



Basic Concepts
Building Thinking - Harnessing Potential
foundation

BASIC CONCEPTS ADVOCACY PROJECT

PHASE 1: Pixley Ka Seme & John Taolo Gaetsewe (2019-2021)

Cluster Meeting 1 (March 2021)

- Name of facilitator/s:
JTG: Louis Benjamin, Gill Brand, Josephine Takawira
PKS: Diane Goldsmith, Michele Lothian
- Dates:
*9 March: Cluster 1
10 March: Cluster 2
11 March: Cluster 3
*JTG Cluster 1 was rescheduled to the 18 March
** All cluster meetings were 45-60minutes in duration
- General purpose of the sessions:
To support and assist teachers with the implementation and pacing of the BCP in their classes as well as to provide focussed input on the conceptual domain currently being implemented in the classes.
- Current Conceptual Domain:
Conceptual Domain of Colour

- Register with names including all officials:

[Click here](#) to access the GOOGLE SHEET for JTG

[Click here](#) to access the GOOGLE SHEET for PKS

- Attendance Statistics:

PKS Clusters	Date	Present	Apologies	Absent
1	09 March	3 (30%)	7 (70%)	0
2	10 March	8 (80%)	0	2 (20%)
3	11 March	5 (50%)	0	5 (50%)
TOTAL		16 (53.3%)	7 (23.3%)	7 (23.3%)

**The district official was on leave at the time of the clusters.*

JTG Cluster	Date	Present	Apologies	Absent
1	09 March	8 (80%)	1 (10%)	1 (10%)
2	10 March	9 (69%)	3 (23%)	1 (8%)
3	11 March	7 (78%)	0	2 (22%)
TOTAL		24 (75%)	4 (12.5%)	4 (12.5%)

**Both of the district officials were present at two of the three cluster meetings.*

- General Comments:

i) The teachers in each district were divided into three clusters with 8-13 teachers per cluster. The groupings were mainly formed because of their proximity to a physical venue or school in the area. There is however one cluster in each district that has no physical venue and only meets virtually.

ii) The number of teachers in each district has contracted since last year from 85 to 64. This drop in teacher numbers can mainly be attributed to resignations and the fact that many teachers were not reappointed to their positions.

iii) It is the responsibility of the lead teachers in each of the clusters to host the meeting as well as to facilitate the connectivity of the teachers at the venue. Most teachers were supported by a more experienced IT person at their schools.

iv) We experienced some difficulty connecting with teachers, particularly in two of the six clusters. We have however gained much experience in this area and we are certain that many of the issues experienced could be resolved before the next set of cluster meetings.

v) The teachers are able to access recordings of the cluster meeting sessions if they were not able to attend the sessions themselves.

- Feedback from Cluster Sessions:

i) The overall feedback from both districts indicates that the majority of teachers have started to implement the BCP inside their classes. This is supported by the visual evidence of implementation that has been posted regularly on the WhatsApp groups (see photos below).

ii) The rate and intensity of implementation varies from as few as 6 basic concept sessions to 45 basic concept sessions over the last few weeks and within this time teachers have mediated 2 to 4 different colours.



- iii) The teachers seemed responsive to the suggestion of delegating the planning of future sessions to different people in each of the clusters.
- iv) The teachers in both districts reported that their learners either came to school for a week at a time or every 2-3 days alternating with other learners. These arrangements have made it possible for the teachers to work with more manageable, smaller sub-groupings inside their classes.
- v) Many of the teachers commented that their learners this year appeared to be weaker than in previous years.

- Conclusion:

The first round of Cluster Sessions far exceeded our expectations. We had anticipated that only a very small fraction of the teachers from these two remote rural districts of the Northern Cape would be able to connect to the cluster sessions. We have, however, had to recalibrate what could be achieved with these two districts over the next 10 months. In many cases the teachers showed high levels of flexibility and were quickly able to learn how to connect to these virtual sessions, many for the first time. We also found that most of the lead teachers had access to the type of devices that were needed to make the connections. We were in fact able to communicate directly with many of the project teachers during the sessions. We found that the teachers, in the main, were very positive and responsive to our efforts to provide continued BCP support and input. It is our aim to continue to forge connections with the teachers and to provide an additional layer of support; we are often the only support service available. District officials are currently not allowed into their schools because of COVID-19 regulations.