



Creating Knowledge (Mvele-dzandivho) – a task without finish: Final evaluation report (25 & 26 Nov. 2008, Closing-out Conference)

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Objectives and design

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- **Objectives (summative evaluation of)**
 - Extent to which project achieved its objectives
 - Functionality and effectiveness of participating schools
 - Extent of achievement of pre-set targets
- **Design**
 - Indicators-driven (monitoring component)
 - Trends over time (Baseline, Mid-term and Summative)

Methodology (1)

- **Sample and respondents**
 - 27 schools (28 in 2006); 16 with secondary & 15 with primary grades
 - Across 6 provinces
 - Grades 4, 7 & 10
 - District, school management, governing bodies, teachers, learners / Representative Councils of Learners (or RCLs)

Methodology (2)

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- **Instruments**
 - Interviews, document reviews, observations, questionnaires
 - Performance testing
 - Literacy / Language and Numeracy / Mathematics

Methodology (3)

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- **Procedures**
 - Around middle May
 - Visit of one to two days per school
 - Trained teams of experts

Key deliverables

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- **Presentations (3):** JET, BHP Billiton, and this closing-out conference
- **Executive/summary version of report**
- **Technical report**
- **School profiles (against indicators):**
 - Management and Governance
 - Teacher Development and Support
- **Datasets**
- **Any other options** (? - www, media)

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Findings and discussion

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Management and governance indicators

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Management and governance indicators

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School management (53)		School governance (20)	
Functionality	9	Capacity of SGB	2
Curriculum policy	16	Practices and implementation	14
Time management	14	RCL capacity	4
Promotion of LOLT	4		
Management of LSMs	10		

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School management trends

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Indicator	Upward	Other	Downward
Functionality	7	2	0
Curriculum policy	8	3	4
Time management	7	3	3
Promotion of LOLT	4	0	0
Management of LSMs	4	4	2

School governance trends

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Indicator	Upward	Other	Downward
Capacity of SGB	1	1	0
Practices and implementation	4	3	7
RCL capacity	1	0	3

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Teacher development and support indicators

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Teacher development and support indicators (65)

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Improved time management	5
Curriculum planning and implementation	22
Assessment strategies	14
Promoting reading and writing with insight	13
Promotion of use of learning support materials (LSMs)	11

Teacher development/support trends

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Indicator	Upward	Other	Downward
Time management	4	0	1
Curric. planning & implementation	15	5	2
Assessment strategies	7	6	1
Promoting reading and writing	11	0	2
Promoting use of LSMs	9	1	1

Overview of impact: Management, governance and teacher development

- Majority of indicators shows a **positive / upward** trend:
 - Management structures
 - Curriculum policy
 - Time management
 - SGB existence
 - Teaching time and teacher knowledge
 - Curriculum planning and implementation
 - Assessment practices
 - Promotion of reading and writing
 - Promotion of appropriate LSM use

Overview of impact – cont.

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- But some indicators show a **negative / downward** trend:
 - Monitoring of curriculum policy implementation
 - Time-tabling detail
 - LOLT work volumes set
 - LSM inventories and orders
 - SGB meetings and minutes
 - Key financial policies and records
 - RCL operations and participation
 - Some assessment frequencies and control

Target achievement

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- School management: 10 of 53
- School governance: 1 of 20
- Teacher development / support: 10 of 65

Note: When targets were set, jointly with service providers, high expectations of (approaching) 100% of the schools were posed. **Was this (un)realistic?**

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Learner performance

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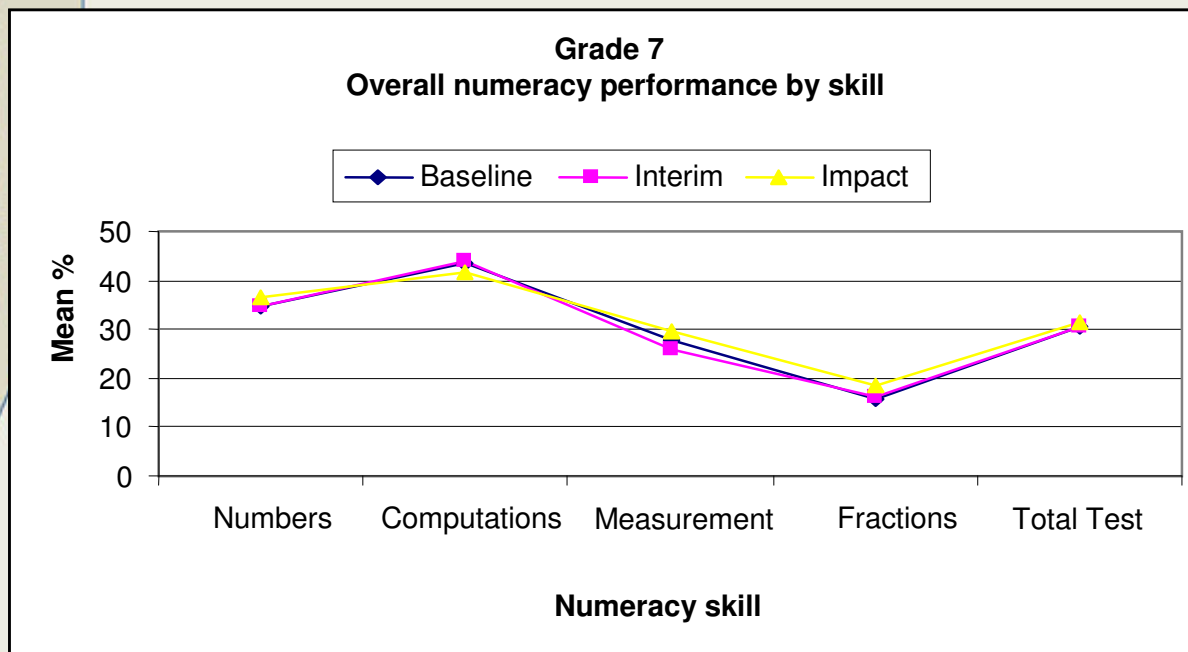
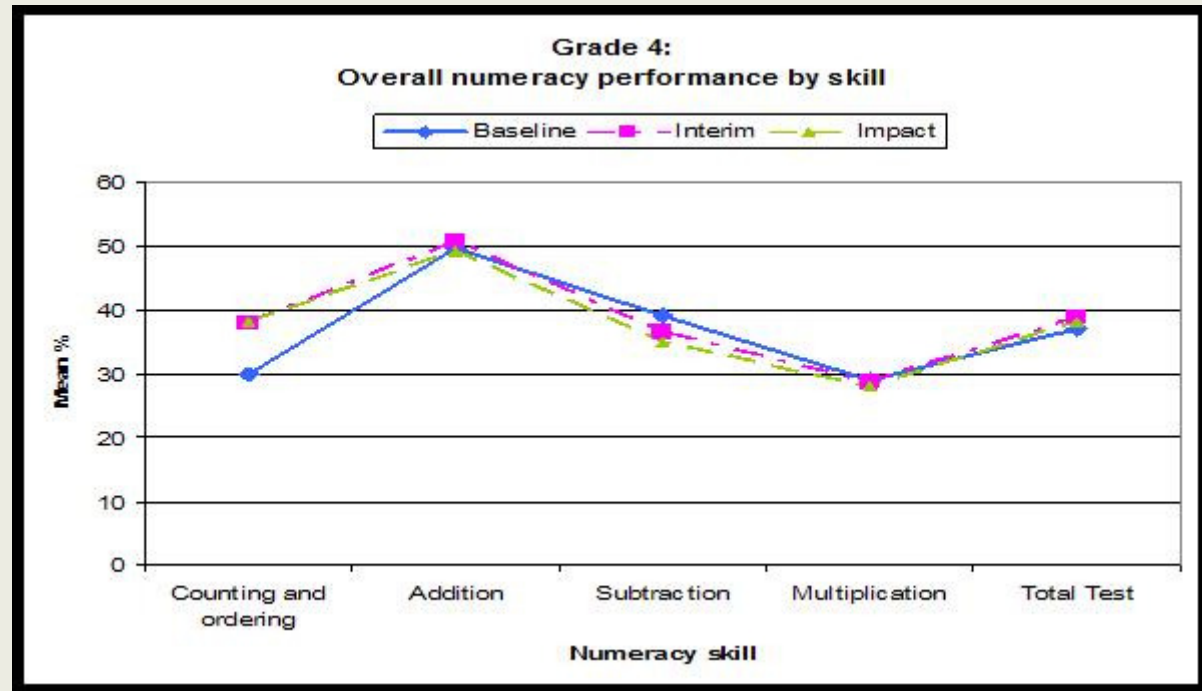


Overall scores: Numeracy / Mathematics

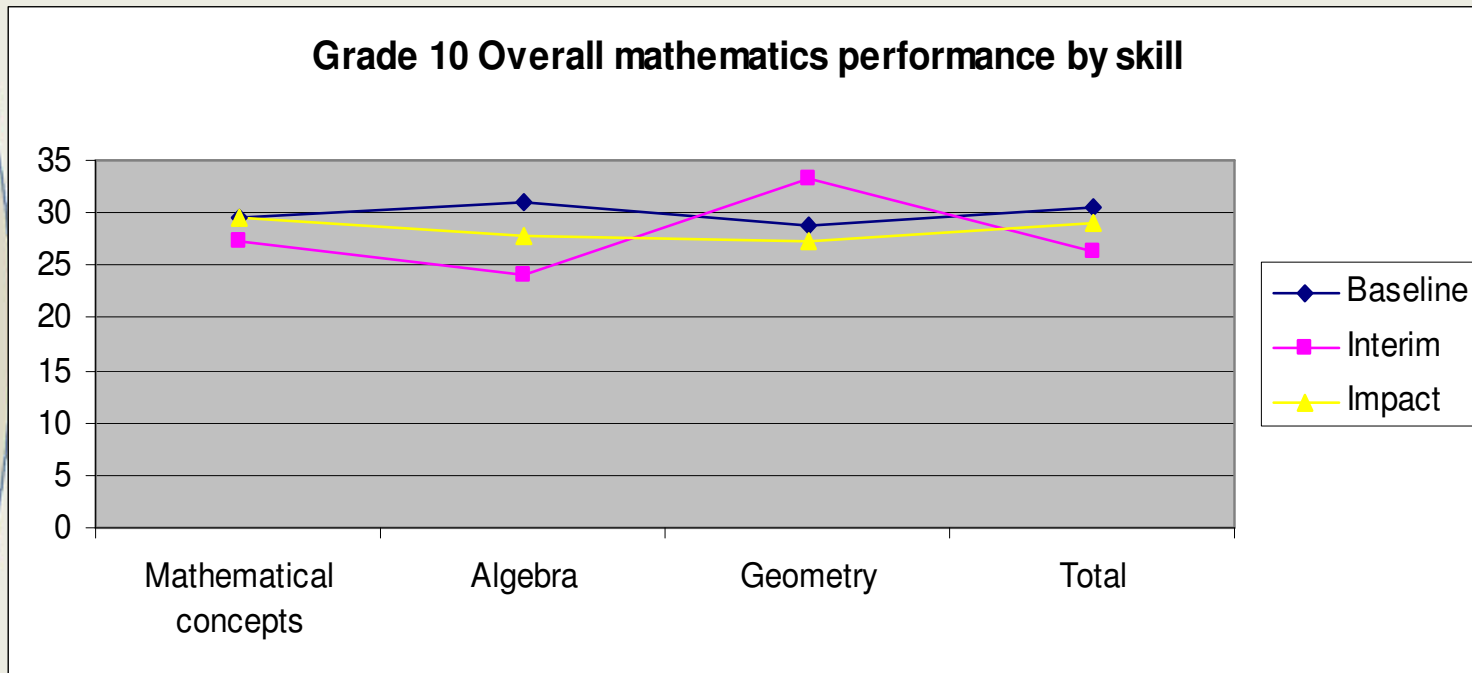
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Learning area and grade	2003	2006	2008
Grade 4 Numeracy	37	39	38
Grade 7 Mathematics	30	30	32
Grade 10 Mathematics	30	26	29

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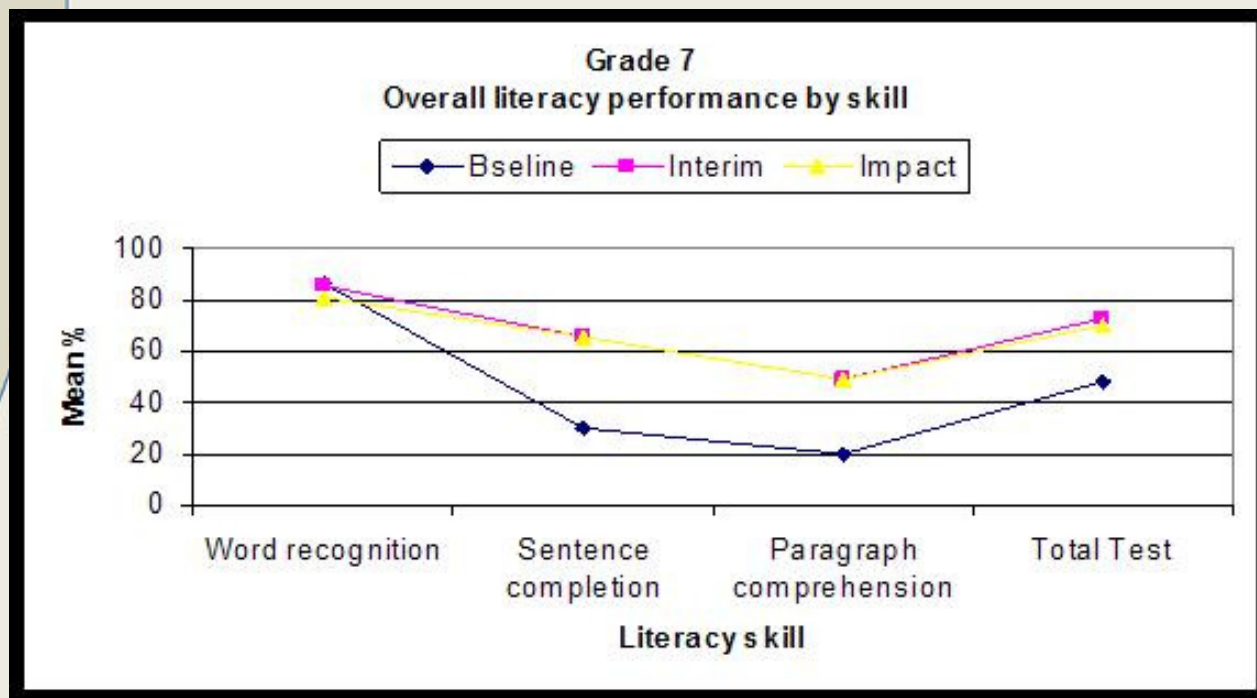
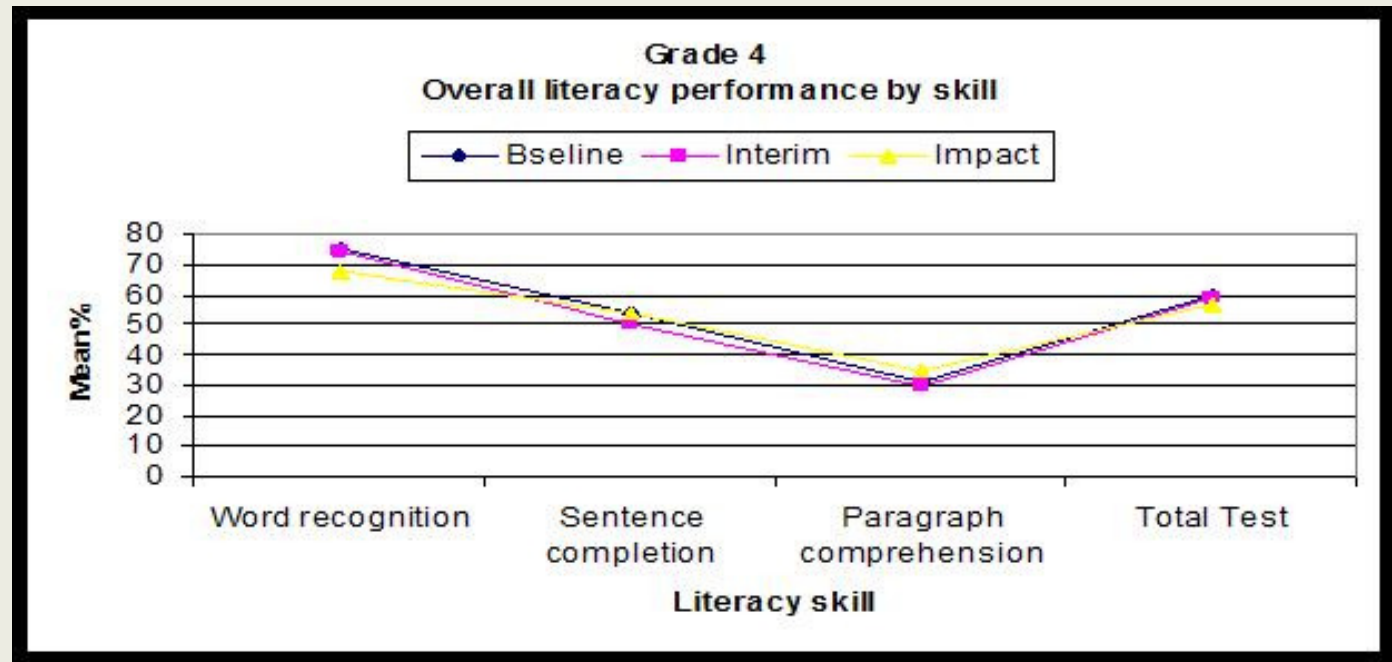
Grade 10 Overall mathematics performance by skill



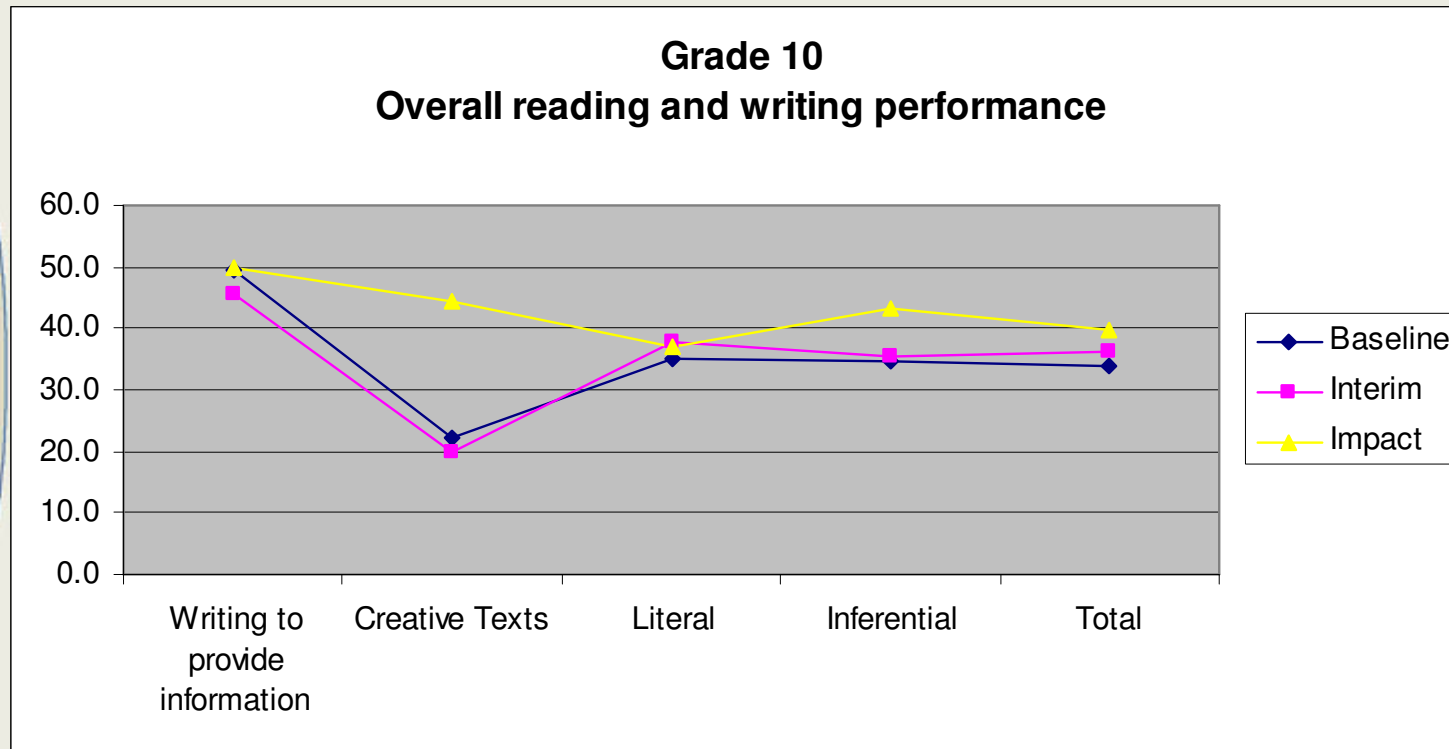
Overall scores: Literacy / language

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Learning area and grade	2003	2006	2008
Grade 4 Literacy	60	59	57
Grade 7 Language	48	73	70
Grade 10 Language	34	36	40



Grade 10
Overall reading and writing performance



Overview of impact: Learner performance

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- **Grade 4**
 - Numeracy: Main improvement in counting and ordering but others remain +/- at baseline levels
 - Literacy: Only improved in paragraph comprehension
- **Grade 7**
 - Mathematics: Improvement across the board except in computations
 - Language: Good improvement across the board
- **Grade 10**
 - Mathematics: Better on mathematical concepts than on algebra or geometry – knowledge production type questions better than comprehension or application
 - Language: Notable improvement in creative writing and inferential comprehension

Early Childhood Development (1)

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- Empirical evidence (on indicators) showed substantive gains over time (since 2006) pertaining to:
 - Fewer learners per classroom (down to 35 from 46)
 - More detailed and better time allocation in time tables
 - Increased participation in rest of Foundation Phase with a view to planning
 - Feedback and quality assurance by HoDs much more in evidence lately

Early Childhood Development (2)

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- Empirical evidence (on indicators) showed substantive gains over time (since 2006) pertaining to (continued):
 - Range of teaching skills and methods used by teachers increased
 - Increased attendance of training / support events by teachers
 - Higher satisfaction levels regarding training quality
- Various respondents pointed out that high staff turnover jeopardised capacity development and continuity

Youth and Social Development (1)

Positives:

- A number of sporting codes continued to benefit well (soccer, netball, cricket, volleyball and table tennis)
- Cultural and other activities such as chess, drama, debating, traditional dancing and indigenous games increased well
- Inter-school competitions / collaboration increased
- HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns kept expanding
- Increased integration of life-skills activities into the curriculum occurred

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Youth and Social Development (2)

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Positives (continued):

- Increased assistance was received from the side of the district (supporting the establishment of RCLs)

Negatives:

- The lack of facilities remains dire
- Fewer RCLs (high schools only) than before received annual training for their roles and responsibilities
- RCLs have been consulted decreasingly about introduction of new youth activities

Project coordination

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- Not a direct focus of the evaluation
- Service provider perspectives were positive:
 - Clarity about their brief and contractual obligations
 - Open communication with project management team, Department, school management and teachers
 - Establishment of area working groups was conducive to good working relationships between different parties

“Final word” on Mveledzandivho (1)

- Much improvement in many of the indicators for governance & management and teacher development & support
- Will not necessarily have a direct and immediate impact on learner performance; improved management and teaching practices are noteworthy, though, BUT one needs to guard against unrealistic expectations (teacher backlogs, learner knowledge gaps, language policy implementation challenges)

“Final word” on Mveledzandivho (2)

- In summary: project achievements are commendable
- Critical questions raised:
 - Should it not have been imbedded into a holistic poverty alleviation and community development approach?
 - Should schools be allowed to choose to participate?
 - Should clustering of schools and delivery areas be pursued for more sustainable support?

What gains should be taken forward? (--and how?) (1)

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- Continuity of participants at all levels is an important condition for sustainability
- A tie-over period, with structured arrangements, monitoring and deliverables, is advocated (i.e., a focused sustainability action plan)
- This has to include wider implementation of many only recently developed policies, strategies and plans

What gains should be taken forward? (--and how?) (2)

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- Shortened “bureaucratic” lines and channels would help
- There are many remaining needs at schools (expanding training to more staff and schools, ongoing support, monitoring, various resources – but infrastructure alone would not be enough)
- Wide debate and dissemination of the findings

Perspectives from literature / theory (1)

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There is good and recent research material out there concretising many aspects of school reform:

- Prof Jonathan Jansen – teacher quality, textbooks and time on task (the 3 “T”s)
- JET / Dr Nick Taylor – appropriate conceptual / cognitive feedback to learners on how they perform

Perspectives from literature / theory

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- McKinsey report (2007) – (i) getting the right people to become teachers, (ii) developing them into effective instructors, (iii) ensuring that the system delivers the best possible instruction to every child
- Related recent HSRC studies – (i) increasing expectations / raising the bar regarding the volume of reading and writing (and in terms of the cognitive demands posed in general), and (ii) the non-negotiable requirement that learners master Foundation Phase (Gr R to 3) learning contents on a year-by-year basis