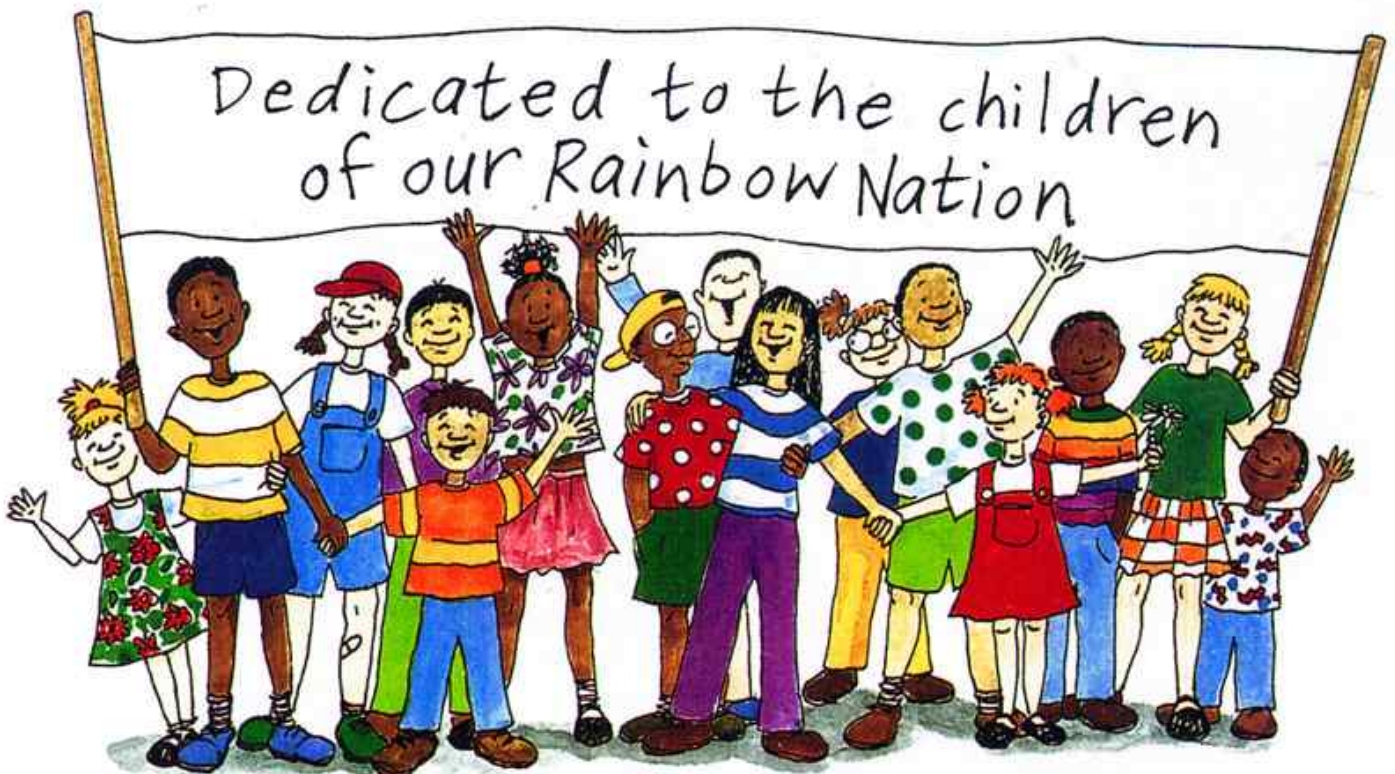




Edu-peg

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



**THE SACTWU
EDUPEG PROJECT**

**4th QUARTER REPORTS
2008**

WESTERN CAPE



REGION: Western Cape - Wynberg

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principal
Zamkukhanyo Pre-School	4	119
Thandabantu Pre-School	3	62
	7	181

Visiting the pre-schools under the Yabonga umbrella, continues to be most pleasurable. The dedication and commitment of the educators is obvious and the happy, well adjusted, enthusiastic learners are testament to the caring and nurturing environment to which they are exposed. Yabonga seeks to support whole child development, and thus we see children that are warmly dressed in Yabonga tracksuits, interacting with activities and resources in the classroom, where fine motor development and intellectual and artistic stimulation is evident. We also observed children enjoying the often tactile and more exuberant outdoor activities, where gross motor development and co-ordination are practiced.

This organization needs to be commended for recognizing that hungry children battle to learn, and physical nurturing is followed through, whereby these children receive two meals a day at school.

The classrooms are described as a delight, where children's work is displayed alongside attractive and instructional posters and friezes. Well established and attractive book corners are comfortable and inviting, with well suited books for this level of learning. The educators are dedicated and motivated and obviously enjoy their interaction time with the children they teach.

More comprehensive lessons, that are more confidently and more competently carried out, are reported, where the children are now being given greater opportunities to work at their own pace, independently, once they understand the activity and instructions. The neat and attractive classrooms are conducive to learning, and the fantasy areas, puzzles, art and craft equipment, etc, all contribute to a positive learning experience for the children. The confidence and improved self esteem of the educators is lovely to note, and these teachers deserve praise and recognition for the very professional way in which they conduct themselves, and for the benefit that they are providing for the young children in their care.

We look forward to working with these two schools again next year, and thank our donors for their generous funding that enables us to do so.



YABONGA
OCTOBER 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- We thank you very much for your Edupeg resources and training. We learnt a lot. The children are doing very well and they are interested. (Thandabantu Pre-School).
- Thank you so much for your time, guidance and for teaching us how to help children. (Zamukhanyo Educare Centre).

REGION: **Western Cape - Nyanga, Gugulethu**

Name of school	Pupil enrolment	Teachers & Principals
Vukukhanye Primary School	596	15
	596	15

The school continues to look neat and attractive. Our trainers were warmly welcomed on their arrival, and as our trainers have been to the school fairly frequently, the administrative assistant immediately called the Edupeg champions to the office. This may appear to be a small achievement but much time can be wasted, if initially organizing the visit becomes a lengthy process.

Township schools deal with multiple challenges. The learners are drawn directly from the community, where many parents are unemployed and single parent families are very prevalent. Poverty, poor nutrition and challenging living conditions, all impact on these young learners. What is sad, and very demotivating, is that these schools are also frequently vandalized. It is extremely difficult for teachers to create a positive and attractive working environment in their classrooms, when overnight this can all be destroyed. Storage and use of resources is also impacted upon and often, nothing of value can be left in the classrooms.

In the Foundation Phase, the teachers observed have made an effort to create an environment conducive to learning. The caliber of the lessons taught, the use of resources and the integration of Learning Areas, are all reason for celebration. It is my sense, that just a year ago, these teachers had no idea about concrete equipment for mathematics, how and when it should be used, and what the objectives are, in connection with such usage. That the equipment was not necessarily used ideally can be sensitively dealt with, but the very positive outcome is that teachers are displaying their ability, desire and willingness to effect change. It is a concern that no real differentiated activities were set, with regard to complexity or lack of difficulty. Also, the majority of the teaching and learning experiences is effected by the teacher, with only a few children being called upon to answer. In these circumstances, the weaker children often remain mute, with little if any participation in the lesson and proceedings. Teachers in both phases at this school appear to be of the opinion that allowing children to interact and learn in ability groups, will lead to stigmatization. Good teaching practice would prevent this, while whole class teaching prevents learners from realizing their potential/struggling needlessly with work/concepts beyond their developmental level. There was however much to be pleased about in the Foundation Phase, including a mat in the Grade 1 class.

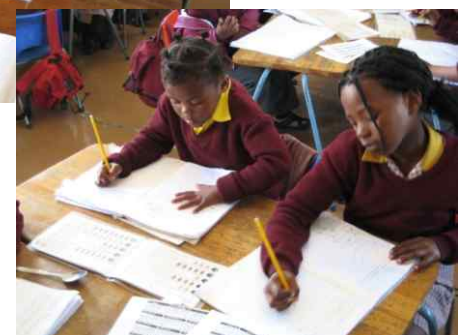
"The educator was able to hold the attention of her learners through her own energy, because of her thorough preparation. Her use of resources was excellent and the activities changed before the learners grew tired of them. She was also firm with the learners and lively herself, and this combination ensures her learners attention and consequently learning." This is a direct quote from Shirley du Plessis's Grade 5 report. Shirley goes on to describe the lesson as "excellent, well prepared and focused, with a very good balance of teacher input and learner activity." The pace of the lesson was also praised, where interest, yet understanding, both received consideration. The teacher was delighted to receive additional input from Shirley.

In the second lesson, the variation in the ability of the learners was most obvious. While some learners were well able to cope, and in fact probably found the set tasks lacking in real challenge, a significant section of the class were reported to "participate very little and were quite inert and seemed little able to do any of the work set, even the very easy exercise prepared by the educator." Shirley was able to sensitively assist the teacher. The pace of the lesson was reported to

be very slow and thus, combined with the excessive noise from the next door classroom, caused a strong loss of focus for many learners. Giving learners' tasks that they could record; and which required some level of critical thinking skills and reasoning, were recommended and Shirley was able to model such teaching, where the educator was more easily able to assess what was occurring in the classroom. This lesson had been well prepared, with resources, but the varying level of abilities of the learners was not taken into consideration.

It is my sense that much has been achieved at this school through our visits. Teachers are no longer suspicious of our visits, or reticent to have the trainers in their classes. Lessons were well prepared and executed and the additional support given was very well received.

We will be sad to say goodbye to Ms Sellem, who has remained a strong support and proponent of Edupeg, and we wish her a well earned retirement. We hope we will be invited to continue our support visits by the new principal, as teachers at this school still require assistance. Sincere thanks to our generous donors who made possible the work we do in this school, and to those who have contributed to the success of the visit.



GUGULETHU
22 OCTOBER 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- The Edupeg material has helped our educators in proper planning and focus on lessons. It has also helped our learners to appreciate and value teaching and learning. (Vukukhanye Primary School).

23 OCTOBER 2008

REGION: Western Cape - Overberg

Name of school	School based visits
Die Bron Primary School	23.10.08

Our trainers received a very warm welcome from the principal and educators at this school. Lessons had been prepared and the teachers all appeared keen to have support in their classes. The school is neat and attractive and much effort is obviously put in, to ensure that the appearance of the school remains appealing. Beautiful flower gardens are apparent and are regularly tended. The foyer of the school was beautifully decorated with Christmas decorations.

Many of the children are drawn from the local community, where poverty and unemployment play a prevalent role in the lives of these young children. Many learners were in uniform, although these are very well worn. Many of the children do not benefit from a Grade R year, and this year, 19 children in one Grade 1 class, and 9 children in the other, will need to repeat the year. Immaturity and lack of concentration contribute to their inability to cope with more formal learning. The programme "Shine", which is run by dedicated volunteers, operates in this school, and these children all benefit from interaction with these caring community people.

The school is also fortunate to have the services of a Learning Support teacher. The need to have differentiated activities, was again discussed with the educators. The learners are obviously not all at the same level of ability, and the various groups require more individualized tasks, to better cope with their learning. These varied tasks, more suitably assigned to learners to best meet their developmental needs, would also assist with class discipline, as more children would be able to cope with the activities set, thus vastly reducing the demands that the children make on the educators, for assistance. Self-confidence and independence would also be developed, as the children began to become more self reliant. The above was discussed with the educators, as well as the necessity to allow the learners adequate opportunities to record their answers. This promotes greater understanding and consolidation of concepts, and allows the children further opportunities to develop their spatial concepts.

The Foundation Phase educators were grateful of the support and input and appeared to have greater clarity about the storage arrangements, which will promote easier access. Shirley had a very positive interaction with the Intermediate Phase educators. She was able to both observe and demonstrate the use of Edupeg in classes, and her input was much appreciated. Initially the learners in

the class were quite disruptive, and this can partially be attributed to the fact that the various grade groups, were being taught the same concept, at the same pace, at the same time, although there are obviously huge disparities between the level of understanding of the learners. When differentiated activities were given to the learners, they became less disruptive and more focused on their set tasks. This also provided an opportunity for the teachers to better assess the understanding of the learners, and allowed for greater individual attention and support. The educators were impressed with what was shared and displayed great enthusiasm and interest.

The storage of the school needed attention and hopefully after discussions in this regard, a more suitable and effective system will be implemented. We try not to be too prescriptive in this regard, but to allow schools to develop a system that best suits their needs. Although systemic evaluations were taking place in Grade 3, and although some staff members were absent, this efficiently run school accommodated our trainers with welcome enthusiasm and a very productive visit ensued.

Sincere thanks to all involved, whose support contributed to this successful visit. We will need to return to this school next year.



OVERBERG
OCTOBER 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- Baie onduidelikhede is uit die weg geruim. Received positive support. (Die Bron Primary School)

10-11 NOVEMBER 2008

This valuable community project is situated in Kayamandi in Stellenbosch, and the pre-schoolers and after care children obviously benefit from the caring and nurturing environment that they are exposed to at this centre.

The dedication of the project director and the resident teacher, are obvious. The facilitators were keen and willing to interact with both our trainer and the resources, and involved themselves fully in the training session. All of the team members presented a mock mini-lesson on day two of our training and they were all keen to get feedback to enhance their skills. This small, yet dedicated group are off to a good start and we will schedule a follow up visit early next year, to further assist these young people.

The reception of the information shared was very positive, and one is aware that there is much care and support given in this small and unpretentious facility, to best serve the youth in the community.

What is also significant, is that the after care facilitators are being given opportunities to advance their skills level, both during their interaction with the children in the afternoon sessions, and also during the morning at other associated projects. These care givers are drawn from the community and can serve as role models for the children in the large township, where the youth often resorts to less socially acceptable practices and behaviour, due in part, to lack of positive role models.

Special mention also needs to go to Gerrit Laning, whose own initiative found our programme. He is tireless in his pursuit of knowledge and information to best serve the community in which he works.

We are very pleased to be associated with this worthwhile and valuable project, and we thank our donors for making the funding available for us to work with this enthusiastic team.



IKHAYA TRUST CENTRE - STELLENBOSCH
OCTOBER 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- The training was excellent and practical. The facilitators learnt a lot from teaching their own lesson. (Ikhaya Trust Centre)

The training of the Anna Foundation care-givers has to date, been off-site, so it was interesting and rewarding to have the opportunity to visit 3 of the sites viz Delheim, Villiera and Bellvue.

All the physical structures are quite unique, but a commonality is the obvious devotion that the care-givers display towards the children in their care. What is also very encouraging is that the children appear to really enjoy attending these after-school facilities and that they (the children), are well accustomed to being productively engaged. Stimulating and varied activities are offered in the neat, bright classrooms.

The care givers are enthusiastic about the Edupeg programme and were all keen to gain further knowledge and information about the resources. The children all appear to have benefitted from their attendance at these after care facilities where emphasis is placed on creative, physical and academic development. Although a wide range of mathematical ability was obvious, the children in general are reported to have a fair understanding of maths. The visit provided a valuable opportunity to practically demonstrate best practice when using the Edupeg resources, and to also clear up some common mis-conceptions about the programme.

Facilitators appeared to have gained increased confidence in the use of the materials. It would appear that the children greatly enjoy using the resources and would probably benefit from more frequent and more structured use. I will follow up on how best our programme can fit in to the well planned activities of each site projects. Sincere thanks to our generous donors who have made it possible to work with this very unique project and to our trainer Shirley du Plessis, for her patient and sympathetic manner, which ensures that she is always approachable.



ANNA FOUNDATION
OCTOBER 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- Thank you for visiting this farm Bellvue and the after-school. Thanks Shirley for your help. We have learnt more about Edupeg. (Bellvue After-School Club)
- Dankie dat u gekom het, dit het baie gehulp. U kan maar weer kom, ons sal baie bly wees. U help ons mooi. (Villiera Na-Skool Klub)
- Ek het geleer dat hulle die Edupeg sakkies moet gebruik, om boekies te beskerm. Die kinders kan hul eie antwoord, want hulle dink is reg doen. (Delheim Na-Skool Klub)

We had been approached by Jonathan Schrire during the course of last year, with the objective of our resourcing the new primary school in Capricorn Park. Jonathan is a driving force in this community and the school has been privately funded and built, with input and donations from a wide spectrum of professionals and national and international business people. This school, on completion, was handed to WCED.

It is a beautiful physical structure, with much care and attention given to the requirements of young learners. It is also a beacon of hope and a source of inspiration and aspiration, for the youth in this large and sprawling township, which has known strife and conflict over the years.

It was decided by the external education support team, headed by Cynthia Pelman of Wordworks, that it would be prudent to wait until the teachers had settled into their new school, before introducing additional resources. A well planned and structured educational plan is in place at this school, with external intervention. WCED support has also been extensive, and it was felt that teachers needed to assimilate all that was in place, before adding resources. The principal, Ms Hassen, specifically asked us to fulfil our offer to the school, and after consultation, it was decided that we would introduce the resources in the latter part of this year, but training per se, would only commence next year.

A very positive training session was held at the school, and a safe and accessible storage area was set up. There was widespread enthusiasm amongst the staff, all of whom showed warm appreciation for the resources, and for the future training which will follow.

We look forward to working with the principal and educators at this very positive institution, and are thrilled for them, that the Grade 4 classrooms will be built to accommodate these learners.

Sincere thanks to our generous donors, to Ingrid van der Spuy, for the obviously very positive initial introductory training session, and to our small admin staff who are so thorough in all planning.



CAPRICORN PRIMARY
11 NOVEMBER 2008

PRINCIPAL COMMENTS

- What a wonderfully, informative session! Thank you so much. (Capricorn Primary)