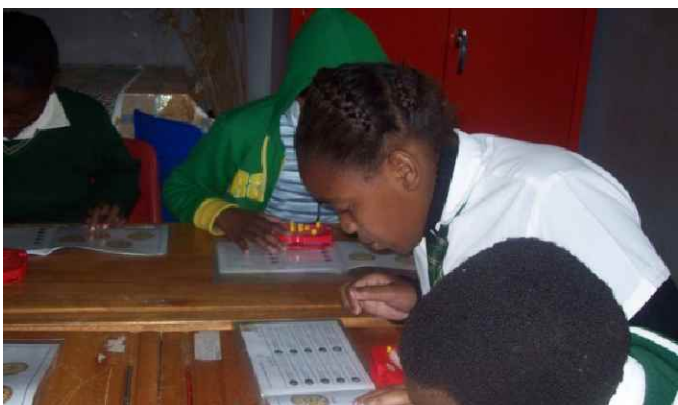


Some schools needed refresher workshops, and the tone and mood of these gatherings was reported to be very positive. Teachers appreciate the safe environment created during the workshops, where they can interact with colleagues, ask questions in a safe, non-threatening (and non-ridiculing) environment, and where they can be helped and supported with issues that they are finding challenging in their classrooms.

One huge obstacle to learning in many of the classes that we visited in these clusters, was the size of the classes. Ninety children in a class is still quite common place. The learners sit packed into their classrooms, usually with more than the 2 pupils per desk, for which the furniture was manufactured. The quantity of classroom furniture required, virtually fills the classroom, and makes movement about the room almost impossible. The teacher is unable to get to the learners to give any assistance required; nor is she able to assess their written tasks, as they are busy with them. This situation is also very tiring and draining on the educators. Controlling, stimulating and teaching such a large group of learners, daily, is not conducive to a well motivated, contented staff.



It is very pleasing to be aware that many teachers are now planning more activities for the learners, and with which learners are actively engaged. All classrooms are described as having educational charts on the walls and many classrooms also have project work of the learners displayed. Schools are also almost all described as being neat, tidy and attractive. Almost all are fenced, and many have flower gardens. A number of schools have cultivated vegetable gardens, and the produce is used to supplement the school feeding meals. All of the schools we visit benefit from school feeding.



The quiet patience and wisdom of our two more mature Kwa-Zulu Natal trainers, have played a critical role in the trust and respect that they have been shown by the educators with whom they interact. Sibongile and Nomvuzo have been very well received by all of the schools, and sincere thanks to both of these fine women, for the work that they do for us. Thanks too to Thobelani for his careful driving and training support.

Sincere thanks to our generous donors, SACTWU, The HCI Foundation and Vukani Gaming/V-Slots, for their committed funding, which makes possible the work that we do in this cluster.



Feedback from workshops:

Mboko Senior Primary

Some challenges from the educators.

- Some pegboards were reported to be sticking.
- Recording.

Some successes from educators.

- Edupeg improves vocabulary and promotes reading.
- Edupeg develops critical thinking skills and the workbooks have different activities that suit different ability groups.
- Edupeg creates a love of Maths.

Masuku Senior Primary

Some challenges from the Foundation Phase educators.

- Record sheets.
- Pegboards being stuck.
- Some Grade 2 and 3 workbooks should be written in English, because sometimes educators use both languages in teaching i.e. English and Zulu.

Some successes from the Foundation Phase educators.

- The Resource Book is easy, with good suggestions.
- Learner's abilities are identified.
- Edupeg caters for all learners, especially slow learners; therefore the learner's individual needs are satisfied.
- To educators, Edupeg is not strenuous. It does not require a lot of paper work. It has many different activities suitable for the different abilities of the learners.

Some challenges from the Intermediate and Senior Phase educators.

- To integrate with other Learning Areas.
- Pegboards being stuck.
- Learners had a negative attitude towards Maths, which demotivated me.

Some successes from the Intermediate and Senior Phase educators.

- Edupeg changed the atmosphere to be learner centred, where all learners are busy during Maths lessons.
- Every learner is fully participating.
- Learners are also working independently without any fear of being unsuccessful.
- Edupeg has contributed a lot by making learners become critical thinkers and problem solvers, thus equipping them for the world of technology that they are all facing.
- Edupeg facilitates learning, as it is simple and easily understood by learners. This system, where learners assess themselves in Edupeg, has been automatically transferred to other Learning Areas.
- Edupeg helps learners to develop a positive attitude towards Maths.
- Edupeg has revived my love for Maths teaching.

Intinyane Combined Primary

Some challenges from educators.

- Edupeg can be time consuming.
- Chaos can be caused by the learners' excitement.

Some successes from educators.

- Edupeg promotes critical thinking skills.
- Edupeg promotes eye- hand co-ordination.
- Edupeg improves vocabulary.
- Edupeg helps children to develop perceptual skills and concentration.

Mpulule Combined Primary

Some challenges from the educators.

- Language is the main problem.
- The number in class does not allow individual attention.
- The main subject is Maths and you integrate with other subjects i.e. an educator who is not a Maths teacher becomes a problem.

Some successes from the educators.

- It is good because its easy to integrate with other Learning Areas.
- The learners enjoy all activities because it is easy to work as a group .
- It helps discipline the learners.
- Edupeg saves time.
- Learners are actively involved.
- A skill of sharing is developed.
- Learners with problems are assisted by those without problems.
- The environment becomes conducive and that creates an environment of better understanding.

Tobi Senior Primary

Some challenges from the educators:

- Difficulty in manipulating the pegboards.
- Integration with other Learning Areas.

Equgwini Combined Primary

Some successes from the educators:

- Good for reading and sentence construction.
- Improves Maths.
- Develops critical thinking, perceptual skills and concentration.
- Caters for all Learning Areas.

Some challenges from the Senior Phase educators:

- Learners sometimes are unable to score or use the personal record sheets effectively.
- Integration with other Learning Areas.

Some successes from the educators:

- Edupeg workbooks are excellent in promoting reading with the learners.
- Language, too, in Edupeg workbooks is at the learners' level of development.
- Edupeg material makes it easier for educators to teach all the themes with ease, in a playful way.

Some challenges from Grade R and Grade 1 educators:

- The educators need a demonstration in Grade R and Grade 1.
- Learners tend to fail to use other Learning Areas because of the love of Edupeg activities.

Some successes from the Foundation Phase educators:

- Easy to use for different kinds of assessment.
- It relaxes their minds and promotes the use of the fine motor-skills.
- It promotes thinking skills and eye-hand co-ordination.
- It integrates all Learning Areas.
- Since it is perceived as a toy of some kind, learners want to use it for the rest of the day.

Magama Senior Primary

Some challenges from the Senior Phase educators:

- Difficulty in manipulating the pegboards.
- Sending somebody to the workshop who does not give feedback to other colleagues.

Some successes from the Senior Phase educators:

- The material is very good. Since we used it the learners have shown great improvement in Maths.
- It promotes reading, creates a love of Maths and encourages a high level of critical thinking skills.
- It integrates other Learning Areas.
- Learners can work as individuals, with confidence, and they do enjoy it.
- It helps learners to participate and encourages group work.

Khiphulwazi Senior Primary

Some successes from the educators:

- The material is very good.
- It integrates with other Learning Areas.



REPORT : SECOND QUARTER 2008

BY BRENDA VILBRO

I met with the facilitators during the holidays to plan our visits for classroom observations in the second quarter. When we telephonically reminded the teachers of our visits into the schools for the second term, we realised that teachers were reluctant to commit to be observed. This displays once again the lack of confidence and self-esteem that teachers have.

This round of visits into schools was quite challenging. It took much negotiation with the teachers to persuade them to be observed. They had many excuses, eg. "I am not ready," and "I did not attend the first workshop," etc. I had to be assertive in the negotiations. Once the teachers made the attempt to be observed using the Edupeg programme, and experienced being observed by the other teachers and the facilitators, they soon realised the value of this exercise. During the feedback session after the lesson these teachers were able to gain much knowledge and insight into their lesson. In many instances, after the lesson, a teacher who observed, volunteered to teach and be observed on our next visit to the school.

As I accompanied the facilitators to the schools about four times per month, Phumzile and Kiviet had to learn quickly how to be more assertive with the teachers so that this component of the programme, ie classroom observations could be achieved.

I have been absolutely delighted to observe the personal and professional growth of our facilitators, Kiviet and Phumzile, since the re-launch of the programme into Kwa-Zulu Natal. Their self esteem and confidence have been boosted to such an extent that it is clearly evident in their interactions with the principals and teachers. They have also completed their lessons with the driving school and will shortly be going for their driver's licence test. As we meet on a weekly basis for report-writing, we also use this opportunity to share knowledge and gain computer skills, all of which have improved enormously.

As we approached the middle of the term, the atmosphere in the schools was tense and one of looming strike action. Due to the strike, further visits and workshops in the schools were cancelled. I remain hopeful that the issues are soon to be resolved so that schools may get back to normal and where schools strive to be places of effective teaching and learning.

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