

Kha ri Gude Mass Literacy Campaign – List of questions from ZADifference [deadline end of day Wednesday, 9th Feb.]

1.	The Kha ri Gude website (<i>Literacy in SA</i>) indicates that 7.5 million people were illiterate (assume 2008 statistics at start of the campaign). The campaign aims to reduce that figure by 50% i.e. 4.7 million literate adults by 2012.	
	1.1	What are the current official literacy statistics for South Africa?
		Currently the official figure is about 7.8 million, though official illiteracy statistics seldom indicate if they apply to totally unschooled illiterates (about 2 million) or the functionally illiterate (about 8.25 million).
	1.2	How and by whom is literacy statistics for South Africa derived? Can the available statistics be considered credible? If not, what are the challenges to overcome to derive a comprehensive and accurate picture of the real situation?
		Official literacy statistics are derived from census and other population survey data (some of it inconsistent). Aitchison (2010) estimates the functionally illiterate population at 8.25 million rather than the official 7.8 million. Using educational level data in census surveys is a very inexact proxy for actually testing literacy levels. This would require a proper literacy survey (as done successfully in Kenya and Botswana).
2.	2.1 – 2.4 Is it accurate to assume that South Africa's political history and specifically the education policies instituted under the Apartheid government is directly responsible for the adult literacy problem in South Africa?	
		Apartheid undoubtedly was one of the factors that exacerbated illiteracy in South Africa but illiteracy is a problem in virtually most developing countries. Lack of compulsory schooling for all, whether because of apartheid or lack of resources is a crucial factor in prolonging high illiteracy levels.
	2.2	Please provide historical statistics that will provide ZADifference readers with pre/ post-1994 picture of the change in adult literacy to date in particular.
		It is apparent that there has been little change in the numbers of adult illiterates over the last 30 years. Though the percentage of illiterates gradually falls, the raw numbers remain relatively static or may actually grow (Census 1996 had 8.5 million with less than Grade 7 (a useful indicator of functional literacy), Census 2001 has 9.6 million) as the population grows. The impact of the Kha Ri Gude campaign, though profound, does not change the number of adults with a Grade 7 equivalent.
	2.3	Which specific aspects of the Apartheid education policies has contributed to the problem of adult literacy in SA? (i.e. in laymen's terms, "they could go to school, why are our adults illiterate?")
		Education for black Africans was not compulsory and was poorly resourced compared to that given to the other people in different apartheid "race" categories. After 1950 it was technically illegal to run night schools or literacy classes for black Africans without official registration.
	2.4	Or is there a broader perspective necessary i.e. other factors that have contributed equally or even more?
		(answer here please)

3.		ZADifference aims to bridge the gap between the underprivileged and the privileged. It aims to give its readers clear and accurate information on the key social and poverty issues in our country and clear and accurate information on how they can become involved and be assured their efforts will bear fruit. From the website copy (<i>please refer text below</i>) there may be a perception that there is a preferred profile for volunteers from impoverished/unemployed backgrounds. Can volunteers from all backgrounds get involved?
		(from website) The Campaign is not only changing the lives of illiterate adults. Because the Campaign relies on a cadre of volunteers to do the teaching, <i>it plays a significant role in the alleviation of poverty – providing volunteers in the poorest communities with a small income.</i> Of Kha Ri Gude's R430 million allocation in 2009/10, 75% (or R325 million) was paid out in the form of stipends to volunteers between June and November 2009. A similar amount will be paid out in stipends in the 2010/11 financial year.
		<i>The preferred volunteers speak the language of the illiterates and live in close proximity to where the classes are held in local communities. That volunteers from such contexts may themselves benefit through a modest stipend is an added bonus and brings money direct to local communities.</i>
4.		It would appear that one of the key strengths of the Kha ri Gude campaign is that it provides mother tongue literacy and numeracy training and participants "learn spoken English".
	4.1	Are 1 st language speakers (i.e. other than Afrikaans or English) a more ideal/ useful volunteer educator for Kha ri Gude's goals and objectives?
		<i>Volunteer educators should speak the language of the learners. This includes substantial numbers of Afrikaans speakers. There are a limited number of illiterate mother tongue English speakers.</i>
	4.2	Can Afrikaans/English only mother tongue volunteers make any real contribution to the campaign? Is so, what could they do and how?
		<i>Yes. They can serve at various levels.</i>
5.		If understood correctly, according to the website, the campaign will require 40,000 volunteers per year to achieve the 4.7 million literate learners by 2012. According to the 2009/2010 financial year figures provided on the website, the campaign is doing well to get close to this required number of volunteers.
	5.1	How are volunteers made aware of Kha ri Gude and the opportunity to volunteer? (perception is that there's been no visible marketing to the general public?)
		<i>There has been marketing but largely through radio in the local vernaculars. Many volunteers were recruited who had worked in previous literacy endeavours.</i>
	5.2	How many volunteers have registered to date to facilitate Kha ri Gude learning sessions (per annum and in total) since the start of the campaign in 2008? (website indicate stipends paid out to 75000 volunteers, does that mean 75000 individual volunteers have registered?)
		<i>No. That figure is for two years. Many volunteers have served in both years so that total figure is closer to 45 000.</i>

	5.3.	What is the retention rate of volunteers i.e. do they tend to repeat the training/ do it on a continuing basis year-on-year or as a once-off? If so, why do they not continue year-on year?
		Retention rate is high. They find it fulfilling work and that they earn a modest income is a benefit given the high levels of unemployment.
	5.4	What is the demographic profile of volunteers?
		See: tables
6.		The website information under “How to register” ends with a registration form. From copy elsewhere on the site (FAQs) it would appear that district coordinators and supervisors are involved and that volunteers are trained if they don’t have prior ABET experience; however the process is not clear.
	6.1.	Please provide a step-by-step description of the volunteer process i.e. from registration (assume using the online form preferably) and the steps thereafter (i.e. who receives the volunteer registration, who contacts the volunteer etc) up to the point where the volunteer facilitates a group of adult learners?
		(answer here please)
	6.2	Please confirm that the list of municipal district coordinators is up to date and accurate for publication.
		Yes.
	6.3	According to the Volunteer Handbook it is up to the volunteer to recruit participants or they may sometimes be assigned to groups by local municipal coordinators. If they are responsible for recruitment of participants, please provide examples of how existing volunteers have gone about recruiting the minimum 15 adult learners?
		(answer here please)
	6.4	It up to the volunteer to arrange (and pay for?) a venue for facilitation. If they are responsible for the venue, please provide examples of how existing volunteers have gone about acquiring venues?
		Some classes re head in homes, others in church buildings and community halls. Most venues are given freely.
7.		Perception is that there is/ has been a myriad of well-funded (albeit by SA government and foreign agency’s/NGOs) literacy programmes but that the success or failure of these programmes are not well publicised or made known to the South African public.
	7.1	Are previous government funded projects e.g. Project Literacy still active and what are/were the achievements?
		Most NGOs were originally foreign and local donor funded. Much of this funding declined dramatically post-1994 and very few literacy organisations survive today. ProLit and Operation Upgrade continue operations but increasingly rely of government tenders (for example from SETAs and the Depart of Labour). ProLit is always publicising its claimed achievements.
	7.2.	Is it known how much the SA government (separately) and other institutions have spent on the problem of adult literacy (historically or at least from 1994)?
		It is difficult to estimate as one may need to distinguish between basic literacy and adult basic education and training. The ABET system run through the Department of Education never got as much as 1% of the Education budget. The Kha Ri Gude literacy campaign has so far received about R1.4 billion.

	7.2.	What makes Kha ri Gude different from previous attempts/ other programmes that have failed or are running currently in parallel?
		The campaign was well conceptualised, prepared good materials and has an organisational culture that insists on delivery.
	7.3	Could a list of other active (and successful) adult literacy programmes in South Africa be provided for ZA Difference readers? Including contact details please.
		There are a range of successful literacy and ABET programmes but they are generally of small scale. [See Keyser, Lyster, Aitchison and Land (2005) for examples]
	7.4	Does Kha ri Gude collaborate with any of these programmes? Please provide examples and results achieved.
		Kha Ri Gude has never had the budget to engage in collaborative projects.
8.	8.1	What are the challenges reported by participants and volunteers? Research indicates that recruitment and retention of participants are often a stumbling block for similar programmes.
		(answer here please)
	8.2	The website indicates that close to 1 million participants have achieved literacy since the start of the campaign in 2008; however, is it known how many participants started but did not complete the programme and what are the reasons for discontinuation?
		Kha Ri Gude has accurate records. Based on the figures of learners completing the full assessment portfolio completing is well over 80%.
9.		The campaign aims to equip participants with reading/ writing and life skills in the context of their everyday life and as a SA citizen.
	9.1	There is an indication on the website that successful learners can apply to their local ABET centres, presumably to gain access to the National Qualification Framework and eventually formal/ informal employment.
		Are Kha ri Gude “graduates” motivated and assisted to take this step? Is Kha Re Gude linked through to a formal skills development strategy and have Kha ri gude learners gone on to ABET and formal/informal employment? If so, please provide conversion rate and examples of such participants (i.e. life stories) if possible.
		The current evidence is that follow through of Kha Ri Gude learners into formal ABET has been minimal but this may well because of the latter’s lack of attractiveness to adult learners. Further research is needed on whether the learners gain entrance into skills training in any numbers.
	9.2	From participation stats per province provided on the website, it appears there are provinces that are not actively benefiting/ participating in the campaign. What are the reasons and are Kha ri Gude taking steps to increase participation in these regions?
		Kha Ri Gude tries to serve all provinces equally. In KwaZulu-Natal the matters is complicated in that the Department of Education there runs its own literacy campaign.
10.		The website confirms that the Kha ri Gude campaign aims to train adults that cannot read and write i.e. “completely illiterate”. “Anyone who can read and write, however basic their ability, should be referred to a ABET public adult learning centre in your area.”
	10.1	Please clarify, in laymen’s terms, the difference between “completely illiterate” and “functionally illiterate”?
		Kha Ri Gude provides instruction up to a very rough and ready Grade 3 equivalence. It is not currently designed to provide formal ABET. Hence the referral of those who hve basic reading, writing and counting ability to formal ABET.

	10.2	Does this referral of “basically abled” (assume functionally illiterate) individuals to ABET centres occur? Are they assisted to actually find these centres and supported not to give up their attempt to gain access to the skills development framework?
		(answer here please)
	10.3	Is it known how many potential learners that complete the Kha ri Gude Placement test are found to be “basically abled” as opposed to “completely illiterate”? Please provide statistics/figures in this regard found by the Kha ri Gude campaign to date.
11.		The ZADifference readers would be inspired to get involved if we could provide them with Kha ri Gude “success stories” i.e. not only the stats but stories of individuals whose lives were changed because they completed the programme.
	11.1	Could Kha ri Gude provide such stories (including photos)?
		(answer here please)
12.		Any other comments/ recommendations by the contributor:
		(answer here please)