**RESOURCE 4: Interview Questionnaire**

**Guides for Social Investment Interventions**

**School Profile – Interview Schedule**

This schedule contains suggested questions that you can use when interviewing the principal. It covers selected aspects of school functionality that could reasonably be discussed during an hour-long interview. The examples and additional information under ‘prompts for interviewers’ provide some context to help you probe for information and interpret the responses you receive.  You can adapt the questions to emphasize the information you need to suit your intervention in terms of project type, subject area or phase.

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| **1. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT** | **Prompts for Interviewers** |
| 1.1 How important is being visible in your leadership style? In what ways do you make yourself and your leadership role visible to your staff, the learners, the parents and the school’s partners? | *Examples: Physical presence in the school; leads assemblies and meetings; leads core processes, e.g. curriculum management; observes classes; interacts directly with learners, teachers, parents and other stakeholders* |
| Notes: | |
| 1.2 How does the School Management Team (SMT) plan and structure its activities? What are the key matters that the SMT deals with? How effective has the SMT been in dealing with these key matters?  *Note: The SMT comprises the principal, deputy principal/s, heads of departments and senior teachers* | *Examples of activities/ responsibilities: Provides direction to the school; implements systems and processes; promotes the quality of teaching and learning by managing the curriculum, staff and physical and learning resources; promotes and manages stakeholder communication and involvement*  *(Examples of stakeholders: district officials, the SGB, teachers, administrative and support staff, learners, parents, partners)* |
| Notes: | |
| 1.3 Do you experience any difficulties with timetabling? (If yes) What are they? Are you able to allocate the required amount of time for each subject per grade, as specified in the curricula? | *Examples: Timetabling difficulties could relate to a lack of classrooms, insufficient teachers, lack of suitably qualified teachers, large numbers of learners* |
| Notes: | |
| 1.4 What methods do you use to communicate with parents/ families? How effective are these methods? | *Examples of methods: Newsletters, notices, learner report cards; hand-outs at parents’ meetings; cell phone text messages; notes in learners’ diaries/ homework books; calling meetings to address specific issues* |
| Notes: | |
| 1.5 How do you involve parents/ families in their children’s education and the school’s programmes/ activities? What kind of response do you get from parents? | *Examples of parental involvement: Group meetings to build understanding of curriculum matters, homework, etc; individual meetings relating to children’s progress and issues; participation in volunteer programmes, celebrations, cultural events* |
| Notes: | |
| 1.6 How often does the School Governing Body (SGB) meet? What matters does the SGB deal with? How effectively does the SGB perform its functions? To what extent does the SGB support the School Management Team? | *Legally mandated functions relate to providing strategic direction; managing school finances and assets (developing policies and procedures, financial statements, annual budget); managing human resources (selection, appointment); fundraising* |
| Notes: | |
| 1.7 Who are your major partners? What kinds of assistance, support or resources does your school receive from these partnerships? How do you set up and maintain the partnerships? | *Examples of partners: Industry, local businesses, community structures, local government, NGOs, corporate donors, local government, parent and community volunteers, other educational institutions*  *Examples of support: Supply and maintenance of resources; financial; services/ programmes relating to learners’ academic, physical , emotional and social needs; access to facilities* |
| Notes: | |

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| **2. CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT** | **Prompts for Interviewers** |
| 2.1 What approach does the school take to curriculum planning, for e.g. do teachers do it independently, or in teams led by the SMT? Is the focus on compliance with CAPS requirements, or does it include more detailed interpretation and mediation of content and methodology? How much guidance do you/ the HoDs have to provide? | *Examples: Planning could range from dates and notes being added to the CAPS document (the minimum), to a detailed breakdown and description of strategy, content, methodology, resources and assessment.*  *A collaborative approach to curriculum planning is a positive indicator.* |
| Notes: | |
| 2.2 As principal, what role do you play in curriculum management? | *Create and maintain conditions to support curriculum delivery, for e.g. ensure relevant materials, resources and classroom practices; ensure monitoring of curriculum coverage and learner performance; provide direction and support for remediation and improvement; support teacher development; mediate between the district office and the school on curriculum matters* |
| Notes: | |
| 2.3 Are CAPs documents easily accessible by your teachers? How many days for teaching and learning does the school have available during the year? | *An awareness of the number of days required to cover the curriculum, and of the number of days actually available during the year for teaching, is a positive indicator. The minimum is 170 days.* |
| Notes: | |
| 2.4 How do you/ the SMT monitor whether teachers keep to the time frames and cover all areas of the curriculum as planned? How do you/the SMT provide feedback to teachers? How do you/the SMT deal with problems identified? | *The SMT role relates to curriculum implementation, e.g. HoDs hold regular subject meetings with teachers; support and mentor teachers; monitor curriculum coverage and the quality of teachers’ and learners’ work* |
| Notes: | |
| 2.5 What is your/ the school’s approach to teachers working together to plan and develop resources, such as lesson plans, materials and assessments? (If applicable) How do you encourage the sharing of resources and experience amongst your staff? | *A collaborative approach is associated with improved quality of teaching and learning, and teacher development* |
| Notes: | |
| 2.6 How do you integrate new teachers? What opportunities are there for your teachers to participate in professional development activities? | *Examples: teacher development workshops and support; both pedagogical and subject specific, formal and informal; including internal interventions such as mentoring by HoDs and sharing amongst peers* |
| Notes: | |

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| **3. TEACHING AND LEARNING** | **Prompts for Interviewers** |
| 3.1 How do you monitor and evaluate the quality of learners’ work? How do you monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching? How do you provide feedback to teachers? What is your approach to helping teachers and learners deal with difficulties and barriers that they are experiencing? | *Examples of monitoring and evaluation: Class visits; evaluating quantity and quality of work in learner workbooks; evaluating quality of assessments and analysing learner responses* |
| Notes: | |
| 3.2 What is your approach to analysing assessment results to identify problem areas in teaching and learning? How do you use the information generated? | *Examples: Remedial instruction, additional lessons, rework, corrections by learners; interventions directed at improving the quality of teaching* |
| Notes: | |
| 3.3 To what extent does the school’s Language of Teaching and Learning (LOLT) impact on the quality of teaching and learning? (If applicable) How does the school assist learners to develop proficiency in the LOLT? | *Examples: Specific subject vocabularies, promotion of reading, opportunities to use the LOLT outside of the classroom* |
| Notes: | |

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| **4. TEACHER AND LEARNER ATTENDANCE** | **Prompts for Interviewers** |
| 4.1 To what extent does the school experience teacher absenteeism, including late-coming and early departure? On average, what percentage of teachers is absent at any time? What are the main reasons for teacher absenteeism? | *Examples of reasons for absence: Workshops, union activities, family responsibilities, school business, illness* |
| Notes: | |
| 4.2 How do you monitor teacher attendance? Do you analyse teacher attendance data, and if so how do you use the resulting information? What steps does the school take to curb teacher absenteeism? | *Analysis and interpretation informs decision making, adds value to the management function* |
| Notes: | |
| 4.3 What is the school’s policy for dealing with classes when teachers are absent? How successfully does this minimise the loss of teaching and learning time? | *Examples range from a structured educational programme to supervision without teaching, e.g. relief teaching/ supervision timetables; teachers’ weekly plans accessible to stand-in teachers; emergency packs (pre-prepared work to be used in the event of absence); makeup lessons on weekends, before/ after school hours; dispersal of affected learners amongst other classes* |
| Notes: | |
| 4.4 How much of a problem is learner absenteeism, including late-coming and early departure? How do you curb learner absenteeism, late-coming and early departure? What are the predominant causes of learner absenteeism and late-coming? Are there processes in place to assist learners to catch up work missed while absent (i.e. for valid reasons)? | *Examples of causes: Family responsibility, distance to school, unreliable transport, girls lacking sanitary pads, adverse socio-economic conditions* |
| Notes: | |

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| **5. LEARNER OUTCOMES** | **Prompts for Interviewers** |
| 5.1 Do you analyse and interpret the ANA results? How does the school use this information? For Secondary level: How do you use the NSC (Matric) results?  *Primary level –Gr 3 and Gr 6 Annual National Assessments (ANAs) in literacy and numeracy; Secondary level - Gr 9 ANAs in literacy and numeracy* | *Example: Using the ANAs diagnostically, by analysing errors and determining their cause/s; taking action (see 3.2) to address the causes* |
| Notes: | |
| 5.2 For Secondary & Combined schools: How many learners do you have in each of the following grades: 9, 10, 11, and 12? (If applicable) What is the reason for the drop in numbers in Grade 12? | *A significant drop in numbers in between Gr 10 and Gr 12 would indicate external factors at play, such as learners dropping out or being held back in order to raise the Matric pass rate* |
| Notes: | |

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| **6. TEACHING & LEARNING SUPPORT MATERIAL** | **Prompts for Interviewers** |
| 6.1 Does the school have appropriate and sufficient Learning, Teaching and Support Materials (LTSM) for all subjects and grades? If not, how do you manage? Where is TLSM stored? | *Examples of factors negatively impacting use of LTSM: Non or late arrival, or incorrect delivery of textbooks; too few copies, necessitating sharing; materials are available but not distributed/used; poor quality photocopies* |
| Notes: | |
| 6.2 Does the school issue textbooks to individual learners? Are learners allowed to take textbooks home? How does the school ensure that textbooks and other LTSM issued to learners are returned? | *Examples: Inventory lists; documented LTSM issued and returned; retrieval system in place.*  *Learners not being allowed to take books home has been shown to negatively impact learning* |
| Notes: | |

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| **7. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT** | **Prompts for Interviewers** |
| 7.1 Does the school have adequate infrastructure and resources for effective teaching and learning? If not, what does the school lack? | *A clean, orderly, well-maintained and secure physical environment is associated with improved school functionality and learner performance. Minimum requirements include sufficient classrooms and furniture, functional services (water, electricity), ablution facilities, office space, perimeter security* |
| Notes: | |