



BC ADVOCACY PROJECT: PHASE 1 (2019-2020)

John Taolo Gaetsewe (JTG)

Field Visit 5

24 – 28 February 2020 (JTG)

Aim

The main purpose of this first official visit of the year was to ensure that the project teachers had started to implement the programme and refreshed their planning and record keeping for the year. The visit also provided an opportunity to strengthen and consolidate the project within the district and particularly amongst the district officials and volunteers.

Overview of Visit

The visit to the district was five days in duration. The provincial officials were not able to attend because of a last minute moratorium on travel by the Provincial Department of Education. The visit programme therefore had to be adjusted to ensure that all the schools could still be visited. (See the revised visit programme at the end of the report-Appendix 1). The volunteers and district officials had recently concluded a round of visits to the teachers which helped to provide greater focus for this round of visits.

The teachers had begun with the implementation of the first conceptual domain (Colour) of the programme at the start of the first term. About a week prior to the visit they had been requested to start with the implementation of the second conceptual domain (Shape).

1. Class Visits and Teacher Mentoring

Visit Statistics-

| John Taolo Gaestewe (JTG) | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Number of schools visited | 17 out of *18 |
| Number of teachers visited | 32 out of **37 |
| Number of district officials participating in the class visits | 2 |
| Number of volunteers participating in the class visits | 2 |
| Number of others participating in the class visits | NA |

**An additional school has been included on the list of project schools as one of the teachers has transferred to another school.*

*** The number of project teachers has declined by 3 since the start of the year. It might be that some of these teachers will find work in other schools and could therefore re-join the project in the future*

Comments on visit statistics –

- *95% of schools in JTG were visited.*
- *86% of JTG project teachers were visited.*
- *All district officials and volunteers were present for the class visits.*
- *All but one of the scheduled school visits were completed – see programme.*

Overview of the school visits-

- The teachers were visited by teams consisting of district and/or project team members and/or volunteers. Two teams left Kuruman each morning to visit teachers and returned in the afternoons to give feedback at a combined group meeting.
- While some changes had to be made to the visit programme there was very little resistance to these changes at the schools.
- The visiting teams were in fact warmly welcomed at the schools often by the Principal, HOD and teacher/s. We have established good working relationships with many of the HODs at the schools who have shown an interest in the project.
- The teachers were on the whole prepared for the visits and started their demonstrations without need for much encouragement.
- While some teachers either had a teaching assistant inside their classes or had their learners taken out of the class during the demonstration sessions, most of the teachers gave their other learners group activities to keep them occupied. These activities were however often not structured enough to keep the learners occupied for very long. One could therefore infer that these teachers might struggle to run the programme without causing some disruption inside their classes.
- The general class environment (cleanliness, organization, and beautification) of the majority of classes was adequate, but a few of the classes were in need of attention.
- There have not been significant staff changes at the majority of the schools since last year and it thus seems that the bulk of teachers will remain in the project until the end of the year.
- We have also had interest expressed by numerous Grade R teachers not yet trained to be trained in the future. We in fact found a team of three Grade R teachers at one school who were being trained by their BCP-trained colleague.

- 4 teachers in the district were acknowledged and rewarded for their consistent implementation of the BCP and also for the quality of their work (see pictures below).



Mediational teaching environment-

Summary of teacher progress in JTG

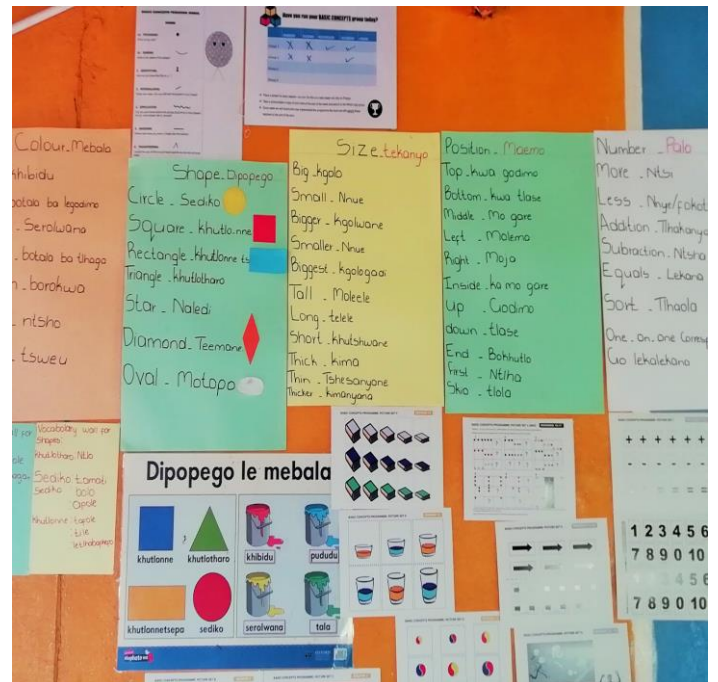
| | <i>Teachers making very good progress</i> | <i>Teachers making moderate progress</i> | <i>Teachers making very little progress</i> |
|--|--|---|--|
| <i>Number and percentage of teachers</i> | 8 out of 32 25% | 15 out 32 47% | 9 out of 32 28% |

**Note: Five teachers were not visited during this round of visits; however, we would expect that the majority of these teachers would be regarded as 'making moderate progress'.*

- The majority (**72%**) of the project teachers in the district could be described as making moderate to very good progress, however, there were a minority (**28%**) of teachers who still required much encouragement.
- The teachers described as '*very good*' were exemplary. They in fact provide a model of the practice that we aim to establish in these classes. Not only have these teachers run the programme regularly, but they were actively mediating while their learners were starting to speak using their conceptual language. These teachers also made excellent use of visual displays of the basic concepts content and associated vocabulary inside their classrooms (see photos below).
- The teachers described as '*moderate*' were making reasonable progress in these classes. The teachers were prepared and comfortable while mediating their sessions. There was also evidence that work was being done inside their Learner Workbooks. We would however recommend that many of these teachers increase the frequency of their interventions.
- The teachers described as making '*very little*' progress raised the most concerns. It was evident that the programme was not being implemented regularly with all groups by many of these teachers. These teachers also tended not to give much attention to the physical environment inside their classes or to the administration related to the programme. These teachers do have Learner Workbooks, but more work could be done in these books. It was also evident that many of these teachers were still uncomfortable and uncertain about the teaching process and running the programme.
- During this visit much attention was placed on the mediation of shape and particularly the steps of how to draw a shape. It seemed that many of the teachers were able to start to apply the process inside their classes.



Teachers mediating and actively engaging their learners



Visual displays inside 'Basic Concepts' classrooms

Department of Education: District and Provincial

- The provincial officials were unable to accompany us on this support visit because of a travel moratorium that had been placed on all officials shortly before the visit.
- The above moratorium also affected several (3) of the district officials from the Frances Baard district in Kimberley who had also committed to come on the visit. These officials are currently busy with the implementation of Phase 2 of the project.
- The two local district officials were however present during the visit and again gave their full support and backing to the project. These officials are committed to the project and have taken a genuine interest in the maintenance of the programme in their district.

Volunteers

- The two project volunteers were present for the full duration of the visit and accompanied the project team and officials during their visits to the teachers.
- The volunteers remain steadfastly committed to the project.
- The visit again provided an opportunity to guide the volunteers regarding their role in the project and particularly inside the classes with the teachers.
- The volunteers were also assisted to check their overall evaluations of the teachers to ensure that these aligned with the evaluations of the other team members.

Summary and Conclusion

The visit was very successful even though we were not accompanied by the provincial and Frances Baard officials. It in fact seemed that the visit provided an opportunity for the local district officials to show leadership in a way that we had not experienced up to this point. In addition, the visit confirmed that most, if not all, project teachers could be visited within a week by only two visit teams.

The volunteers and district officials made various suggestions throughout the visit that could help to improve and tighten the implementation of the project in the district. We will be following up on several of these suggestions within the next few weeks. For example, it was suggested that the teachers be given concrete guidelines (A3 posters) to assist with ideas for small group activities. The main area of concern however, was the group of teachers who were making very little progress. Some suggestions were made by the officials and a range of strategies discussed: for example, we have agreed to monitor these teachers more regularly and also to call on the schools and HODs to assist.

The visit provided satisfactory evidence that teachers had independently been able to resume the BCP intervention with new groups of learners and had done so from the start of the year or at least a few weeks into the year. There were no teachers that had not started to implement the programme again. We were also delighted that most of the project teachers (95% at this stage) had been reappointed to their posts at the start of the year. We were therefore, on the whole, very pleased with the state of the BC Advocacy Project in the JTG education district.



APPENDIX 1

Basic Concepts Advocacy Project: Phase 1 (2019 – 2020)

John Taolo Gaestewe

Programme for Visit 5: (24-28 February 2020)

| | Team A | Team B |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| 24 February 2020 | 08:30 – 09:30 Meet at district office to discuss logistics School visits Olarato P/S (1) Robanyane P/S (2) 14:00 Feedback at District Office | 08:30 – 09:30 Meet at district office to discuss logistics School visits Ipetlontle P/S (2) 14:00 Feedback at District Office |
| 25 February 2020 | School visits Wrenchville P/S (2) Glenred P/S (3) 14:30 Feedback at District Office | School visits Moraladi P/S (2) Gamopedi P/S (1) 14:00 Feedback at District Office |
| 26 February 2020 | School visits Deben P/S (3) - 1absent Shishen P/S (1) 14:00 Feedback at District Office | School visits Gakgasana (2) Masakhane (2) Legae Le Bana (1) 14:00 Feedback at District Office |
| 27 February 2020 | School visits Noordkaap P/S (3) 14:00 Feedback at District Office | School visits Hotazel (1) – 1 absent Maruping (1) Mahikaneng (2) 14:00 Feedback at District Office |
| 28 February 2020 | School visits Segonyane P/S (4) 12:00 Feedback at District Office | |