Bridge Maths and Science Learner Support Community for Effective Practice

Summary of the Tertiary Access Focus Group Meeting

Foundation Boardroom, Sasol Inzalo Foundation, the Mall Offices, Rosebank

7 November 2013, 12h30 - 15h30

Dear Community Member

Zarina Khan facilitated the last Tertiary Access focus group meeting of 2013 with support from Carlene Gonzo and Barbara Dale-Jones. This meeting focused on mapping for education, models for influencing a system and messaging for this community, and the wider education sector.

The following members of the community were present:

2enable	Keren Gear
BARLOWORLD	Nolundi Ningi
GreenMatter	Liz Robson
Gauteng East District	Moipone Maleka
HR Support Solutions	Marjie Harrington
Institute for Balanced Living	Jenny Dry
Khulisa Management Services	Samantha Dube
MerSETA	Ester van der Linde
MerSETA	Camilla Smith
Renaissance Strategic Solutions	Kim Robinson
SAIDE	Rebecca Pursell
Sasol Inzalo Foundation	Marietjie Vosloo
Tsebo Education Network (TEN)	Robert Stephens
Tshikululu Social Investments	Joyce Wanjogu
Ukuqonda Institute	Andrew Hofmeyr
Ukuqonda Institute	Gabriel Mphuthi

Mapping adult education provision in Gauteng

Overview of Project Work

Ms. Rebecca Pursell is a seasoned monitoring and evaluation specialist whose experience spans over a decade. She is currently Senior Education Researcher at South African Institute of Distance Education (Saide) responsible for monitoring and evaluation activities pertaining to literacy, schooling and higher education. Her presentation to the focus group illustrated recent GDE decision support services work that Saide accomplished with GIS (Geographic Information System) mapping. Saide's investigation was designed to provide explanations for the following queries:

1. A large number of people in Gauteng who have not completed Grade 9 or 12 but there is very low enrolment at Adult Education and Training (AETs) Centres. The centres that exist across the province serve a small number of learners despite location and population density. There is a need to identify areas where there are potential learner populations who are not being reached.

2. Propose catchment areas per existing centre to identify hard to reach populations (minimum distance catchments).
3. Centres that are poorly located/not offering what is required need to be identified.
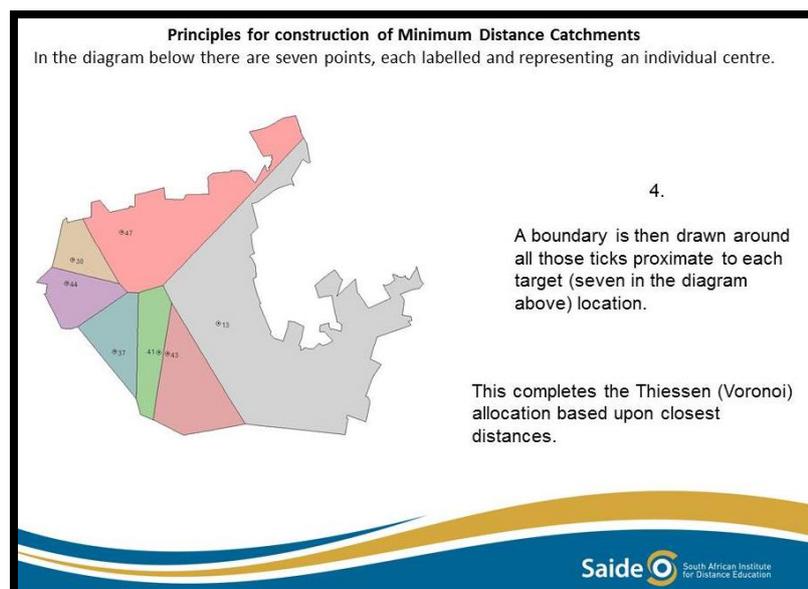
The Saide team found that

- Programmes offered at the Adult Education and Training Centres (AETs) were not aligned with target populations
- Some Centres offer the same programmes in very close proximity, but other key programmes are not in place
- Census data enabled us to make recommendations for the introduction/re-orientation of programmes

Methodology and Visualisation

The researchers in this process collected EMIS (Education Management Information System) data and Census 2011 data. This allowed them to look at the age and the highest level of education of individuals in various areas. Thereafter they were able to identify target groups for close consideration, the categories that Saide focused on include:

- Anyone with less than grade 9 education
- 18-24 years (NCS Candidates) with grade 11 as highest qualification
- Individuals who are 25 years old or more with grade 9 as highest qualification
- Compare profile with enrolment

Thereafter they created a GIS map using minimum distance catchments and municipal data. Using the Theissen Polygon Construction or Voronoi Polygons in response to create minimum distance catchments for AETs.

Principles for construction of Minimum Distance Catchments
In the diagram below there are seven points, each labelled and representing an individual centre.

4.

A boundary is then drawn around all those ticks proximate to each target (seven in the diagram above) location.

This completes the Thiessen (Voronoi) allocation based upon closest distances.

Rebecca shared a range of possibilities for the use of the information generated. GIS maps that were generated allow a viewer to:

- Scroll over key areas and key data will pop up on the map
- View, at a strategic level, which areas are not sufficiently addressed, and who is working on those addressing issues
- Identify the best intervention points
- Map learner data against current uptake vs. available services per catchment area
- Review coverage of programmes at each level of the chain
- Create a profile of learners from experience of participating organisations
- Find out what are the high risk locations (red sections) in the tertiary access chain
    - Map existing service providers against need within the province
    - Map matric results against areas of residence
- Analyse census data of those above 20 years of age with a tertiary qualification, highest qualification and field of enrolment. This can be broken down into Small Area Layers (statistical geography), but are not aligned with districts or municipalities
- Quality of Life data generated by Gauteng City Region Observatory (GCRO) which has gathered information about time taken to travel and place a person is travelling to could also inform optimal the location of centres.

How this forum can influence the education system

Dr Marietjie Vosloo is a Programme Director at the Sasol Inzalo Foundation. Marietjie made some brief comments on opportunities for the tertiary access focus group to influence the education system in the August 2013 meeting. In this meeting she shared a full description of some of the models available to the focus group. A batch of existing frameworks that the group could draw learnings from is described here.

Transformative Change Cycle – Buckley and Perkins

A system will undergo transformation in a number of stages. Marietjie felt that as a collective there are limited options of what the group could do, together, in this framework; however, there are opportunities for impact if members of the focus group are working in their individual organisations. For example, it may be challenging for the focus group to go out into the world and run an intervention together, but it is entirely possible for the entities represented in the group to do this. It was emphasised that an opportunity exists for the focus group to work collectively to create meaning of the change that needs to take place. On the cycle, the collective stages relate to "reordering" and "translation".

Education reform - Joseph de Stafano

This model focused on education reform. De Stafano highlights that often educational interventions focus only on the technical dimension of reform which looks at pedagogy, classroom management, curriculum and assessment. He suggests that reform should also be affected by the political *(Issues of leadership, politics, and civil society)* and institutional *(capacity, resources and frameworks)* dimensions. Here again Marietjie suggested an avenue for collective focus, the group contribution sits within the political dimension: supporting communication and political strategies for dealing with mental models and entrenched interests

if conditions are to prevail for taking impact to scale. This links well with conversations taking place in the focus group on messaging for the focus group.

Self-Organising Systems – Margaret Wheatley

This model talks about creating the conditions for a self-organisation to emerge. Three elements of a self-organising system include relationships, information and identity. In this focus group a lot of work has taken place on relationships, significant information has been generated and continues to be generated as the group focuses on mapping. In order to reach the stage where self-organisation can occur there is need to for conversation on "who we are" as a focus group and a link with the sense making capacity of the group that need to be tackled. The group must feed the conversation about what is possible and what this shift would require.
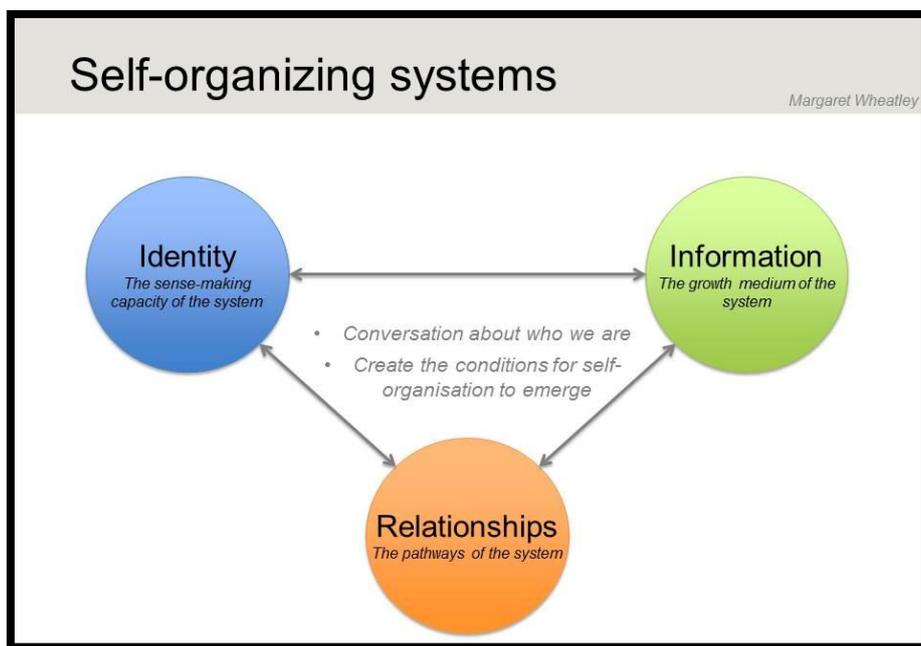
Growth Mindset – Carol Dweck

If the focus group decides to work to make a significant shift, some neurologists seem to agree that mindset is an important place for interveners to work. The growth mindset asserts that talent is a malleable quality that allows everyone to learn and grow. This works particularly well with learners. The praise they receive will contribute to either a fixed or growth mindset. Fixed mindset thinking considers intelligence, talent and ability unchangeable – meaning that learners without that indefinable "it" factor will not succeed. Messages that link with growth mindset are an area that the focus group could work; contributing to the way learners and society think about success in school and beyond.

Marietjie explained that beyond simply understanding models, the group needs to consider *how* it can influence behaviour change. The focus group is trying to make an impact in an open system where it does not have direct authority. In essence the group is interested in getting voluntary adoption and rapid spread of a new way of doing things. Marietjie led the group through a review of ideas that have spread quickly, for example, how videos go viral online, environmental awareness and marketing penetration.

Behaviour Change – Les Robinson

This model is based on a spiral of activities that is refined from time to time. Spiral elements encourage the activist to make the subject of change desirable, to create an enabling context and create a safe space that makes the action possible. Thereafter the activist creates a buzz around the issue; shares a call to action by credible inviter whom the actors or recipients of the invitation will respect. Thereafter, actors may try the action, once they experiences good results, satisfaction, this may lead to sustained adoption of the new behaviour.

### Making a product or idea contagious – Jonah Berger

Dr Vosloo shared some ideas on making a product or idea contagious which were extracted from "Contagious" a book by Jonah Berger. The elements to consider are summarised with acronym STEPPS:

- Social currency – this refers to whether this idea or product makes people look good?
- Triggers – while considering the context what cues make people think about the product or idea? Can the forum grow the habitat that is required to keep audience thinking of the product or idea?
- Emotion – focus on feelings that are generated by a product or idea.
- Public – does the product or idea advertise itself?
- Practical value – Does *talking about* the product or idea help people help others?
- Stories - Is the product or idea *embedded in a broader narrative that people want to share*? Is the story valuable in addition to being viral?

These points will contribute the way messages generated in the focus group will eventually be shared.

Diffusion of Innovations – Everett M Rogers; Crossing the Chasm – Geoffrey A. Moore

Innovation of adoption life cycle Marietjie presented suggested that there are different ways of sharing ideas innovations with society based on the characteristic responses to new ideas. Various segments of the market require slightly different approaches to encourage adoption of an idea or product.
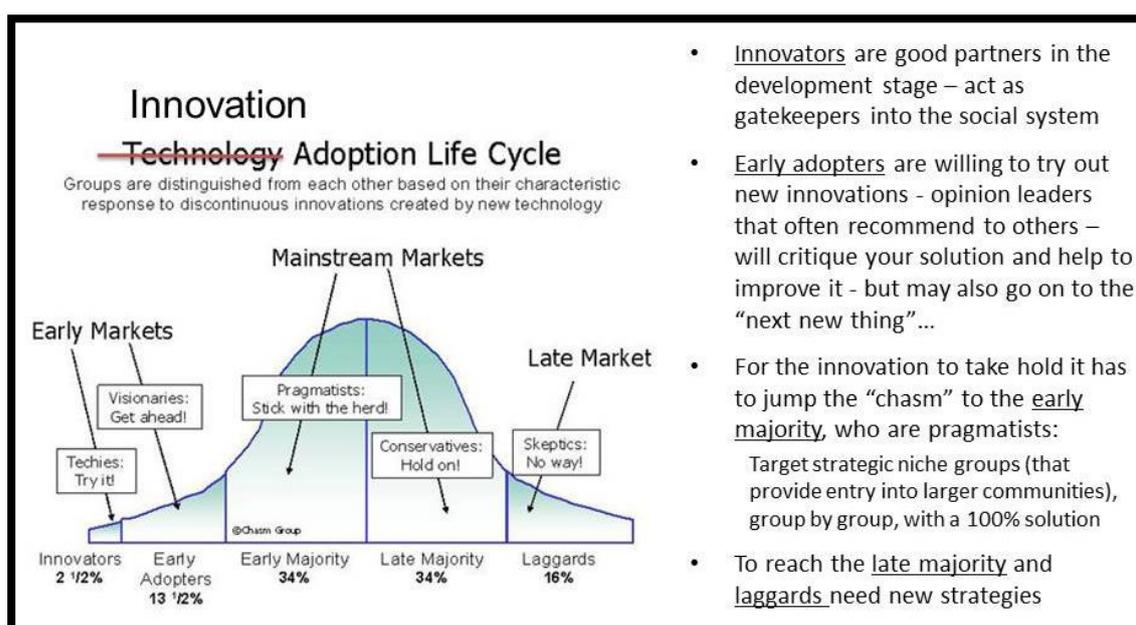
Defining a Tertiary Access message that will be shared

The focus group is interested in influencing the education system. Members agree that to do this, there must be a defined focus or message that advocacy rallies around. In order to assist the group in defining this focus Ms. Kim Robinson created an initial list of ideas from which the group could define the conversation. In this meeting Kim gave the group an overview of some of the themes she collated in the last meeting and pledged to be part of a working group that looks at messaging in greater detail. Some of the key ideas she shared include:

- Children can direct their own learning. This thread could focus on moving away from the fixed mindset that says learning happens at school and in the presence of a teacher. Learning is a lifelong process and this could be reflected in some of the messages shared.
- How teachers and learners relate is an important part of the educational experience. There may be a thread on how learning and teaching is a two way street in which both groups occupy both roles for optimal growth.
- Young people need to understand the value of hard work and stick-to-itiveness for success in school and life as a whole. A thread of messages may focus on raising issues relating to fact that success is an ongoing process.
- Parents, particularly the less literate ones, have often been left out of the educational transformation conversation. This group may consider ways to reach them and highlight their value in the learning process.

Community outcomes

The Tertiary Access focus group aims to contribute to a smoother transition from school to the world of work for maths science and technology graduates. Working with communities for effective practice, Bridge has the following objectives:

- The contribution of the community to the whole system;
- Creating common purpose, peer support and trust among stakeholders;
- The maximising of resources by the community;
- The spread of effective practice within the community and its associated stakeholders (horizontal integration); and
- The vertical integration of policy and practice.

In the closing remarks members of the group showed common purpose, trust and peer support among stakeholders by offering their time or expertise to further the work of the focus group. The working groups will include:

Mapping	Messaging
Barbara	Kim Robinson
Liz Robson	Camilla Smith
Robert Stephens	Jenny Dry
Marjie Harrington	Alon Joseph
Ester van Linde	

Andrew Hofmeyr – Ukuqonda Institute

We work in very specific contexts, as an organisation, from primary to secondary school so we can be a source for specific kinds of knowledge if it is asked in a specific way in three provinces. We can share information based on the perspective we have.

Alon Joseph - FutureCEO

Thank you, it was useful to hear so much knowledge and hear so many people's points of view. It is always very fascinating to hear other's points of view. Thanks to the convenors. It is an amazing forum. I am passionate about education, I am happy to help on the branding and marketing side of things, once they are more defined. I can also help with strategy.

In this meeting collaborative working groups to develop the mapping and messaging streams of activity of the focus group. This work is an instance where the community is maximising resources by pooling the knowledge and interests of a number of stakeholders chart the way forward for the group and community in 2014 and beyond.

Best wishes,

The BRIDGE Team

November 2013