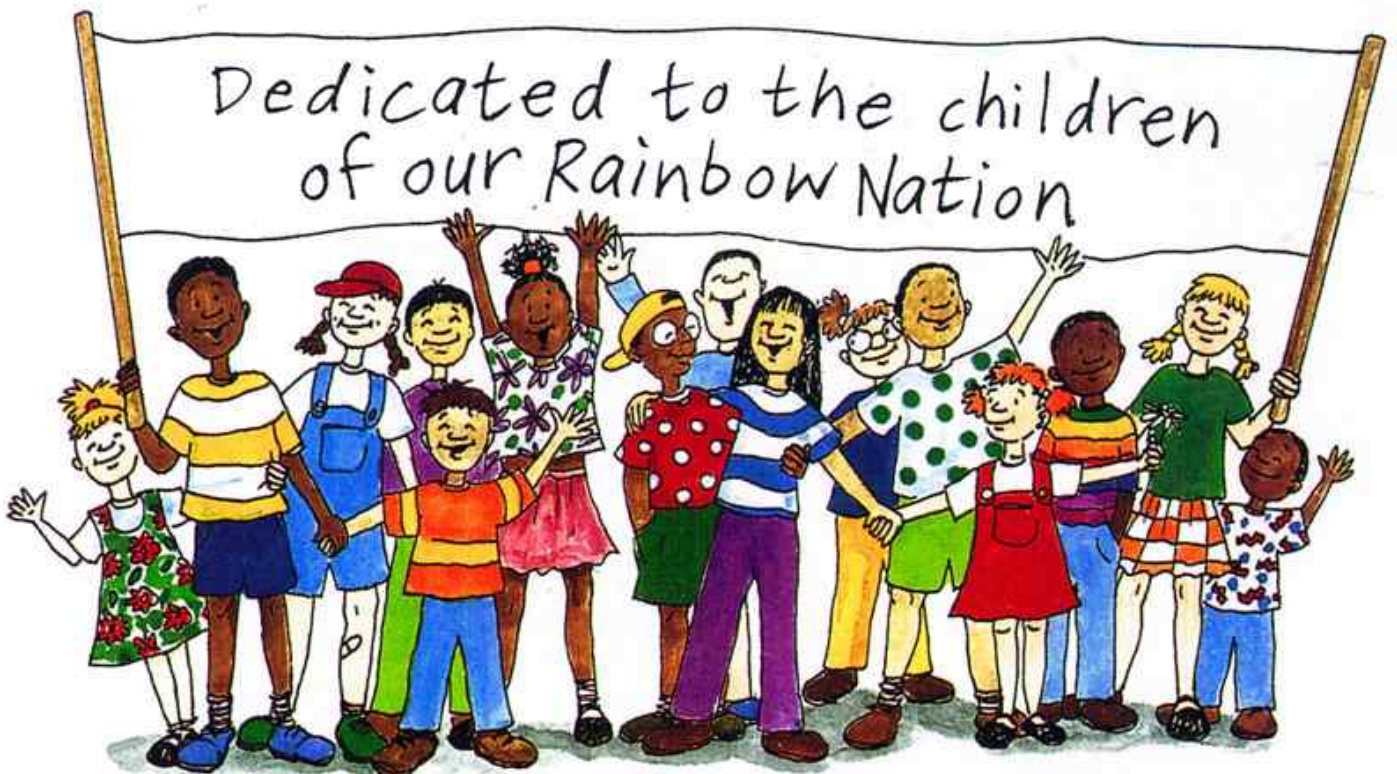




Edu-peg

THE SACTWU EDUPEG PROJECT

3rd 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



**THE SACTWU
EDUPEG PROJECT**

**3rd QUARTER REPORTS
2008**

EASTERN CAPE



REGION: Eastern Cape: Kolomane
DATE: 21-25 Jul 2008

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Mandlakapheli Primary School	58	8
Buthisizwe Primary School	261	8
Sinethemba Anta Primary School	46	5
Zimale Anta Primary School	125	8
Masiphatisane Primary School	60	6
	550	35

We were specifically asked by the Eastern Cape Department of Education, to support the five very rural schools in this cluster. Access to these schools is challenging, as the road conditions are very poor. For the school visits this week we hired a bakkie, which is obviously a more robust vehicle, and better able to deal with the very poor road surfaces.

I met with our Eastern Cape trainers immediately after their week in Kolomane, and they were fairly despondent about the visit. All five principals were absent at a week long training workshop in Fort Beaufort. As many principals are also teaching principals, this also impacted on the sharing of knowledge, methods and skills. Additional teachers were also absent from their schools, some apparently also due to more workshops. Some teachers were experiencing transport challenges and were not at school either and some teachers arrived late, also due to travel difficulties.

In one school, Mandlakapheli Primary, the school governing body were attempting to occupy the learners until the educators arrived. However, in all other schools, minimal or no teaching was taking place. Vuyo mentions in her report of how aggressive the children were at one school at the commencement of the school day, and how there was much fighting in the school. She goes on to describe how the children soon settled down once given activities to do, and how the atmosphere in the classroom changed once the learners were actively engaged in activities. In one school, there were virtually no learners at school. One school would not allow our trainers access to either themselves or the classrooms.

I need to commend both Vuyo & Hluma, who remain professional and diplomatic, even under the most challenging of circumstances. They continue to quietly seek a way forward whereby they can best engage with the educators and learners. Once in classrooms, the educators are thrilled with the new skills and methods that are demonstrated and how easily the Edupeg resources can be used along with the curriculum. Our trainers emphasize the necessity to plan and to include resources in lessons, as well as demonstrating how to best support the varied learner abilities in a class. Methods where children are more actively engaged in lessons and where the learners are able to verbalise freely (in groups or pairs), and where they can share ideas, are shown to teachers.

Many teachers still practice "talk + chalk" type lessons, where the focus, pace, content, etc of the lesson is controlled by the teacher. Our trainers frequently report the reluctance of the learners to verbally engage in such lessons, as they do not want to be exposed by possibly giving incorrect answers. Alternative methods are sensitively shared with educators. All those teachers with whom we were able to engage, were very positive and extremely grateful for the help and assistance that they received from our trainers. Educators were very pleased to note the increased involvement of their learners, in lessons that were more learner centered, and where more stimulating and exciting tasks were set.

The preparation and cost of going into an area such as Kolomane, is not insignificant, and I will follow up with the Fort Beaufort district office, why we were not informed that our visit, planned in November of 2007, and confirmed in early 2008 and in June and July 2008, clashed with other departmental training. The efficacy of Edupeg, its impact on teaching and learning, etc could be asked to be evaluated, and the impact in a cluster such as Kolomane would be reflected as to be poor and which would be due to circumstances beyond the control of Edupeg. It would appear that no departmental support or encouragement is being given to this valuable resource, which was specifically requested for this isolated area. I will follow up on all concerns I have about this cluster. We are scheduled to return to Kolomane next quarter, and we look forward to a more positive visit.

Special thanks to our patient and generous donors, our dedicated trainers and our administrative staff, all of whom contribute to each cluster training.



KOLOMANE
21-25 JULY 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- The programme is good for every Learning Area. It is very easy. It has attractive pictures.
(Masiphatisane Primary School)
- Edupeg has helped us with all their resources. Edupeg even helps our pupils with education.
We would like Edupeg to not forget us. (Zimasile Anta School)
- At least children understand well when looking at pictures. (Sinethemba Anta Primary School)
- Because of the clusters we have we didn't have enough time to use/deal with Edupeg.
(Buthisizwe Anta Lower and Higher Primary School)
- Edupeg is good, but we have not had enough time to use it this year. We have not used it.
(Mandlakapheli Primary School)

We arrived at D.D Siwisa Primary school on a beautiful, clear Eastern Cape morning. Two young students opened the gates for us, and the entire school was noted to be fully fenced. The school was neat, clean and attractive and generally very well maintained. No litter was evident in the grounds and the admin area were neat and clean, with the floors polished and shining. We were ushered to the principal's office, which was also neat and tidy.

REGION:

Eastern Cape: Fort Brown, Peddie, Grahamstown

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Fort Brown Primary School	69	7
D.D. Siwisa Primary School	526	14
	595	21

It was disappointing that the responsibility for the arrangement for our visit had apparently been handed to the phase H.O.D's, and much confusion abounded. Well after nine, an Intermediate Phase lesson was arranged. I asked to view the resources storage, which was somewhat messy, with a borrowing system that had not been utilised since 2005, and where many of the resources were missing. It transpired that educators were apparently still unsure how to best utilise the resources - after 4 years of support. Demonstration lessons were arranged and I decided to take the class where Vuyo had observed a lesson, and where a general info session was in process. The learners in this Grade 4 class had been set a task to answer written questions and it was very apparent that they were not accustomed to such activities. I took the class outdoors where we approached this aspect through verbal fun, interactive group-work, and I felt quite confident that much had been achieved. There were huge disparities between the ability levels of the pupils, and yet this class had all been given the same activity and time frame in which to complete the task. No extension work was provided for the obvious group of bright, enthusiastic learners, and no allowances had been made for the very weak children, many of whom lacked confidence and self-esteem.

It was rewarding for me and also enjoyable to teach a class group, and to have them seek me out after break to ask if I was coming back to teach them, as they had so enjoyed the lesson. Their obviously caring, diligent and conscientious teacher advised me that she can no longer cope with the pressure of her job, and will be leaving the teaching profession by year end - at the latest.

I also spent some time in Grade R, showing the very enthusiastic teacher how to best utilise the perceptual activities in the Edupeg books, to support her Grade R group of learners. This teacher has 36, 3,4,5 & 6 year olds, and is extremely hard pressed to meet the very diverse needs of these young children, as well as deliver on what is expected of a Grade R child on entry to Grade 1. She has inadequate seating for these children and virtually all the chairs available to her are broken and a hazard to young learners. The practical and tactile equipment at her disposal is hopelessly inadequate for her task.

I was much disheartened at this visit. The initial impression of a neat and attractive school, was soon eroded by the awareness of the poorly kept and under-utilised resources provided, the lack of commitment to prepare for our visit, the lack of team work in the grades and phases and teachers exiting school virtually before the learners. Obviously little marking or planning is prioritised in the provided time slots for this. The principal took great exception to my very politely and diplomatically discussing the seating situation of the very young learners in the Grade R class, and I left the school feeling very deflated.

By contrast Fort Brown was a delight. I had met with Diana Hornby, of The Angus Gillis Foundation, late on Wednesday afternoon, and was excited to see for myself, the newly erected school. This facility has been built by The Angus Gillis Foundation and then handed to the Eastern Cape Department of Education.

The school is in great condition and all of the classrooms are bright, airy and attractive centers of learning. I was particularly impressed by the learners, who appear to be more caringly nurtured, (from their home environment), than many of the semi-rural children with whom we work. All of the children were spotlessly clean, and their faces radiated enthusiasm and willingness to learn.

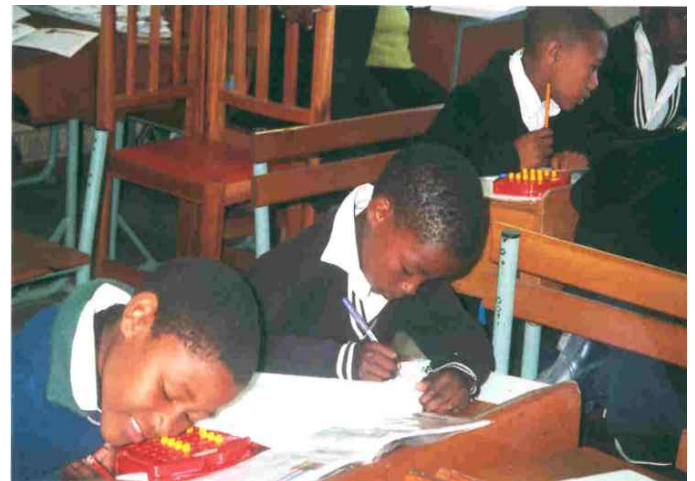
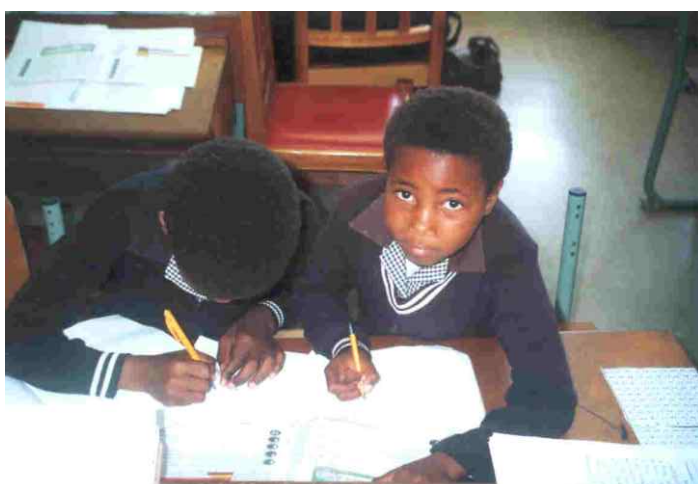


Fort Brown lies ± 30 km from Grahamstown and transport for the teachers can be very challenging. The Foundation Phase teacher needs to hitch-hike this distance daily. I well remember this teacher, her dedication and genuine care of her learners. Her multi-grade class are well used to individualize activities, and it was rewarding to observe these children, industriously involved in their set tasks.

Vuyo assisted Mrs Ndlebe with her planned lesson. Vuyo must be commended for the quiet, courteous manner in which she works with educators. Vuyo obviously has a good grasp of all Learning Areas and teaching methodology. However she patiently and respectfully observes and only when appropriate, does she intervene. This is done with sensitivity and diplomacy and she always includes the educator in the solution. We were sorry not to be able to meet with the other educator, who was at a RUMEP workshop. An educator who has now left the school, took some Edupeg resources with him. I discussed an improved storage facility with Mrs Ndlebe, and the necessity to check resources at least once a term. We will replace the missing stock.

We will continue to support these two schools, as teachers continue to benefit from our training intervention.

Sincere thanks to all who make this intervention possible - from our donors, the Eastern Cape Department of Education, our trainers and administrative staff.



GRAHAMSTOWN/FORT BROWN
JULY 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- Edupeg materials are very much useful in our school. They help us to make teaching and learning easier. (Fort Brown Primary School)
- There's only one educator who uses the kit and I always encourage the educators especially in the Foundation Phase. There are two in the Senior and Intermediate Phase who use this kit. (D.D Siwisa Primary School)

REGION: Eastern Cape: Queenstown & Whittlesea

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Romanslaagte Primary School	67	7
Welcome Valley	373	9
	440	16

It is of a concern, that teachers in a number of schools into which we work, appear to lack either the skills and capacity or the necessary retention, to enable them to implement what has been patiently, sensitively and methodically demonstrated in both workshop and classroom environments.



All educators claim to recognise the value and usefulness of the resources, and how these attractive, colourful and comprehensive materials are highly relevant to the curriculum. Learners in the more rural areas frequently lack any form of print media at home, and the beautiful and widely varied pictures in the Edupeg books provide opportunities for language enrichment and development in first and second language, as well as enhance the awareness of the learners, of the outside world. This too is frequently mentioned by educators. It is extremely disheartening to come across schools where lack of skills/capacity/organisation, etc results in our valuable resources being un-cared for, under-utilised, and dis-respected.

The circumstances described at Romanslaagte Primary School appear to require urgent departmental intervention. The description of learners observed to be receiving no tuition at all is obviously of grave concern, and the description of the general disarray of the school is worrying.



Welcome Valley Senior Primary appear to have a more motivated staff and a more structured and organised school environment. Educator co-operation and teamwork are reported and a willingness to engage with the programme.

I intend to re-schedule visits to both of these schools this term, as the circumstances described above, warrant this.



QUEENSTOWN & WHITTLESEA
28-29 JULY 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- We appreciated the way the facilitators conducted the workshop. It is really fruitful and will help us further in doing our work successfully. (Welcome Valley Primary School)
- Satisfactory. Encourage us how to integrate in different learning areas. (Romanslaagte Primary School)

REGION: Eastern Cape - Cintsa

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Cintsa East Primary School	131	8
	131	8

After a very successful visit to this school in late April, this was a very disappointing visit. After detailed and careful communication with the school over a period of weeks, in connection with the visit and confirmation phone calls, faxes, and written communication, the school alerted us the afternoon prior to the training that many teachers would be absent from school.

Our trainers were already on-route to Cintsa East, following their training in Kokstad. Accommodation and meals had been pre-paid at the B & B in Cintsa East. Following communication with our trainers, we decided to press ahead with the visit and get greater clarity on what was happening at the school.

The principal, who was so positively pro-active with regard to our April visit, was unfortunately absent from school, and has been hospitalised. Many teachers were absent. The reception from the Foundation Phase teachers was positive, and our trainers were able to observe lessons. However, it is reported that the reception from the Intermediate/Senior Phase teachers was far from polite, and no interaction with educators in these grades was possible.

Thanks go to our trainers for their professional conduct and their ability to hold their decorum even when almost provoked by rudeness and disrespect. It would appear that some educators do conduct themselves in a rude and disrespectful manner towards facilitators, to hopefully dissuade the trainers from pursuing the intervention into the school - which usually entails some level of commitment and input from teachers. Some educators, it would appear, are just not willing to undertake any extra work, although by doing so, they will enhance their skills and methods, and ultimately benefit their pupils.

Thanks to our donors for making possible this intervention. We will need to make a decision as to whether we will continue our support of this school.



CINTSA
15 AUGUST 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- We as Cintsa East Public School are very grateful to have Edupeg. It's such a beneficial programme. (Cintsa East Public School)

REGION: Eastern Cape - Fort Beaufort
DATE: 4-8 Aug 2008

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Millholme Farm School	21	7
Post Retief Farm School	21	1
Upper Blinkwater Farm School	50	7
Kaalhoek Farm School	12	6
	104	21

This little cluster of farm schools has been reduced from 5, to 4 schools. It would appear, that further rationalisation and amalgamation of these schools may occur in the future. The enrolment at these little farm schools is not high, but the schools obviously serve the small, yet immediate rural communities in which they are situated. An obvious challenge would be the logistics of getting the school children from these outlying areas, to one school location. The road access to some of these areas, is very poor, and in the rainy season, the roads can be very dangerous and almost impassible. Probably a school with a weekly boarding facility will need to be established, which is obviously an expensive capital outlay.



Our trainers were very well received at 3 of the 4 schools, and lessons had been prepared for the trainers to observe. Educators in these schools have been using the Edupeg resources for some years now, and as they have become more confident in using resources in their lessons, their awareness of the value of the Edupeg programme has also increased. All of these schools are multi-grade schools, and those teachers who have made an effort to familiarise themselves with the programme, and who prepare activities for their various grouping of learners, have really found the individual and group aspects of the programme are most useful in their planning and teaching of lessons. A number of these schools are multi-lingual, with English, Afrikaans and Xhosa being spoken. The children at Millholme Farm School certainly benefit from the dedication and commitment of Ms Botha, whose tri-lingual ability ensures that her learners are best able to learn, in their mother tongue.



All educators recognise that our trainers are present in a support capacity, and the relationships that has been established and nurtured over a period of years is such that good trust and rapport are evident. Teachers are confident to ask advice and to share difficulties experienced. Both Vuyo and Hluma are well equipped to assist and support educators.

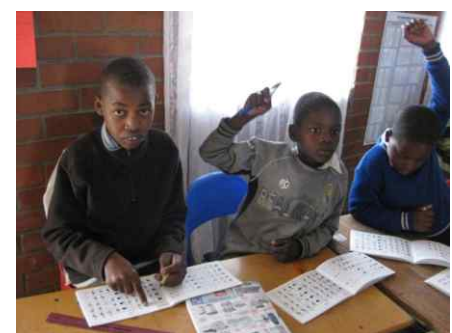


It was very disappointing that Post Retief Primary School did not appear to be at school on any of the days that we were in the region. Repeated phone calls and attempts to arrange a suitable time and venue to at least meet and interact, came to nothing. This situation did occur during the week of the Cosatu called strike, which may have been a factor in non attendance at school. The school is reported to be in poor condition. One also wonders about the learners, where they are during the day and the impact of this disruption to their schooling. With often almost overwhelming challenges, it is understandable how so many of our youth lose hope and lack confidence in their future potential. We were sorry not to have seen anyone from the Fort Beaufort education department during this visit, and hope to meet up at one of our clusters in the near future.

Sincere thanks to our donors, who make possible the support for teachers and learners in this small semi rural area. Thanks too to our trainers, who need to carefully negotiate the often challenging roads, to enable them to visit these small farm schools, and for their patience and sensitivity when working with the educators and learners.



And finally, recognition to our small administrative staff who put great effort into the details and planning, to ensure a successful visit to each cluster.



FORT BEAUFORT
4 – 8 AUGUST 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- Using your resource is very helpful because it helps me even in other Learning Areas. More especially it goes hand in hand with the NCS programme. (Kaalhoek Farm School)
- We as the school appreciate and value the products of Edupeg, because they are effective and useful to both teachers and learners. (Upper Blinkwater Primary School)
- Friendly and helpful staff. Thanks for the “tip” of writing down the work, will help a lot with multi grade classes. (Millholme SSKV Primary School)

REGION: Eastern Cape - King William's Town

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Ndukumbana Primary School	128	7
Smiling Valley Farm School	167	7
Kei Road Combined	275	7
Toise Farm School	62	8
Lendek Farm School	63	3
	695	32

The five schools in this cluster are all physically unique. Smiling Valley Farm School is described by Nompucuko Zakaza as being "beautiful and impressively neat". Lendek Farm School is neat and attractive, but having previously been a home, they are limited by space restrictions. Kei Road Combined is also neat, and well built. Ndukumbana Primary is plagued by vandals and the school is described to be in a very bad state. Many of the windows lack window panes, and sadly the community does not lend it's support to this school. The mud buildings are in need of maintenance and the poor security places many challenges on multiple aspect of school learning. Toise Farm school is also troubled through vandalism and burglaries. The physical structures at this school are described as being dangerous. Teachers experience challenges with regard to space and storage and classroom displays are hampered by the wall materials.



Our trainers were warmly welcomed at all schools and lessons had been prepared for our trainers to observe. Learners were co-operative and eager to learn, in all schools that were visited, and it is reported that the pupils enjoyed using the Edupeg resources.

The storage of our resources is good in these schools, and while there is obvious signs of use of the programme, all teachers admitted that they could increase this usage.

Limited use was predominantly put down to absence from school (and obviously classes), to attend departmental training. There is obvious need for educators to receive skills training, capacity building and training, but it is also of concern that teaching and learning does not largely take place in these schools when the educator is absent. However, what is of interest and importance is that, many teachers visited displayed improved understanding of many aspects that we cover in our training. Whether this can be attributed to our training/to departmental intervention/other NGO support, is uncertain. It is probably due to a combination of the above. What is encouraging, is that teachers are planning better, using resources more frequently in their lessons (that we observed), incorporating concrete equipment to support the learning and understanding of concepts, and allowing the learners increased opportunities to participate in lessons.



Learners are now more actively engaged in their own learning process, and it is most pleasing to see monitors being used in both Foundation Phase and I ntermediate Phase. Small groups of learners are reported to be engaged in meaningful discussion, where they are enabled to improve their language skills - in both 1st and 2nd language, develop reasoning skills, enhance critical thinking skills and interact in a socially acceptable manner.



We were still exposed to a few lessons that were dominated by "Question & Answer" type teaching, but both Vuyo and Hluma were able to discourage this learning approach, with sensitivity, and promote a more learner-centred approach where the children themselves are more fully engaged in the learning process. More differentiated group work is necessary in virtually all schools, and Vuyo and Hluma were able to sensitively share/demonstrate this. Photo-copied Edupeg activities were discouraged, as besides the cost (both financial and environmental) of this process, the children are deprived of the colourful pictures and their detail.



Where necessary our trainers held small informal and informative mini-workshops, to ensure that all educators are confident about the use of our materials and understand the flexibility of the programme. Written maths was also promoted, in all educational phases and the value of this was discussed with both principals and teachers. That teachers need to plan lessons, was also covered, and teachers were encouraged to have all required resources to hand. They were also encouraged to work through set tasks themselves, prior to giving these as an activity so that teachers were aware of the complexity of the questions posed, and if their learners possessed the knowledge and skills to solve these. Pegboard use by a whole class was strongly discouraged and the reasons for this discussed.

Commentary from the principals is encouraging and all schools indicated a desire to remain in the programme in 2009. We thank our sensitive and dedicated trainers for their diligence and hard work; we thank our donors for their generous sponsorship; and we thank our administrative team for their preparatory training work.

KING WILLIAM'S TOWN
18-21 + 28 AUGUST 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- We get lots of information from these books. It integrates with other Learning Areas. One becomes stress free. (Lendek Lower Primary School)
- It has helped us a lot. We store the programme safely in a clean, dry and secure area. We think we would like to go further with this programme. (Toise Farm School)
- Educators found this programme very easy and interesting. Edupeg books have pictures that attract the attention of the learners. This makes learners to understand and like this programme. (Ndukumbana Lower Primary School)
- The programme is very useful. Our learners are able to count and work in groups. It builds their confidence. (Kei Road Combined School)
- This programme is of great importance to us at schools because it provides assistance in classroom activities, which is the most critical part of our education. (Smiling Valley Farm School)

REGION: Eastern Cape - Alice (Zulu Traditional Authority)
DATE: 25-27 Aug 2008

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Elijah Primary School	138	8
Balura Primary School	116	8
Lower Sheshegu Primary School	74	10
	328	26

All the schools in this cluster gave our facilitators a very warm welcome. The schools have difficult access due to the poor condition of the roads. Both Elijah and Balura Primary Schools need maintenance/painting. Notwithstanding the above, the schools are described as being neat and clean.



The learners are well behaved and polite and they are all neatly dressed, although many children come from challenging home and community conditions. It is pleasing to note that teachers are using pupils as monitors, to assist with tasks in the classroom. This helps to make learners independent, and it also builds their confidence, self-esteem, skills and capacity. What is also encouraging is to be exposed to small learner groups which are interactive, and where communication skills are improved. Allowing children to share ideas also promotes reasoning and critical thinking skills, as well as allowing children to formulate opinions of their own. Improved listening skills, concentration and social skills are also developed.

In some classes, the concept of group work is still not clearly understood, and both Vuyo and Hluma spent some time on this aspect. They also tackled too much educator input, where the "Question and Answer" method of teaching dominated, leaving the learners rather passive and not that involved in their own learning.



The storage and access, use and intervention of resources were dealt with and teachers were encouraged to include resources when planning their lessons. It would appear that teachers in this cluster have also been absent from school for quite extended periods of time during this year. Some educators complained that their attendance at departmental workshops has seriously impacted on their classroom interaction time with their learners. Teachers do obviously need to receive training, and with departmental visits to schools often still a challenging situation in some Eastern Cape districts, workshops is one way of interacting with teachers. Additionally many educators can be targeted simultaneously through the workshop approach to training.

All educators thanked our trainers for their sensitive and supportive approach and attitude towards the teachers with whom they interact. Educators shared their appreciation of being assisted in their schools and in their specific classrooms, where they most need help. Planning and assessment were uniformly areas where educators required assistance.



Virtually all teachers needed assistance with the concept of a more sustained approach to the regular use of resources in lessons. Access to resources needs to be easy and care, respect and organisation of resources and their storage were also dealt with.

Generally things went well in this small cluster. We thank our donors for their funding which has made possible our work in this region, and thank all those whose practical involvement contributed to the success of this visit.



ZULU TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY
25-27 AUGUST 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- Edupeg is very important. It helps us in all Learning Areas. We also integrated the content. (Elijah Mgiijima Primary School)
- Progress is fruitful to us. Your support towards us was excellent. Thank you for your support. (Balura Junior Secondary School)
- The Edupeg programme is very important, it guides us, and learners enjoy working with pegboards, using pictures for communication when doing Learning Areas. (Lower Sheshegu Primary School)

1-12 SEPTEMBER 2008

REGION: Eastern Cape: Zwelivuziwe Development Trust: Cluster 2
DATE: 1-15 Sep 2008

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Gugulethu Primary School	311	12
Nonkundla Primary School	151	5
Emncolsho Primary School	190	8
Mbolompeni Primary School	27	4
Ngonqweni Primary School	331	14
Luxomo Primary School	33	3
Emabaleni Primary School	154	8
Nokwanda Primary School	300	9
Dongwe Primary School	205	9
Nobunto Primary School	216	9
	1918	81

In the majority of schools in this cluster, our trainers were warmly welcomed and principals and educators were pleased to receive Nompucuko and Vuyo into their schools. In seven of the ten schools, lessons had been prepared and teachers were keen to gain further information and input from our trainers. Many principals and educators made particular mention of how the interaction with our trainers had enhanced understanding of RNCS and improved practical classroom methods and integration of teaching resources. In all of these schools interaction with the pupils was positive and the learners were all reported to be neat and tidy, keen to learn and enthusiastic about using the Edupeg resources.

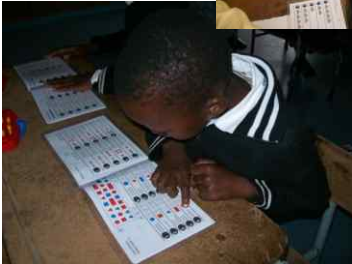
Access to 3 schools remain challenging and I must comment our trainers on their diplomacy in often difficult circumstances. Reticence to allow trainers into the classrooms, usually relates to poor/little use of the resources, and teachers are unwilling to be exposed as to their limited use of the programme. These schools remain the losers, as we are not judgmental about non-usage, but rather look to encourage and support the educators to improve their teaching skills, strategies, including resources in their planing and active lessons.

Many of the educators in this cluster, with whom we worked, feel that this year has been very disruptive due to the amount of time that they have been required to be absent from school, due to departmental workshops. They reported that the time away from their classes was very disruptive and has negatively impacted on class routine, teaching and learning. Many educators have found that the information given to them at the departmental workshops, is vast. They feel that they do not know how to integrate all that they have been told into practical classroom implementation, planning and the required documentation. Numerous teachers felt that they were insufficiently skilled to draft their own Learning Programme. There appeared to be a general frustration around adjustment to required curriculum changes. Some teachers cited the necessity to attend cluster meetings, in an attempt to gain greater clarity and understanding, is having a further impact on their absence from school and teaching. Circumstances for all are obviously very challenging, as educators obviously need to be compliant with curriculum demands, and some form of training is required to share the knowledge and information.

In many instances, educators said that having our facilitators with them in their classes, assisting them and supporting them to practically understand policy, was invaluable. It is pleasing to note that in all of the schools that we visited, educators were prepared for all visits and teachers are now volunteering with enthusiasm, to have our trainers visit them in their classes. Not only do they value the support and input, but also the experience to teach in front of someone, as is required for both internal and external moderation. Teachers value our feedback forms which they keep in their personal files and can be used in the IQMS evaluation as evidence of teaching.

Although the frequent absence of teachers from school has obviously resulted in more limited use of our resources, the general feeling amongst the educators, is positive. Some schools are still difficult to access by road, due to the very poor conditions of the roads. Almost all schools are reported to be neat and clean, although some are in desperate need of maintenance. At Embaleni Primary School for example, pupils were reported to be shivering, as the day of our visit was cold, and there are many broken window panes in the classrooms. Insufficient school furniture was reported in some schools, and children had to stand to complete their tasks. The condition of the plastic chairs in some schools is of a concern, as these could be hazardous, to young children, in their very broken state.

A need for good team-work amongst educators and the necessity for good school governance and encouragement, emerged during our visits, and after discussions with the trainers, we are going to look to put more focus and emphasis on these aspects next year. Schools also feel that departmental support with Edupeg would be beneficial and further assist them, and I will visit the district officials in the fourth term in this connection. Although we are far from being "home and dry", I feel well satisfied with what we have been able to achieve this year, and thank all those who have been responsible for the various aspects of the programme and it's practical implementation into schools, with particular mention of our donors, trainers and administrative team.



ZWELIVUZIWE CLUSTER 2

1-5 SEPTEMBER 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- The Edupeg programme is very interesting and exciting, educators utilize the materials in other Learning Areas like Tech, EMS, etc. (Nobunto Senior Primary School)
- Learners enjoy using the materials. The activities in the books are understandable. (Mbolompeni Junior Primary School)
- The programme is very useful to us. It motivates and encourages the pupils to talk. It develops thinking and reasoning skills. Thank you very much. (Emncotsho Junior Secondary School)
- Resources are of great importance to the whole school. Teachers are utilizing material effectively. (Nonkundla Junior Primary School)
- We benefit a lot from your programme and it is interesting. Learners enjoy the programme. We need resource books, pencils as well as Grade R books. (Gugulethu Junior Primary School)
- All educators from Foundation, Intermediate and Senior Phases in our school have found it helpful in all Learning Areas and learning is fun. (Nqonqweni Primary School)
- Learners like Edupeg. The material is so easy to understand. We wish the project to continue. (Luxomo Primary School)
- The programme is interesting and we educators are trying to implement it and the kids have grasped it. (Emabaleni Combined Primary School)
- We've seen this project which is interesting and informative. We've noticed that in every Learning Area, it is useful because of integration. (Nokwanda Lower Primary School)
- The books are good, bright and colourful to arouse the learners' interest and are at their level. They integrate with other Learning Areas. (Dongwe Combined Primary School)

4-5 SEPTEMBER 2008

REGION: Eastern Cape - Port Elizabeth
DATE: 4-5 Sep 2008

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Philip Nikiwe Primary School	263	9
	263	9

The visit to this school was extremely successful. Mrs Makeng works continuously to create a centre of excellence and learning at this New Brighton School. Her retired husband tends the garden and surrounds, where an attractive courtyard has been planted and maintained. Vandalism remains an on-going challenge in this area, and the school shows physical signs of this scourge.



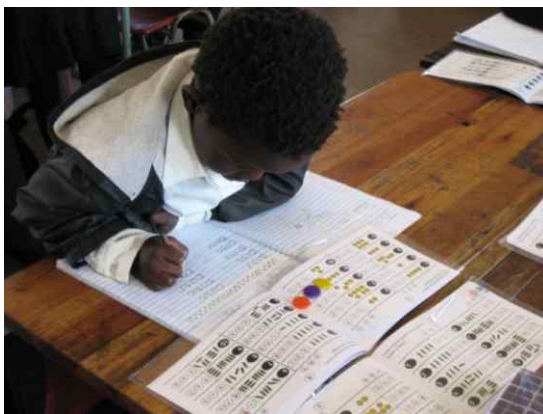
Staff challenges, non-payment of teacher's salaries, vandalised toilets and poor electricity supply are all additional difficulties that need to be dealt with, as well as the challenges that are ever prevalent in a township school.

Poverty and unemployment are high in the Eastern Cape, and the children are fortunate at this school, as Mrs Makeng has been able to secure school feeding for the entire school. The educators all displayed a keenness and willingness to learn. When working with the learners, one soon became aware of the low mathematical functioning and that children have been more exposed to the mechanics of the operations, rather than the teaching and understanding of the concepts themselves. This is what is frequently found in the schools into which we work.



The Grade One children have had a challenging year due to staff complications, and at present they are functioning on a very low level. They have little or no experience of working independently on differentiated activities and required constant teacher support. The educators were assisted with this aspect, as well as with some general classroom structure and organisation. The Grade Three demonstration and observation lessons were conducted in Mrs Guwa's classroom, who has already emerged as a dedicated and committed champion.

In the Intermediate Phase, the children were quite withdrawn and reticent to engage initially. Generally they displayed a lack of understanding of basic concepts, which is frequently experienced when children are exposed to rote methods of learning where they try to memorise formulae, and where concrete equipment has not been an intrinsic component of teaching. Learners displayed low levels of confidence and self-esteem. Once the learners began to focus and engage with the activities, and allowed their common sense and reasoning abilities to come to the fore, they became visibly amazed as they realised that they themselves were solving the problems posed. Their visible joy and excitement is remarked upon as the learners realised that they understood the questions posed and the challenges set, and that additionally, with this understanding, they possessed the ability to solve not only these problems, but other problems related to this concept.



All reticence to engage in the activities had completely dissipated by the end of the second day, and the learners lost their self-consciousness and engaged with the activities with great enthusiasm and enjoyment.

Both trainers remarked on the enthusiasm and appreciation of the staff at this school and the humbling experience to work with both the educators and learners at Philip Nikiwe Primary.



We thank our donors for the support which has made this intervention possible.



PHILLIP NIKIWE
5-6 SEPTEMBER 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- The Edupeg programme is so interesting. Educators and learners enjoy it. It encourages learners to speak and participate throughout the lesson. It integrates perfectly with other Learning Areas. We will appreciate another training day. (Phillip Nikiwe Primary School)

15-17 SEPTEMBER 2008

REGION: Eastern Cape - Imidange Development Trust
DATE: 15-17 Sep 2008

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Bhaliti Junior Primary School	108	4
Peelton Primary School	102	4
Zamani Educare	24	1
	234	9

Bhaliti Primary School, in this cluster, gives a very good impression. Our trainers received a warm welcome from the principal and staff at this school, which is described as being neat, clean, well maintained and secure. The classrooms have been made into attractive centres of learning and posters and relevant display material are evident on the walls.



The learners are well disciplined and enjoyed the interaction with the Edupeg resources. In both Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase, our trainers demonstrated and encouraged educators to give the learners greater opportunities to fulfil written tasks. The use of pegboards by all learners in a class, was very strongly discouraged, and reasons for this were given. Educators were also encouraged to attempt more integrated lessons, and the value and benefits of this approach were discussed. Educators were also assisted as to how to utilise diagrams in the teaching and learning process. Although a departmental workshop had been planned, which would clash with our pre-arranged training, the teachers at this school first fulfilled their commitments to Edupeg, and then proceeded to the training.



Our visit to Peelton Primary was less productive. It would appear that educators at this school lack teamwork and leadership. Only one teacher is using the resources, although our trainers effected a workshop session with all educators on our last visit. The resources are neat and tidy and well stored, but there is little evidence of use. Yet another workshop was held, to explain the Edupeg programme, and how it can be incorporated into planned lessons, to enhance teaching and learning. We hope to see improved use of the resources on our next visit.



Zamani Pre-School remains in a very challenging position. They still lack premises and few, if any children are attending school, due to the very difficult circumstances that presently prevail. I will speak to the EDO about this school when we meet later this year, and will also see if social services are possibly in a position to assist. The principal is very frustrated and disappointed at being unable to give the children a place of safety in which to learn. Our materials are neatly stored and safe.



I must commend our trainers again on their patience, diplomacy and fortitude under often challenging circumstances. They are great ambassadors of both education and Edupeg. Special thanks to our donors for their funding and to all who have contributed to the training into this cluster.



IMIDANGE

16-18 SEPTEMBER 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- We have gained a lot from this project. The learners have developed independency and self-confidence. (Bhaliti Junior Primary School)
- What a wonderful intervention to our OBE (Outcomes Based Education). Edupeg is really hands on education. (Peelton Higher Primary School)