



AUDITOR - GENERAL
SOUTH AFRICA

Auditing to build public confidence

Minutes of meeting

Meeting with current and previous CEOs of the Kha Ri Gude campaign

25 March 2014

Department of Basic Education

Points of discussion

Person responsible

1. Welcome, purpose of meeting and attendance

Chrisna Janse van Rensburg

Chrisna Janse van Rensburg welcomed everyone present and thanked Dr Ramarumo (current Chief Executive Officer (CEO)) for the opportunity to also engage with Prof V McKay, who was the previous CEO of Kha Ri Gude (KRG).

Some of the findings in the report, as discussed at the 2nd Steering Committee Meeting on 6 February 2014, which related to the time when Prof V McKay was still CEO needed further explanations. She was also one of the founders of the campaign and had extensive background knowledge on the topic. Prof V McKay was seconded from UNISA to the DBE from 1 April 2008 to 30 September 2011 to manage the campaign.

She is currently the Deputy Executive Dean at UNISA.

Attendance:

Chrisna Janse van Rensburg	Senior Manager Performance Auditing AGSA
Chrisna Botha	Manager Performance Auditing AGSA
Dr Ramarumo	CEO of Kha Ri Gude Department of Basic Education
Prof McKay	Deputy Executive Dean at Unisa

2. General background

Prof McKay expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to also engage with the AGSA on the Kha Ri Gude campaign. She, together with other colleagues such as Prof John Aitchison, did extensive research on illiteracy before the campaign was launched. She served on the Ministerial Committee of Literacy at the start of the campaign and provided the final report of the Committee to Chrisna Botha.

When looking at illiteracy, and the possibility of the execution of the campaign, one had to take numerous factors into account, such as:

- Trained human capacity
- Infrastructure
- Vulnerable population
- Recruitment

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- Statistics available - Testing, etc. Numerous campaigns were looked at during the research period of the Ministerial Committee, and the report highlighted best practices for example Brazil and India. Cuba and Venezuela and elsewhere. When benchmarking KRG against other literacy campaigns, KRG is the only campaign where assessment of all the learners takes place.	
3. Policy Prof McKay indicated that although a formal policy was not drafted for the campaign, Cabinet approved the Ministerial Committee on Literacy's report, a budget and strategy in August 2007 and the operational plan in November 2007. Prof McKay also provided the following documentation that was used during her term as CEO, that gives guidance and supports the operational activities/ objectives of KRG: - Staff functions - Assessment process - Principles guiding the KRG operations - Scopes of work of the KRG volunteers - Criteria for the payment of volunteer stipends - Conditions of employment of the KRG volunteers - Monitoring and Evaluation plan	
4. Targets and dropouts KRG set the target at 4,7 million learners, as this was the number of unschooled adults as per the Census 2001. Overall there was 9,6 million illiterate adults (unschooled as well as functionally illiterate). Within the 9,6 million there was a number of people that were uneducable by conventional means because of sub-normal intelligence or severe handicap, as well as people who were over the age of 64. When this number was deducted from the 9,6 million, 7,6 million was left, and 50% of this was 3,8 million (the 50% relates to the Dakar goal where South Africa made a commitment to reduce illiteracy with 50%). The 3,8 million was therefore the realistically achieved number set by KRG. Because of some inevitable drop out and attrition this requires a larger initial target than 3,8 million and the Ministerial Committee has developed this plan to reach 4,7 million illiterate adults by the end of 2012. Prof McKay referred the AGSA to the Ministerial Report page 17 and 18 where the above was explained. The dropout rate of learners (attrition and failure) was set at 19% (also refer to the Ministerial Report). This was calculated based on many factors such as rates in other countries, nr of people uneducable, HIV rate etc. Prof McKay compared the pass rates (refer Report dated 28th February 2014 on	

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Data Bases for 2008 to 2013) of the campaign to the ANA 2011 results for grade 3 learners (Kha Ri Gude = grade 3) which was 42,4%. (ANA 2011 results provided). Kha Ri Gude results were far better than the normal **Maybe change normal to formal** schooling system.

5. Recruitment of learners and volunteers

Prof McKay indicated that the geographical spread of the learners was kept in mind when resources were allocated to the provinces. She confirmed that the 2008 recruitment process drew previously trained ABET educators and they were absorbed mainly as coordinators and supervisors.

Although the **Census** of STATSSA was used as basis for the targets. The Census figures were not the only drivers for the Campaign. The roll out was also influenced by provincial peculiarities (such as the Masifunde Campaign). She indicated that is a lack of reliability of national literacy statistics which is common when proxies are used for measuring literacy.

Commented [V1]: Chrisna I have rephrased this. You can see if this is accurate.

6. Database numbers

Kha Ri Gude accommodates repeat students, those that have already completed and passed the campaign but who enrol again. Learners repeat because of the social function and/or they do not want to lose what they have learnt.

The database numbers that was provided to the AGSA (refer Report dated 28th February 2014 on Data Bases for 2008 to 2013) excludes however the repeat learners.

Prof McKay disputed the number of completed LAPs submitted for 2008 which indicates only 63% of learners completed the campaign. She asked the project management company to revisit the numbers for this year.

Chrisna Botha asked about the difference in the database figures and the numbers that were reported on in the Annual Reports and Budgets of the department. Prof McKay agreed that there was a difference and that Dr Ramarumo will have to indicate which set of numbers should be used, and provide reasons for the differences every year.

Faulty/Invalid ID numbers existed on the database since inception of the campaign. In 2009 and 2010 they were identified via a process with Home Affairs. Often on verification it was found that learners identified as "dead" by home affairs were indeed "alive". She pointed out that one of the additions to the data base was that it checked the algorithm of the last ID digit and also the gender from the middle ID digit. However, the project management company drew a list of exceptions and these were followed up. Volunteer Educators with 'faulty' ID numbers were for example fired with immediate effect if no proof could be obtained of the reason for the 'faulty' ID number. She submitted a report (refer to the Summary Report: 31 May 2011) where the number of exceptions were listed. Chrisna Janse van Rensburg requested Dr Ramarumo for proof of follow up actions on the wrongful ID numbers (or exceptions) on the database,

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for all years of the campaign.

An audit was executed by the AGSA at accost of R1 million on the information systems in 2009 and then followed up by the AG thereafter. In response to this systems audit KRG spent more than a R1 million to ensure their systems complied with the AG's requirement. However, no system is fool proof and Prof McKay indicated that it would be worth to explore more sophisticated technology and new ways to identify faulty/invalid IDs.

7. Monitoring

Prof McKay indicated that it was unfortunate that the AGSA visited two sites that appeared to be fictitious. Although it is acknowledged that these sites may exist, it was definitely not the norm and was exceptional. The AG herself mentioned "good" sites that she had visited. Compared to the basic education and higher education systems which also had ghost employees etc, the sites identified in KRG are relatively low and are generally discovered. Even formal systems like the mainstream schooling system with better physical and human infrastructure, (schools, districts, subject advisors, principals) have been known to have ghost teachers. KRG with its limited human resources and physical infrastructure have relatively few.

Chrisna Janse van Rensburg enquired about the monitoring of the campaign by the department. Dr Ramarumo indicated that reports are submitted by the monitors.

Prof McKay stated that they did identify a lack in the monitoring process during the first few years of the campaign, and introduced the new level of monitors in 2011. The documentation that she submitted (refer point 3 above), includes the scope of work of the different volunteers.

Commented [V2]: Chrisna have reworded for accuracy

8. Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)

Prof McKay indicated that she was in agreement with the finding on ABET. ABET does not have the same level of record of the data that KRG has. Since the inception of the campaign, there was a struggle for KRG to ensure that ABET enrolled KRG "graduates". Logistics played a big role, as there were 40 000 KRG sites vs only a small number of ABET sites. KRG was for free while learners had to pay for ABET. Prof McKay indicated that the learner cost which was for free for KRG compared to learner cost of ABET, and referred Chrisna Botha to the Health and Welfare SETA, for ABET provisioning cost. The cost was indicated at R3 000 per learner (2009-10). The learner cost for KRG in 2009-10 was R686,35.

Numerous meetings were held with ABET. Data was provided to the different provinces and even at/to HEDCOM meetings. ABET struggles to absorb KRG learners as ABET doesn't have the capacity or resources. Chrisna Janse van Rensburg suggested that if no mileage is coming from engaging with the provincial departments, maybe people at a higher level should be involved such

Commented [V3]: Chrisna I am going to turn this around. There was a struggle by KRG for the learners to be absorbed by the ABET system.

Commented [V4]: It was rather Prof McKay assisted ABET to develop the ABET level 2 materials to facilitate the transfer of learners.

DID I SAY THIS? IF NOT IT IS FOR YOUR INFO.

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as the **Ministers** and DGs. Dr Ramarumo indicated that it is something they could look into.

For interest **sake**, Prof McKay referred to a number of independent reports on KRG which were not paid for by the DBE. These included reports from Unicef, Unesco, students from other universities, a Unisa group is busy assessing impact and Prof Aitchison from UKZN who has written a number of articles on the KRG.

She also referred to large number of articles on ABET.

Commented [V5]: Just as an aside
The new White paper on post-schooling has incorporated KRG as part of its "community learning centres". I think there is a high level intention.

Commented [V6]: I referred to a number of other reports on KRG.
None of them funded by DBE

SORRY CHRISNA I READ THIS WRONGLY. I SEE YOU ARE ONLY HERE REFERRING TO ABET.
YOU CAN CHANGE BACK

9. Budget

The budget in the operation plan that was approved by Cabinet never realised. KRG had to find ways to still run an effective campaign but with less money, for example:

- Increased class capacity (from 15 learners to 18 learners)
- 20% reduction in material cost **to** change book format and layout

Commented [V7]: from changes

Although compensated, this was still not enough to keep the target at 1 200 000 learners per year and a decision was taken to reduce the target of learners per year and extend the campaign to 2015. By extending the campaign, KRG could still reach the target of educating 3,8 million learners.

Chrisna Janse van Rensburg enquired about the learner cost that is budgeted for the 2014, 2015 and 2016 years. A normal increase of 5% was applied (to make provision for inflation), but it does not make provision for increased cost to reach the last learners. Prof McKay agreed that since **illiteracy** is reducing every year, the number of illiterate adults become less and less. Therefore it becomes more difficult to reach the remaining illiterate adults. Your logistics and circumstances will change and you might need to cater for less people in a class. Accept for inflation, the learner cost should actually become more expensive towards the end of the campaign.

Commented [V8]: chrisna
it was "Since the pool of illiterate learners is decreasing it may mean smaller classes.

The MCL report speaks about a mop up year to find the extra "hard to reach" learners.

Prof McKay referred to the **Commonwealth website???**

Commented [V9]: They Commonwealth of learning requested use of the KRG materials for other commonwealth countries. The then Minister approved this useage.

10. Social impact

Extensive data mining was done when Prof McKay was CEO. Social and health impact studies were done and very valuable information was obtained. Prof McKay showed the questionnaire in the Learner Assessment Portfolios where learners answered a few basic questions on improvement of their life as a result of completing the KRG campaign. She provided a copy of the outcome of a study to Chrisna Botha. These outcomes were important when reporting to UNICEF and UNESCO.

11. Children

Prof McKay agreed that there were children enrolled in the KRG campaign.
Youth aged 15 or more were always expected to be enrolled in the campaign.

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The database shows that only 3252 youth below 14 years of age had enrolled. These were mainly street children or juvenile prisoners. They were mostly farm children, juvenile and street children, as well as disabled children. Schooling was 95% **MAYBE 98%??** universal but not a 100% Kha Ri Gude did not show **these** children away when they enrolled.

12. Execution of the campaign

At the start of the campaign the department experienced obstruction by the **ABET section** of North West department. There was also a Masifundisane campaign in KwaZulu Natal which reached approximately 400 000 learners. Although KRG also aimed at reducing illiteracy, KRG was something new and the people had knowledge of Masifundisane and not KRG.

Chrisna Botha enquired as to the reasons for ordering more English books in 2012 when sufficient stock was on hand. Dr Ramarumo would provide supporting documentation to the effect.

13. Closure

The LAPS verification process would be underway on 30, 31 March and 1 April 2014 and the AGSA was invited to visit this process. It was going to take place at the Holiday Inn Airport, in Johannesburg.

Chrisna Janse van Rensburg thanked Prof McKay and Dr Ramarumo for their time. Prof McKay indicated that she has a written response to the draft management report of the AGSA, and would like to refine it before submitting. She also indicated that she would try to obtain some international standards/norms for dropout rates and provide it to the AGSA.

Chrisna Janse van Resnburg stated that as a result of new explanations and reasons for some findings, additional information will have to be audited. This will result in additional audit costs to the department, as the above were not made available previously to the auditors. Requests for information will follow soon after the meeting.

Signatures:

Chairperson

Date

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Secretary

Date