



National Early Childhood Development Community of Practice

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS 10 MARCH 2020

Meeting held at Sasol, Sandton



SETTING THE SCENE

Mentorship and coaching are essential to the development and professionalisation of practitioners in any practice. In ECD, there is growing evidence that qualifications alone are not enough to improve the quality of care and teaching: practitioners improve their practice with ongoing support through mentorship. The aim of this session was to assist members of the CoP to identify innovations, challenges and practical interventions in mentorship and coaching. The CoP also included important sector updates about the Function Shift and the minimum wage discussions.



FEEDBACK: DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR (DoL) MINIMUM WAGE

At the last National ECD CoP the DoL was invited to present on the National Minimum Wage, and CoP members discussed how this affects the ECD sector. Click [here](#) to read these Meeting Highlights. We need to note that since the last CoP there have been changes to the legislation as captured below.

The national minimum wage (NMW), as well as minimum wages in some other sectors, will increase with effect from 1 March 2020.

R20,76 per hour

The minimum wage of R20 per hour will increase to R20,76 per hour (an increase of 3,8%). The new minimum sets a new baseline across all sectors, with a few exceptions.

Exceptions

The exceptions include domestic workers, farm/forestry workers, workers employed in Expanded Public Works Programmes and workers with learnership agreements in terms of the Skills Development Act. These minimum wages will be as follows:

- Domestic workers: R15,57 per hour
- Farm/forestry workers: R18,68 per hour
- Workers employed on Expanded Public Works: R11,42 per hour
- Workers with learnership agreements: See schedule in the link to the Government Gazette below.

Increases in other sectors

Employers in *SD9: Wholesale and Retail Sector*, as well as *SD1: Contract Cleaning Sector*, will have to increase their minimum rates as well. Details about these minimum wages can be found in the Government Gazette (GG) – [click here](#). Although not addressed by the GG, other sectors where the minimum wage is still R20 per hour (and which are not mentioned in this particular GG), would also have to comply with the new minimum of R20,76 per hour from 1 March 2020.

Are benefits included?

Employers are reminded that the way that they structure a remuneration package is restricted. The NMW excludes allowances that are paid to enable employees to work (such as transport and equipment), or payment in kind (such as board or accommodation), as well as bonuses, tips or food. So, for example, one cannot argue that you pay an employee less than the minimum wage because you contribute to their uniform or provide them with meals.

Exemption

There is provision for employers to apply for exemption, which may result in the amount that they would have to pay being reduced by up to a 10%. The National Minimum Wage Exemption System is accessible online at <https://nmw.labour.gov.za>. Alternatively, employers may approach their nearest branch of the Department of Labour.

Rex Molefe as a member of the ECD CoP reference group gave feedback on the issue. The Bill has the laudable aim of seeking to address inequalities and wage disparities. The ECD reference group has communicated with the DoL, and discussed issues relating to exemptions from the Minimum Wage Bill for the ECD sector. This important workforce should not continue to receive salaries at or below minimum wage; at the same time, however, we recognise that there are many centres who can't even afford to pay minimum wage. But requesting a blanket exemption for ECD centres is not the solution: there are also many centres which can afford to pay minimum wage and above, and who will hide behind the exemption and continue to exploit an already exploited workforce. The recommendation is that centres who meet the exemption criteria need to approach the DoL as individuals, and if they encounter problems they could raise these at this forum. If we are advocating for professionalisation, we should not ask for blanket exemption.

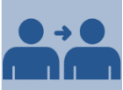


POINTS FROM THE FLOOR

- The maximum exemption is 90%. Minimum wage is R3150, which may still be too high for some ECD centres to pay. We also need to be clearer regarding what exactly the exemption entails.
- The ECD Reference group has identified a number of issues relating to legislation that hinder the success of ECD. BRIDGE wants to do an analysis and overview of the policies and legislation (including the NMW) and is looking for funding for this work.
- Although many participants were disappointed with the feedback, it does leave room for people that are invested in ECD. "We want professional people in the sector."
- We need to make a distinction between care-centres and ECD centres.
- In terms of quality provision this is not a bad thing. We want the ECD workforce to be paid a fair salary. We need concrete evidence with which to approach the DoL.
- There are many contextual factors relating to the NMW, which has also been discussed at NEDLAC (National Economic Development and Labour Council). There are also developments such as PIECCE, professionalising the sector through diplomas and degrees for ECCE practitioners in the Birth to Four space. However, there is little funding for Birth to Four, so what kinds of uptake will there be if graduates are only offered minimum wage?
- The new amendment on the NMW says that if you don't comply there is a fine of R300 per employee. Where does this come from? And what happens to the ECDs that don't comply? Enforcers don't look at the whole picture.
- At the University of North West, a Grade R diploma was developed, and there was a commitment from government that these graduates could be remunerated at REQV Level 13; however, there are no posts available.

- Afri-CAN is an organisation that works with ECDs in rural areas and assists them with getting registered. Only 3 out of 53 schools have enough money to pay minimum wage. Funding is used on infrastructure, then there is not enough money for salaries.

In sum, there are a number of contextual issues in relation to the overall policy landscape, funding, and retention of qualified professionals that the CoP needs to consider.



MENTORSHIP AND COACHING

Presentation 1: Motlalepule Mokhine

Motlalepule is a leadership coach, facilitator and life coach, working in both corporate and development contexts. She has a strong belief in the value of mentorship as a means to professionalise any field, and shared some of her insights and experiences in mentoring and coaching.

MENTORING

- The general assumption about mentorship is that there is one person who is more knowledgeable than the others. While this may be true in certain technical ways, or as related to being experienced as opposed to a novice in the field, we need to remember that the mentorship process is a two-way relationship; we can always learn from each other.
- In corporate contexts mentorship is often framed as a formal relationship with specific deliverables. But there are also informal mentorship relationships, and we can learn from social media and blogs as well.

COACHING

The analogy of a sports coach is useful. For example, the role of a soccer coach is not to teach people how to play soccer – those in the team already have these skills – but to improve both individual and team performance. A coach will therefore focus on attitudes and techniques. Coaching skills include the following:

- Getting people to reflect on what makes them a winner.
- Bringing in structured reflections and improvements to those who already have a specialisation: the person being coached may have the knowledge, but may have gaps in other areas, and the coach will help by bringing in leadership skills or skills related to personal relationships.
- ‘Holding up a mirror’ to the individual which then starts a partnership towards effectiveness.
- Asking the questions that enables the individual to make changes in order to be successful.

Motlalepule noted that there is a difference between one-on-one coaching and team engagement. In a corporate context people need to be made aware of the relationship between the organisational values and their personal values. If there are differences between these, there may need to be work done within the organisation. For example, a person who always stays late may be perceived as a hard worker, but may not in fact be investing their time in the company.

Both coaching and mentorship require a feedback cycle. This sometimes does not happen because of power relationships. A key element in successful mentoring and coaching is to build in a successful feedback loop.



Presentation 2: Corné Kruger

Corné was involved in the development of North West University’s Diploma in Grade R Teaching. With the introduction of distance learning they really needed to connect closely with schools, and therefore a mentoring approach was initiated. The development of the programme entailed a great deal of international research into models of mentoring and coaching, and into both theoretical and practical debates in relation to the topic.

Click [here](#) to see the presentation ‘Mentoring and Coaching: Sharing Experiences from NWU Grade R Teaching’.

No universal definition or view of mentoring and coaching;
“Some theorists see **coaching as a type of mentoring**, while others see **mentoring as a type of coaching**” (Mullen, 2012, p. 9).

At NWU they have placed an emphasis on the counselling aspect of mentoring for their students, in support of longer term learning goals. Coaching tends to have more specific objectives.

Mentoring versus coaching (Maarten, 2011)	
Mentoring	Coaching
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves sharing of knowledge • Long term investment • Facilitates decisions • Focused on the mentee 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves questioning and assessing • Limited investment • Reflective listening • Focused on tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth/development; helping people realise their potential • Teacher/consultant = a learning/thinking partner • Built on respect, trust, supporting in nature 	

Corné made the following general points during her presentation.

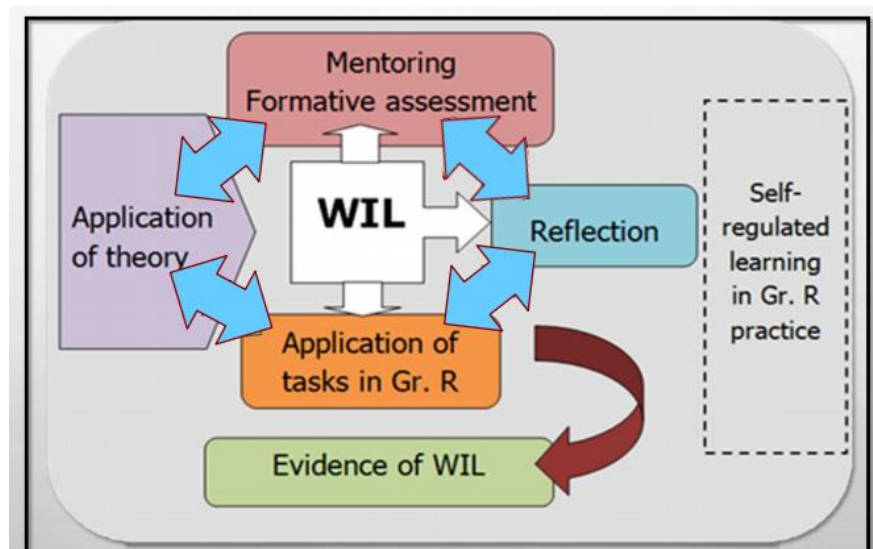
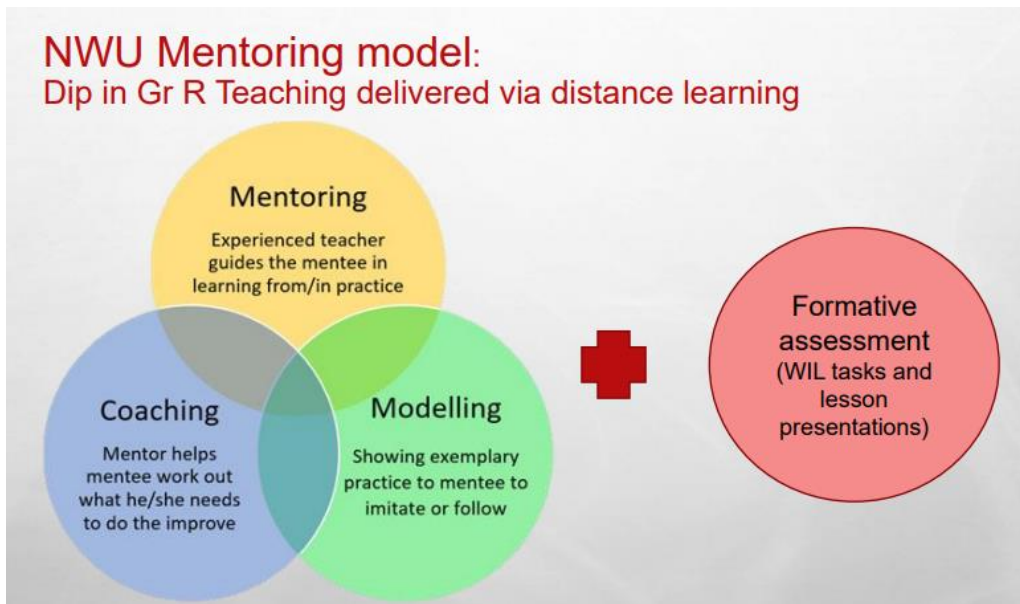
- Both the mentors and mentees have different roles in the mentoring process: for example, the mentor will listen, observe, encourage exploration of ideas and facilitate reflection, while the mentee needs to display commitment to the programme and their

professional development plan as well as accept feedback and critically reflect on the feedback.

- One can be both a mentor and a mentee – this is not only applicable to student teachers but to teacher educators too.
- It's important to see the mentor as a guide and not just a person to pass on knowledge/experience.
- It's important to remember that feedback is not critique – it leads to self-improvement and development
- It is not only about knowledge transfer, but about the learning process. The goal is professional development, but also to model teaching so that the student becomes a good teacher for her/his learners.
- International practices differ widely (see slide 10).

“The core of mentoring is learning.” *Corné Kruger*

Corné described the NWU model in detail and its relationship to Work Integrated Learning (WIL), as illustrated by the slides below.



Most of the NWU students are already in schools, so clearly articulated partnerships with the schools are also key. Corné shared details on programme modules, examples of assessment templates and rubrics used in the programme (see presentation), as well as some of the evidence indicators of successes they have had. She ended by stressing that mentoring should be built on the philosophy of collaborative learning for self-directed learning. Mentors also become capacitated and improve their own practice through being a mentor.



Q&A SESSION and SHARING

- Afri-CAN has started rolling out coaching in their ECD centres to help practitioners with curriculum delivery. Feedback has been positive. This has benefitted the young teachers the most. By applying certain coaching and mentoring models, there has been some sort of structure and accountability in schools.
- Is there a specific SAQA unit standard that speaks to mentorship and coaching? Corné Kruger indicated she is willing to assist with this.
- Social Innovations runs after-school centres. Teams of mentors go there and talk to teachers. One challenge is that teachers often feel they are not left with anything concrete after the session. Social Innovations is therefore developing what they call ‘edu-bites’ in order to leave teachers with a tool/resource to use going forward. Now they want to develop this for Grade R, and are looking for content for the mentors.
- Watershed Organisation undertakes research into Leadership Development. In ECD they have recognised the need to have reading mentors/literacy coaches in the community. BRIDGE suggested that they view the presentation given at a previous CoP meeting by Project Literacy on this topic, [here](#). In addition, go to the BRIDGE website and view Meeting Highlights from the Early Grade Reading Community of Practice.
- The University of Johannesburg offers a free online short course on mentoring and coaching starting in April 2020. This link provides more information: <https://www.uj.ac.za/faculties/facultyofeducation/mentoring-school-teachers>
- Regarding the issue of payment for mentors, it was noted that this varies depending on context. If they are accredited they may be able to demand payment. Coaches in the corporate sector are usually paid.
- There is peer coaching at the Hollard Foundation Trust and it is shown to be effective if mentors have themselves been mentored: those to be trained as mentors are drawn from the pool of practitioners. The coaching is formalised through training. This is a funded project and mentors are paid to go to other communities.
- GROW ECD uses a 2-pronged approach, offering tools and resources through ‘education in a box’ and ‘business in a box’. One of these services is mentoring in order to bring in better business practices to ECD centres to make sure they are sustainable.

“As we reimagine HR capacity in ECD, we need to use mentoring and coaching as building blocks in a package of pathways in professionalisation.”

- Coaching and mentoring needs to happen in the schools or centres at which practitioners are based. In the TVET sector some difficulties have been noted, in that current teachers in schools see student teachers as competition, and are not prepared to share or support them; in some cases, they don't even want them to present lessons. This highlights the need for **advocacy** for mentoring, starting in the community. This could be linked to some form of recognition or prestige.
- Could mentorship training be linked to building up SACE points?

"Mentoring is important in all contexts but we also need to talk about this in terms of leadership and transformation."



GROUP WORK: REFLECTIONS ON MENTORING AND COACHING

Groups were asked to reflect on mentoring and coaching in their own contexts in terms of challenges, opportunities and an M&E plan. Below is a consolidation of points.

CHALLENGES

- There are sometimes organisational challenges in that those in leadership positions are not mentors but behave more like inspectors. They do not understand the developmental aims of mentoring.
- ECD practitioners feel that the ECD space is their space. They are not willing to share information; this results in resistance towards mentoring. This then requires building rapport between ECD practitioners and mentors and coaches.
- ECD practitioners fear that it is an inspection or an assessment instead of a reflection. A mentor is perceived as a boss rather than a support. Mentors themselves sometimes take this view.
- The current economic crises in remote areas make it difficult for ECD organisations to even consider mentoring and coaching.
- In relation to student placements, sometimes the mentor might be less qualified than the mentee. These power dynamics lead to competition between the two rather than a focus on the deliverables. People come from different backgrounds and have different experiences in the field, so there are different ways of appointing mentors. New students bring in new information and teachers may feel threatened and fear being watched. It takes time to earn respect and trust.
- There is a lack of capacity or training (who are the mentors? what are their job descriptions, what are the expectations?).
- There is a lack of accountability within organisations: that is, a lack of monitoring and evaluation regarding the roles and responsibilities of both the mentor and mentee.
- On-boarding people into a mentorship programme is often done informally.
- Structured mentoring is costly in time and money, and sometimes there is no space for it in the budget.

- Some participants noted that they have never seen any mentoring going on in ECD sites. If a national policy or framework for mentorship is developed, what happens if the framework applies only to some ECDs? The challenge is that some centres might not even be aware of this. Models need to be tested in different types of centres before a framework is developed.
- In government the challenge is that there is no coordinated effort, and often there are discrete silo programmes going on that different departments are not aware of. How do you share information and avoid duplication?

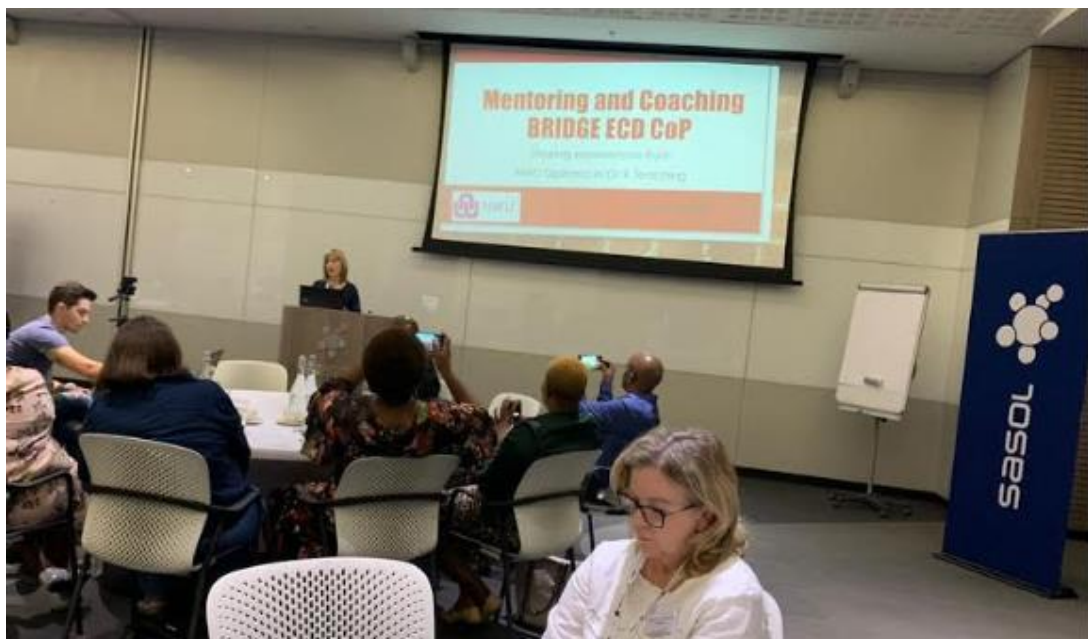
OPPORTUNITIES

- Funding opportunities for mentorship need to be actively sought.
- Advocacy and messaging about the benefits of mentorship programmes should be strengthened, and there should be more exposure of mentorship services.
- Training of principals and site managers should include a focus on the benefits of mentorship, and how to communicate these to their own institutions. Mentoring should be part of staff development.
- Mentorship could be linked to school development plans.
- Mentorship must be appropriate. There is a need to normalise existing practices in communities. Draw on the value of what communities already know. Celebrate what exists. Involve parents more. Start with what we have first instead of bringing in insiders, which may alleviate the jealousy and the fear.
- There should be a database of mentors and mentorship services from which institutions, centres, schools and students could draw.
- This should be perceived as a method of development and support aimed at career growth. The structure of mentoring should be inclusive and have multiple outcomes. Understand where the individual comes from and build on existing strengths.
- Create capacity for different cultures. This will accommodate the different cultures and ensure that diversity is considered an important factor for the understanding of mentoring.
- Building rapport is one of the crucial strategies in mentoring; this will address the trust issues that exist amongst ECD practitioners regarding mentorship.
- Implement mentoring on a play-basis for ECD centres.

M&E PLANNING

- Encourage a culture of self-reflection to challenge how individuals view mentoring.
- Ensure that mentorship and coaching is integrated within the organisation's M&E framework (if they have one) and includes designed sessions, goal tasks and outcomes. The number of sessions should consist of timelines and desired outcomes.
- Mentoring should form part of your staff development strategy. It should be in there as part of M&E and therefore supported by organisational policy, performance indicators and budget.

- M&E of mentorship could also be linked to compliance and registration management for ECD centres.
- There should be a shift of focus, from outcomes-based to empowerment-based.
- Universities with mentorship programmes need to start with a baseline and then review at the end, and use key indicators to measure the benefits of mentorship. This could help with overall advocacy in the sector.
- M&E of mentorship in any context should be formalised and have a budget attached to it.
- It is critical for DBE and DSD to understand what is meant by monitoring and coaching, as this is not currently part of the deliverables in M&E. Government officials also need to be capacitated.





FEEDBACK: CECDN PROCESS: REPORT BACK ON SECTOR VIEWS ON MIGRATION

The Collaboration of ECD Networks (CECDN) is made up of BRIDGE, NECDA (National ECD Alliance) and SACECD (South African Congress for ECD). With funding from the DG Murray Trust (DGMT), this group has held country-wide dialogues on the proposed function shift of ECD services from DSD to DBE. The views, challenges and recommendations gathered in these sessions are captured in the report which is being circulated to people in the sector. The report includes the following themes:

- Policy and legislation
- Training and curriculum
- Registration and infrastructure
- Communication and advocacy
- Finance and ECD donors
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Health and nutrition
- Social protection
- Human resources/ workforce.

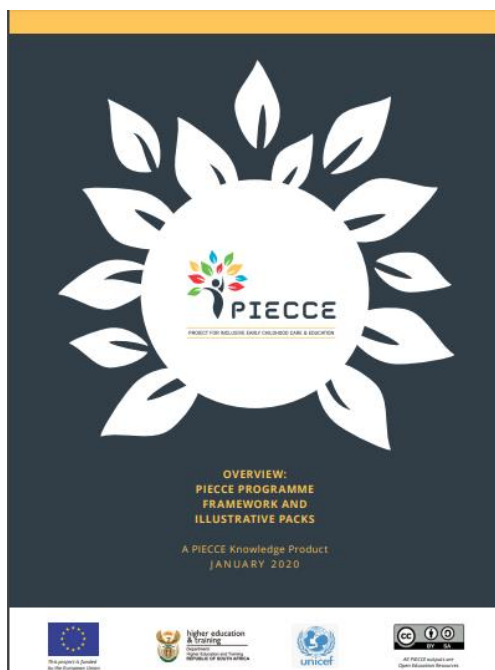
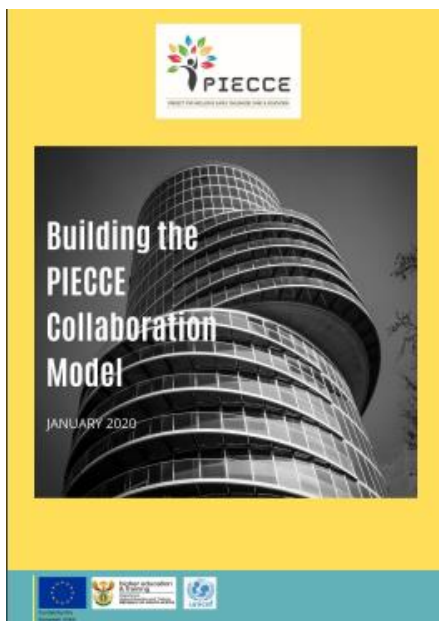
Please find the link for the full report [here](#) and a separate link to the recommendations [here](#).

The report will be submitted to DBE and will help inform the presidential proclamation that is yet to be made regarding the migration. We are also engaging with the NECT who is mandated by government to continue with consultations on the migration.



UPDATES

- PIECCE: There will be a full feedback session on the completion of the PIECCE project at a later stage. These resources on PIECCE are currently available:
 - 'Building the PIECCE Collaboration Model', January 2020. Click [here](#).
 - PIECCE Programme Framework and Illustrative Packs, January 2020. Click [here](#).
 - A Collaboration Process Model for Programme Development, January 2020. Click [here](#).



- Jade Trueman, a CoP participant and Social Worker at the DSD, is currently doing a Master's Degree thesis on *The Role of the Social Worker in ECD*. She is asking professionals in the ECD sector to participate in a study. If you are interested, please contact her: jadevalentinetruean@gmail.com.
- Edna Freinkel from Reducate Trust is an avid CoP member who runs training to teach any child or adult to read. Contact her at 083 629 8776 or freinkel.e@gmail.com if you are interested in this training.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Facilitator: Nalinee Soobramoney

No	Name:	Organisation:	E-mail address:
1	Abram Kgari	Oratile ECD	kakgari@yahoo.com
2	Andrea Sciarappa	Tools for Schools	andrea@toolsforschool.net
3	Akani Mkansi	BRIDGE	akani@bridge.org.za
4	Alta Meiring	SWG TVET	meiring@swgC.co.za
5	Anesh Hamanoishe	Watershed Institute	anesh@watersledgi.com
6	Anthony Diesel	SA Partners	tdiesel@sapartners.org
7	Anuschka Mouton	PIFF	admin@piff.co.za
8	Bronwyn Hooges	African Charity	bronwyn@africancharity.org
9	Cathy Moore	ACSI	cathy_moore@acsi.org
10	Christine Kere	Watershed Institute	tina@watersledgi.com
11	Colwyn Martin	Wits	lorayne.excell@wits.ac.za
12	Corne Kruger	NWU	Corne.Kruger@nwu.ac.za
13	Craig Johnson	BRIDGE	Craig@bridge.org.za
14	Dudu Mafu	Professional Child Care College	info@childcarecollege.co.za
15	Esme Olyn	ABC Kidz Educare	esme@abckidseducare.co.za
16	Florence Sithole	Cross Connect Community Outreach	hlakangdrop@gmail.com
17	Fransie Claassen	Wonder Forest Nursery & Creche	fmclaassen@gmail.com
18	Gail Jenkil	FEDEC	5142254@fedex.com
19	Gugu Zulu	Sasol	Gugu.Zulu@sasol.com
20	Heather Dixon	Khulisa Management Services	hdixon@khulisa.com
21	Ipeleng Mohlala	Early Care Foundation	ipeleng@earlycarefoundation.org
22	Jade Trueman	Department of Social Development	jadevalentinatruean@gmail.com
23	Keshni Bipath	University of Pretoria	keshni.bipath@up.ac.za
24	Kimon Phitidis	Social Innovations	kimon@socialinnovations.co.za
25	Kyle Tolman	Cross Connect Community Outreach	Kyle@crossconnect.co.za
26	Liesel Combrinck	Future Nation Schools	liesel.c@futurenationschools.com
27	Lucy Thornton	independent ECD consultant	lucythornton1@gmail.com
28	Mamsy Magogula	Little Star's EDU CARE	littlestars2006@gmail.com
29	Mandla Tshabalala	Molteno Institute for Language and Literacy	Mandla@molteno.co.za
30	Margaret Jonson	Midlands Community College	marketing@midlandscommunitycollege.co.za
31	Martha Betha	Brainwave careers	nyakasemb33@gmail.com
32	Melissa King	BRIDGE	melissa@bridge.org.za
33	Motlalepule Mokhine	Temogo Associates	motlalepule@temogo.co.za
34	Muthaki Wendy	SWG TVET	wendytendani03@gmail.com
35	Natalie Gross	SAMA	nat.rep@samantessai.org.za

36	Nkhensani Baloyi	BRIDGE	canseley@gmail.com
37	Nonki Mhlongo	Future Nation Schools Lyndhurst	nonki@futurenationschools.com
38	Ntjantja Ned	Hollard Foundation	ntjantjan@hollard.co.za
39	Ongeziwe Nxokwana	BRIDGE	ongeziwe@bridge.org.za
40	Paulie Jackson	ISASA	paulinej@isasa.org
41	Peter Sekgobela	Thusanang Trust	Peter@thusanangtrust.org.za
42	Phindile Mahlangu	Little Star's EDU CARE	littlestars2006@gmail.com
43	Phumzile	Swa College	phumzilekub@gmail.com
44	PORTIA NALA	Future nation schools, Fleurhof	lungile@futurenationschools.com
45	Pretty Mabowa	Administrator	pretty@africandet.org
46	Princess Okeke	Little Star's EDU CARE	Zwaneprincess@gmail.com
47	Rex Molefe	Motheo	rexmotheo@gmail.com
48	Robyn Wienan	Preschools 4 Africa	robyn@preschool4africapurpose.co.za
49	Shireen Milles	GROW ECD	shireen@growecd.org
50	Sophia De Beer	Freelance ECD Consultant	sophiadebeer@gmail.com
51	Tanya Nel	ECD Upliftment Projects and Consulting	tanya@ecdupliftmentprojects.co.za
52	Thandeka Rantsi	BRIDGE	thandeka@bridge.org.za
53	Theo Buccoli	ISASA	theob@isasa.org