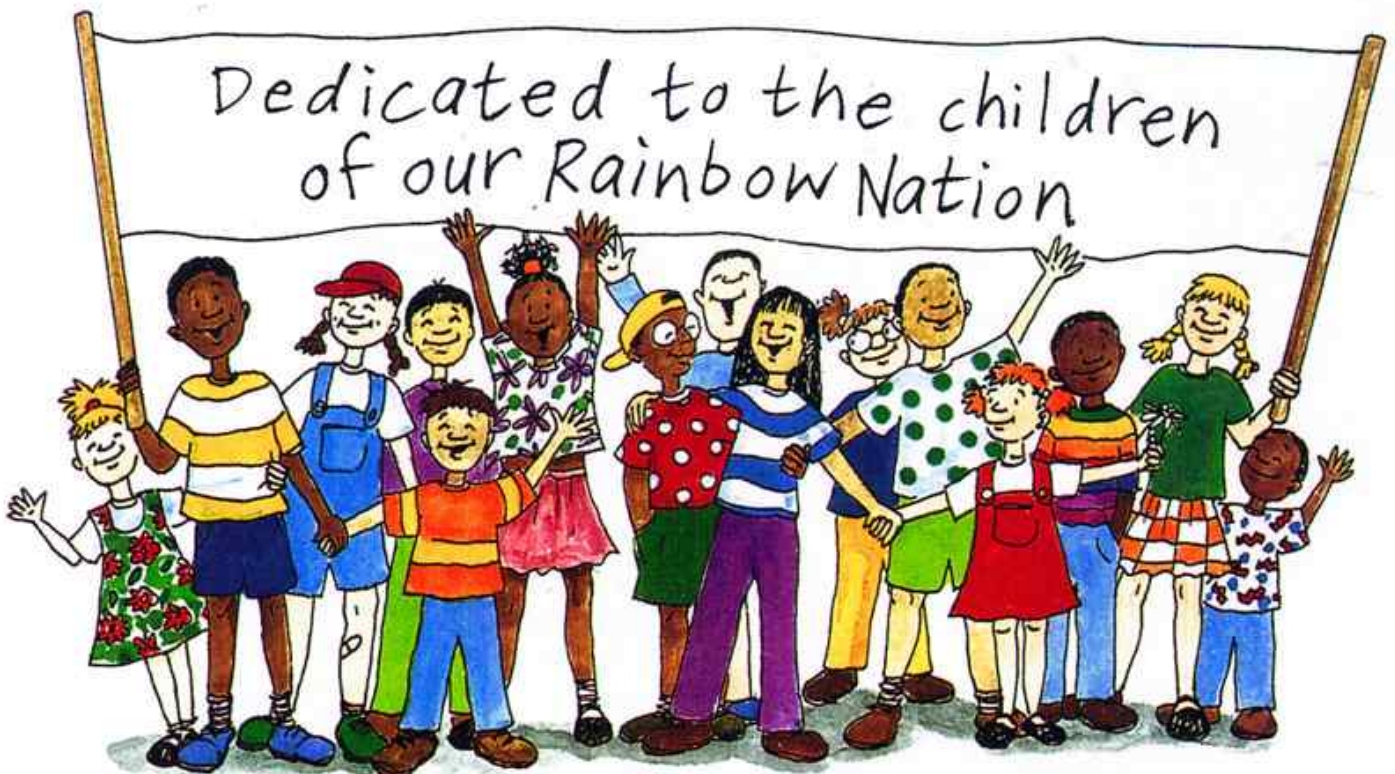




Edu-peg

THE SACTWU EDUPEG PROJECT

4th 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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BOTSWANA



The children at all of the schools that I visited remain keen and enthusiastic to learn. It is encouraging to see the eager faces gathered outside for an open air assembly before classes begin, and to see the involvement of the learners in the singing of the hymns, which often incorporate physical action and movement. The pupils at the school are all always dressed in school uniform and they are always polite and friendly. It is encouraging to be aware that school feeding continues to be available to all pupils, not just the younger classes (as in South Africa).

Early November is the time of "the small rains" in Botswana, and thus the weather was a little cooler and the very sandy conditions in the schools were dampened down during my recent visit. Much sand is however still brought into all of the classrooms and time is spent each morning, sweeping this back outside.

Jason has spent much of this year, involved with relationship building, and establishing his credibility in the schools. What is very encouraging, is that he is now sought out by many staff members, who ask for advice and support with teaching. What is also encouraging, is that the teachers stay, watch and learn; they do not leave the classroom as occurred at times in the past. Jason's reputation as being a teacher who is able to teach almost any aspect of mathematics (particularly), has spread and teachers are seeking him out more and more frequently, for assistance.

It is Jason's plan in 2009, to now link text book lessons more fully with the Edupeg resources. With his established credibility he feels that this will be more fully embraced. To date, teachers have been very text-book and curriculum bound, with scant awareness that a richer and fuller learning environment is often required to ensure that learners engage and understand concepts taught.

In all schools visited, both principals and teachers were delighted with the improved national results of the Standard Seven examinations. All personnel, at all schools, unanimously put this improvement down to Jason's support and intervention. This is a great accolade for Jason and I feel he can feel proud of the support that he has been able to give these educational communities.

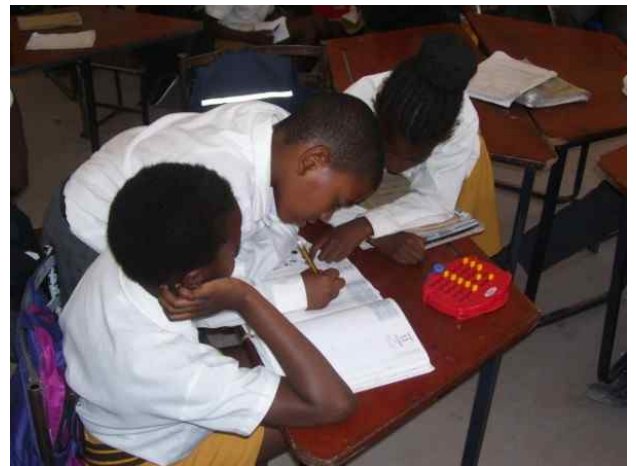
It is still disheartening to see children trying to record written work with less than an inch of a pencil, or struggling with the inner refill of a ballpoint pen. Sharpeners are non-existent, and a blade is used to wastefully and laboriously sharpen pencils. The chalkboards are all in need of replacement/refurbishment., which along with text books are the primary teaching tools in Botswana.

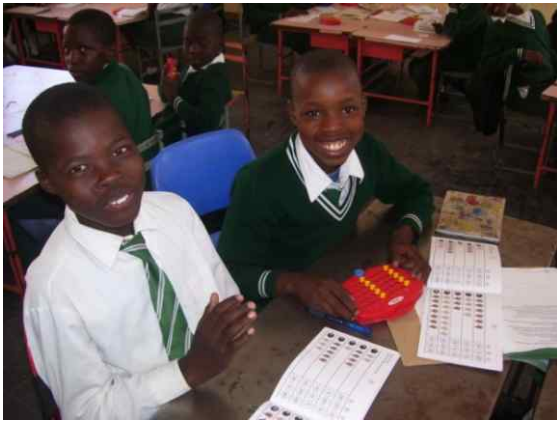
We spent a day working with Standard Ones' (Grade One's) and Jason gained much knowledge about working with this younger age group. He will travel to South Africa in early February, and

REGION: Botswana

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principals
Bana Ba Letsatsi	203	4
Matshwane Primary School	200	9
Letsholathebe Primary School	969	28
Bana Ba Metsi	53	4
Xnamaseri Primary School	522	16
Gxhabara Primary School	920	31
Etsha 13 Primary School	920	26
Moremi Primary School	195	12
Boyei Primary School	1020	33
Botswelole Primary School	432	16
Wilderness Safari	*	*
	5434	179

*This sponsorship is for Wilderness Safari's "Children in the "Wilderness" initiative, where numerous disadvantaged children are exposed to a Wilderness/environmental/learning experience, i.e. no finite number of children.





work with our trainers to gain more expertise about the younger classes and also how to encourage and support educators to utilise resources more fully in lesson planning and teaching.

A very uplifting day was spent doing "Puzzles & Games", which forms part of the curriculum in Botswana. One is aware afresh, how few experiences these children are exposed to, and how much excitement is generated from a simple card game/noughts and crosses/hangman.

One is aware of a great acceptance, warmth and tolerance amongst the children. I saw no experience of children being shunned due to weaker performance/ability, etc and I heard no raised voices of teachers - as in harsh discipline, as I walked about the schools.



We also visited Bana Ba Letsatsi, which continues to thrive, under the extremely positive, enthusiastic and caring leadership of Fiona Miller. I feel that we can indeed be proud to be a small part of this project. (Do look at it at <http://banabaletsatsi.com/index.htm>)

I also had a very positive meeting with Braam and Willemien le Roux. They are an ex South African couple who have been living and working in Botswana for 25 years. All of this time they have been involved with social responsibility projects which directly benefit communities. This couple, along with Dave Boddington (ex Bana Ba Metsi) and his wife, have had land granted, to replicate the Bana Ba Metsi project (for street children/orphans/at risk children), but this project will be for girls. Bana Ba Metsi (also one of our projects), only caters for boys. I would like to propose that we look to assist this very worthwhile project. It will be situated in Shakawe, and Jason will be able to service this project as he travels through Shakawe on his way to the ferry to Bana Ba Metsi.



Braam and Willemien le Roux are also involved with a very interesting pre-school community project which also sounds to be very well structured and organised, and which serves the broader community in Shakawe.



Although we have not achieved as much as I would have hoped for in schools with regard to Edupeg specifically, I feel that we have gained much ground and credibility, and Jason has established very positive working relationships at all of the schools into which we work. Following Jason's visit to South Africa, I feel he will be very well positioned to further support the development of the teachers' capacity and skills with reference to utilising resources in planning and teaching.

Sincere thanks to our caring and generous sponsors, The Wild Foundation, for the funding and support that has made possible the work that we do in Botswana. Thanks to Jason for his patience and expertise, which has had a very positive impact on the teachers' skills level and understanding - particularly in mathematics.



And finally to our small but diligent admin team, thank you for the attention to detail that is so crucial in developmental work, and which helps to make training interventions successful.

Warm wishes to all for a peaceful and restful festive season and a new year filled with hope and new beginnings.