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Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all

Country profiles of formal and non- formal adult education opportunities in literacy, numeracy and other skills: South Africa

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1. Introduction:

Starting with the key indicators in South Africa, the following information is extracted from the Fast facts put together by the South African Institute of Race Relations (IRR) towards the end of 2014 (Institute of Race Relations, 2014). It must be said that IRR does not collect its own information but uses the information collected by the South African Statistics Department for its analysis.

Demographics

Size	1 220 813km²
Population density per km²	44.2
2013 population estimate	53,82m
• Proportion African • Proportion Coloured • Proportion Indian / Asian • Proportion White	79.0% 9.0% 2.5% 9.5%
Proportion aged below 18 (2012)	35.5%
Proportion aged 65 and above	5.3%
Male life expectancy (2011-16)	59.1
Female life expectancy (2011-16)	63.1

The Economy

GDP growth rate	2.2%
Average annual real growth (2003 -13)	3.7%

Proportions of GDP:

• Agriculture	2.1%
• Mining	8.1%
• Manufacturing	11.9%
• Electricity, gas and water	3.3%
• Construction	3.6%
• Trade	13.3%
• Transport	9.0%
• Finance	18.2%
• Community, social and personal services	8.3%
• General government services	15.1%

Labour Market participation rate (2Q 2014)	57.3%
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Unemployment (official) (2Q 2014)	25.5%
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Unemployment (expanded) (2Q 2014)	35.6%
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People living in relative poverty	35.9%
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Dependency on employed population	2.6%
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Education

Number of pupils (grades 1-12)	12.49m
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Education expenditure as a proportion of total (2013-2014)	41.6%
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Proportion of 0-4s attending ECD	33.0%
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Proportion of literate adults	92.9%
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Proportion of adults with no education	5.5%
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Proportion of adults with grade 12	32.7%
Proportion of adults with university degree or higher qualifications	4.7%
Proportion of pupils in no-fee schools	73.2%
Proportion of pupils in receipt of social grants	25.8%

Health and social security

Health expenditure as a proportion of total	30.7%
Social grant beneficiaries (2014)	29.5%
Under –five mortality rate	46.0
Severe malnutrition under -fives (2012)	4.4
Children living in poverty (2012)	55.7

Since its democratization in 1994, South Africa has instituted several educational programmes such as the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programme and the South African National Literacy Initiative (SANLI, 2000) in an effort to promote universal access to education and most importantly, to eradicate illiteracy among adults, many of whom were deprived of educational opportunities during the apartheid era. The programmes were also intended to empower previously socially disadvantaged groups in order to enable them to be self-reliant and to participate more effectively in national development processes.

From a legacy of massive discrimination, the new government has struggled valiantly to overcome a complex set of constraints and sculpt new contours of adult education. The demands inherited by this new government were too many and coffers were bankrupt. According to Stewart (2001), in the early 1990s South Africa's 60% adult literacy rate ranked between less- developed and developing countries, despite expenditures of about 7.3% of GDP on education. In the late 1970s,

the previous government had initiated a program- based adult education system through the establishment of night schools. These night schools were initially established as means to upgrade teacher qualifications. Soon, the night school system was extended to the ‘completion’ of senior secondary education for those who have dropped out or have not been successful in taking the examinations. School buildings were used and this allowed for a large delivery system for the completion of senior secondary schooling on a part-time basis. During the 1970s business firms and in particular the large mining companies started to provide adult education on programs registered with the Department of Education. Many of the companies which initiated such programs did so in order to comply with foreign investors’ requirements. But as the disinvestment campaigns were pushed forward in the 1980s, companies down-scaled their provision as well. By the 1980s, company sponsored adult education was dwindling and large Non-governmental Organizations that were working in adult education began to take centre stage, like the Bureau of Literacy and Literature; the South African Institute of Race Relations; Operation Upgrade; Project Literacy and Learn and Teach (Stewart, 2001).

2. Literacy programmes in South Africa

As soon as the new government was in place, it introduced a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and a new structure in its school system that is composed of 12 grades of schooling. The new curriculum in the school education system was to be known as Curriculum 2005¹. Before 1994, government night schools and linked private centres offered the only officially recognised certification in adult basic education in South Africa. This was the Standard 5 adult examination. In the new dispensation this was widely regarded as unacceptable. Apart from it reflecting apartheid education, it emphasised authoritarian and rote learning and was based on a schooling curriculum. With the introduction of Curriculum

¹ 2005 was going to be the first year the first intake would graduate after 12 years of education from the schooling system.

2005, the old Standard 5² official examinations for adults fell away. What ABET certification there was, was then based on unguided assessments by the public adult learning centres (PALCs). The introduction of Curriculum 2005 for school-going learners and the growing status of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) also led to a period of confusion, uncertainties, lack of direction, low motivation and poor quality in many PALCs. It became clear that adults were increasingly losing ground in having access to an important currency. The adult education system was then changed to become known as the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and this is how it relates to the other qualifications in the South African education and training system:

NQF levels	Formal Education	Adult Education
10	Doctoral Degrees	
9	Master's Degree	
8	Post-graduate diploma / Honours	
7	Bachelor's Degree	
6	Diploma	
5	Higher Certificate	
4	Grade 12 (National Senior Certificate)	National Senior Certificate (part-time)
3	Grade 11	

² This was after 7 years of schooling

2	Grade 10	
1	Grade 9	ABET 4 (General Education and Training Certificate (GETC))
		ABET 3
		ABET 2 (Literacy and Numeracy levels)
		ABET 1

Until recently, adult education in the Republic of South Africa was legislated through the Adult Education and Training Act of 2000, promulgated in 2010 (Government Gazette, 2010). This Act legislated the definitions of Adult Education, the registration of private centres, the establishment and governance of public centres; the funding of public centres; quality assurance and promotion of adult education and the transitional arrangements from the old system to the new. In this Act:

“adult” means a person who is sixteen years or older; and **“adult education and training”** means all learning and training programs for adults on level 1 registered on the national qualifications framework contemplated in the National Qualifications Framework Act, 2008 (Act No. 67 of 2008) (p.6).

Because of the above definition, over the last twenty one years, the focus in adult education in the country has been on Adult Basic Education and Training up to level 1 of the NQF. Adults could acquire a nationally recognised certificate, equivalent to the Grade 9 school level, after taking formal examinations. In 2009, the Education portfolio in government was divided into two Ministries, namely Basic Education which deals with all schooling matters; and Higher Education and Training which deals with all post-school

matters. Adult education has remained in the Higher Education and Training Ministry as this is regarded as a post-school issue, but received very little attention as matters of university TVET, Skills Development were prioritised till recently. It is only this year that Adult Education has started to receive attention. A new institution named the Community Education College has recently been legislated for its establishment. In 2014 the policy on Community Colleges was gazetted to formalise all the functions of community and adult education in the Department of Higher Education and Training, separating this function from literacy and numeracy functions, which remained with the Department of Basic Education (Government Gazette, 2014).

However, as far back as 2005, it was becoming clear that relying on the formalisation of adult education for certification only was not going to break the ‘back of illiteracy’ in the country and a massive mass campaign was needed to do so. This mass literacy campaign was to be known as Kha Ri Gude³ and its genesis was greatly influenced by the Cuban and Venezuelan models of mass literacy campaigns. The development of a strategy and plan, which involved major literacy Non-governmental Organisations and renowned academics and critics of the government on adult literacy, was approved by Cabinet in November 2006. The establishment of an operational plan proved to be tortuous as it took up to 2008 to start pilots. The scale doubled in 2009 and increased again in 2010 and 2011. It is this Kha Ri Gude program that has been at the backbone of removing illiteracy in South Africa and will be discussed in the rest of this paper.

When the Kha Ri Gude started, it was always going to be difficult to know precisely how many adults were going to be the target of this programme. Aitchson (2012) explains the complexities of getting to the estimate numbers of illiterate people in South Africa. This

³ “Let us learn” in Venda, one of South Africa’s eleven official languages.

involved numerous caveats and quibbles about the data from proxy and self-reported measures. Whilst the national statistics collection department, Statistics South Africa, seemingly has accepted the literacy indicator established by Harley et al (1996) which is pegged at the equivalent of Grade 7, the Kha Ri Gude worked on a Grade 3 equivalent as a literacy indicator. In various papers, South African scholars have contested the information reported by the Statistics South Africa department as being flawed (Aitchson, 2014, 2015; Aitchson, & McKay, 2013; Gustafsson, et.al, 2010; Posel, 2011). The Ministerial Committee on Literacy report of 2006 argued for a target of 3.8 million, developed a plan to enrol 4.7 illiterate adults by the end of 2012 (ministerial Committee on Literacy, 2006, pp.17-18. Kha Ri Gude has been the mainstay of adult education in South Africa, with the sole aim of getting adults who never went to school, literate and numerate. Other non-formal programmes carried out by Non-Governmental Organisations are too small to enumerate here. Also, there is no study known which has attempted to quantify adult education that falls outside governmental programmes.

3. Provision on literacy and numeracy

When the Kha Ri Gude operational plans were finally established and accepted, the Ministry seconded two professors who were central in the writing of the policy and programme. The following description of the programme is largely extracted from the paper these two individuals have written, describing how the programme worked (Aitchson & McKay, 2013).

The original design for the running of the campaign involved a central management/oversight unit which was also responsible for the development of instructional plans and materials and a cascaded training of personnel from national to provincial to district and then to local level. According to Aitchson and McKay, as with all such cascades the problematic elements included:

- The logistics of delivery of training and materials to the lowest level – that of the volunteer educator who teaches a group of learners
- The methods and effectiveness of the reporting back to the headquarters on the running of the classes and the assessed achievements of the learners
- The financial system for paying salaries and stipends to the personnel and volunteers at the various levels.

The planning for campaigns had three main functional areas of activity:

- Coordination
- Curriculum, Teaching and Training
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Research.

Coordination was managed at the national level by a campaign unit housed within the national Department of Education in Pretoria. The next level was that of Coordinators (more of or less one in each district in the areas where the campaign operated who each managed twenty Supervisors), the next of Supervisors (one for every ten Volunteer Educators), and finally the Volunteer Educators (in the original plan called tutors, later facilitators, but now more commonly titled Volunteer Educators or just Educators). At the national level the number of professional staff dealing with coordination was very small – the CEO and a Chief Operations Manager (though the latter only served in 2008 and early 2009).

Curriculum, Teaching and Training also had a very small national staff base, the CEO played a significant role here and a Curriculum Officer served in 2009 and January 2010. There was also a Training Officer. However, most of the major curriculum decisions had already been made in 2006 and 2007 and the materials development, the foundation of the campaign's educational *modus operandi*, had been developed. The major assessment instrument was a Learning Assessment Portfolio (essentially a battery of exercises/tests linked to the various stages in the reading, writing and numeracy curriculum) that was designed in mid-2008). The Training Officer

coordinated a cascade of training of Coordinators, Supervisors and Volunteer Educators. Though training was done, the financial resource limitations restricted the length of the training, and much reliance was put on the structured design of the course materials and the accompanying *Literacy facilitator's notes* and *English for everyone facilitator's notes* to support the educators. At the higher level of the Coordinators and Supervisors, there was also an implicit assumption that many of them would have had some form of adult basic educator training. They also had a far stronger training role than had been originally envisaged which compensated for the lack of large training budget.

An interesting curriculum, teaching and training innovation was in the provision to the people with disabilities. The campaign plan had made a major commitment to the support of the disabled and this was followed through, though it proceeded at a somewhat slower pace than the rest of the campaign for understandable, training, logistical, equipment and materials development reasons (including the campaign's need to adapt the materials and print its own Braille texts).

Though it may be repeating the obvious, the implementation of such a literacy campaign required accurate up to date data, collected and used efficiently and effectively. Except for the few officers in the Department of Education in Pretoria and the data capture, call centre and warehousing staff and facilities at the SAB&T⁴ offices in Pretoria, the campaign had no institutional bases or facilities or formally employed staff. Deliveries of materials to sites all over the country, including in rural areas, required accurate information on learner numbers, what languages they would study in, etc. Shortages or other problems had to be reported via the call centre for immediate redress. Payrolls and the authorisation of electronic payments into bank accounts⁵ were reliant on accurate and timely rendition of registers and other reports from educators, Supervisors and

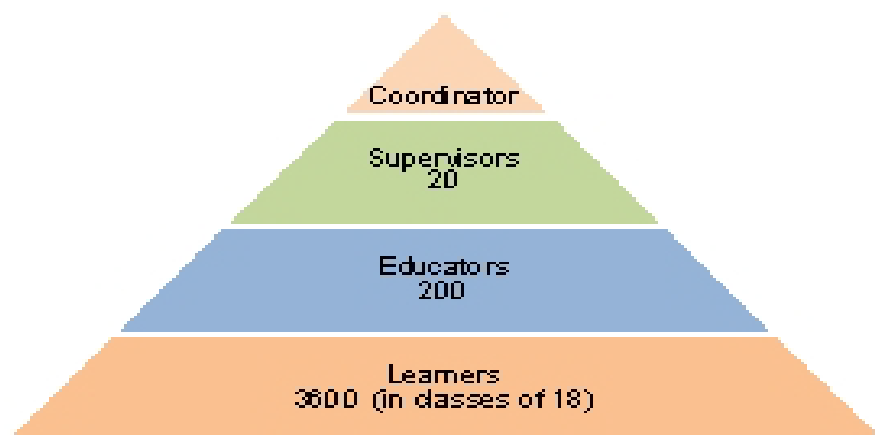
⁴ A consultancy which was retained by the Department for a few years for the implementation of Kha Ri Gude

⁵ For obvious security and anti-fraud reasons the campaign was not going to be transporting large sums of money around the country.

coordinators. Assessment portfolios had to be collected and stored centrally and were verified by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). The data can be looked at in relation to the following categories: Personnel, Learners, Logistics, Assessment, Research, Finance and Risk Management.

Personnel

Kha Ri Gude has a simple cascade of educational personnel:



A Coordinator oversees about twenty supervisors each of whom in turn supervises and monitors ten volunteer Educators (who teach a class of fifteen (in 2008) or eighteen (from 2009) learners. There is a general *Volunteer Registration Form* (Kha Ri Gude Literacy Campaign South Africa., 2009) which requires the usual biographical, qualifications and employment status information.

Apart from the more overtly statistical reporting, qualitative data was also generated via the internal monitoring processes that include both (a) monthly class visits by Supervisors who were meant to visit each volunteer Educator's class each month – monitoring each Educator according to predefined criteria and following this up in discussions with the Educators in a monthly meeting, and (b) occasional visits by the Coordinator, and (c) spot checks by a team of Monitors

(since 2009). The monitoring by the Supervisor is meant to be formative and action-oriented and requires the Supervisors to raise critical issues during their monthly meetings with Educators, and later with their respective Coordinators.

Learners

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
Learners								
Eastern Cape	109 633	148 084	135 141	136 799	129 999	114 647	59 061	833 364
Free State	15 406	52 323	52 409	54 781	49 834	45 601	24 245	294 599
Gauteng	31 827	81 152	87 043	85 543	86 402	87 497	79 640	539 104
KwaZulu Natal	72 032	135 443	131 359	145 475	129 357	119 886	90 636	824 188
Mpumalanga	28 792	58 624	51 786	55 577	50 894	47 761	47 274	340 708
Northern Cape	31 928	8 141	8 275	12 839	8 785	14 098	11 430	95 496
Limpopo	45 928	106 463	100 965	97 217	97 164	90 283	66 428	604 448
North West	34 317	30 607	31 532	35 803	32 685	32 157	26 873	223 974
Western Cape	11 999	13 166	12 771	15 415	15 044	14 434	15 853	98 682
Total	381 862	634 003	611 281	639 449	600 164	566 364	421 440	3 854 563

Source: Department of Basic Education Report 2015

- By 2014 the Campaign had reached **3 854 563 of the 4.7 million targeted** learners.
- In 2014, **421 440 learners** were registered in the campaign, this included **3 046** disabled learners
- The rates of learners completing the programme and submitted their assessment portfolios have been consistently high. In the second year of the programme in 2009, 79% or 497 830 learners completed the program.
 - 80% or 491 280 learners completed in 2010.
 - 81% or 520 252 learners completed in 2011.
 - 85% or 508 663 learners completed in 2012.
 - 88% or 496 898 learners completed in 2013
- Of these completers approximately 95% of the learners demonstrated competence

- The Campaign has reduced the average per capita cost per learner from R1 196.73 in 2008 to:
 - R 699.02 in 2009
 - R 763.58 in 2010
 - R 777.76 in 2011
 - R 953.83 in 2012
 - R 1 057.22 in 2013
- It is anticipated that the per capita cost per learner will be R1 177.00 in 2014.
- An incentive grant of R43.7 million was introduced in 2011 through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). R51.511 million in 2012, R56.838 million in 2013 and R62.236 million in 2014. The grant enabled the campaign to expand its learner enrolment by an additional:

Volunteers

Voluntary Educators	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Eastern Cape	9 953	9 295	9 131	10 253	10 140	10 055	6 606
Free State	2 420	3 315	2 918	3 502	3 436	3 284	2 654
Gauteng	5 207	4 933	4 682	5 461	5 705	5 847	8 016
KwaZulu Natal	6 113	8 703	8 271	9 472	9 294	9 120	8 822
Mpumalanga	2 854	3 650	3 092	3 499	3 484	3 477	5 454
Northern Cape	381	497	166	475	521	918	1 332
Limpopo	4 146	6 744	6 262	6 667	6 793	7 126	7 183
North West	2 998	2 091	1 749	2 316	2 229	2 328	2 943

Western Cape	1 230	755	787	984	1 005	1 093	1 482
Total	35 302	39 983	37 058	42 629	42 607	43 248	44 492

Source: Department of Basic Education Report 2015

Learners by gender:

Province	Female	Male	Gender not specified
1-Eastern Cape	52035	7007	19
2-Free State	23096	1129	20
3-Gauteng	73762	5186	692
4-KwaZulu Natal	84233	5875	528
5-Mpumalanga	44539	2454	281
6-Northern Cape	10525	637	268
7-Limpopo	62115	4067	246
8-North West	24892	1937	44
9-Western Cape	14170	1673	10
Total	389367	29965	2108

Source: Department of Basic Education Report 2015

Learners by age

Province	Registration Totals	Age 1-17	Age 18-20	Age 21-30	Age 31-40	Age 41-50	Age 51-60	Age 61-70	Age 71-80	Age 81-90	Age 91+	Age Not Specified
1-Eastern Cape	59061	190	1567	11658	11780	10954	10583	7119	3782	1240	169	19
2-Free State	24245	71	513	3811	4630	4979	4767	3422	1460	504	68	20
3-Gauteng	79640	156	1578	16107	18267	17428	13716	7650	3089	855	102	692
4-KwaZulu Natal	90636	169	1634	17268	20356	18586	15673	9737	4664	1768	253	528
5-Mpumalanga	47274	138	824	7650	9556	10098	8918	5815	2868	958	168	281
6-Northern Cape	11430	60	364	2011	2088	2326	2135	1401	588	176	13	268
7-Limpopo	66428	108	1270	14775	15596	12512	9743	6690	3810	1406	272	246
8-North West	26873	112	535	4104	4971	5565	5434	3759	1736	555	58	44
9-Western Cape	15853	35	492	4169	4278	3089	2077	1115	436	137	15	10
Total	421440	1039	8777	81553	91522	85537	73046	46708	22433	7599	1118	2108

Source: Department of Basic Education Report 2015

Current enrolments:

Province	2015 Volunteers Captured as at 5/11/2015	Target Volunteers for 2015	Total Learners Enrolled	Target Learners For 2015
1-Eastern Cape	4 645	2 608	858 059	40 199
2-Free State	416	348	298 269	5 428
3-Gauteng	4 887	1 687	565 176	26 782
4-KwaZulu Natal	6 831	8 957	840 109	139 868
5-Mpumalanga	3 582	6 128	348 275	92 010
6-Northern Cape	905	1 660	98 656	21 894
7-Limpopo	7 096	7 812	651 380	125 261
8-North West	3 187	5 573	236 117	80 621
9-Western Cape	657	2 213	101 719	29 659
Total	32 206	36 986	3 997 760	561 722

Source: Department of Basic Education Report 2015

Looking at the starting target of 4.7 million, the Department of Basic Education estimates that it will reach its target in 2016 by enrolling $\pm 500,000$ learners in this year, and Kha Ri Gude will then be wrapped. In other words, the Literacy and Numeracy programme will come to an end in 2016 as a national campaign.

Logistics

In the case of the Campaign, plans had to be made for the mass printing, packaging and delivery to every site of the learning materials and administrative forms and then the return of forms and reports and the completed Learning Assessment Portfolios to the centre. Clearly logistics was to be extremely taxing and burdensome. Luckily, the appointed CEO had experience with the University of South Africa, probably the world's largest distance higher education institution, of all these logistical issues and the ABET Institute component of the previous SANLI roll out had identified some of the requirements and suitable agents of such delivery.

Assessment

While the task of assessing more than 600,000 learners on the standardised instrument of a Learner Assessment Portfolio (LAP) at 40,000 different sites is an enormous task, the Campaign has constructed a model for assessment which makes it possible to conduct continuous *mass* assessments. In this sense, Kha Ri Gude differs from other campaigns in other countries which may have assessed only a sample of learners or taken attendance at classes as a proxy for attainment of the competencies and application of literacy or numeracy. This form of assessment will be discussed in more detail in the following section on quality assurance and monitoring. But the task was daunting as it can be seen from the picture below:

Boxes of Learner Assessment Portfolios from nearly 90% of registered learners are centrally warehoused prior to verification by SAQA moderators.

Finances

Financial data was of signal importance in the operations of the Campaign. Clearly the Campaign as designed could not run without materials being printed and delivered, and then used in classes whose part-time teachers would be paid a stipend. Yet the history of South African educational interventions is replete with disaster stories about corruption in textbook procurement and delivery and about part-time educators who are either not paid, or who don't teach but are paid, or who don't exist or are dead but someone receives the payment (the so-called "ghost teachers"). Because of the announcement in November 2006 that Cabinet had approved the budget of R 6.4 billion for the new literacy initiative, it was also likely that the

Campaign could well be the target of the entrepreneurs of educational procurement and delivery malfeasance. A really robust financial system that was able to speedily interact with the other data flows was necessary not only to ensure the success of the Campaign but also to see that it was not derailed. In addition, the Campaign had direct financial accountability to the National Treasury. However, though there are persistent problems with "rejected payments" from banks. It needs to be stated that the percentage of rejected payments in the second year of the Campaign was much lower as the volunteer Educators become more "bank literate" and is less than 1% of all attempted payments.

Risk management

Any project on the scale of the Campaign requires some attention to the assessment of risks, securing of assets, safety of staff and the prevention of any fraud (as already indicated in the section on finance above). Effective coordination and communication, backed up by effective monitoring will do much to reduce the dangers of fraud, corruption and theft. In addition there has to be some anticipation of the likelihood of unintended (or unforeseen) consequences of the intervention that may have negative results, including that of providing any "perverse incentives"

The State Information Technology Agency (SITA)/Home Affairs verification has proved extremely effective. As a result of this a number of attempts at fraud were picked up and dealt with. For example in 2009 Kha Ri Gude ran an Identity Number to check all volunteers and learners then on the system via the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) and the Department of Home Affairs.

Records read	617 142	100%
Records successful	526 831	85%
Persons absent from file	31 408	5%
Persons test digit incorrect	46 884	8%
Persons whose identity number not numeric	43	0.00007%
Persons deceased	11 976	2%
Person emigrated	-	-

4. Monitoring and Assessments

Assessments were used in the Kha Ri Gude programme as the main tool to monitor achievements of the programme, learners, and educators. It was recognised that conducting on-site national examinations for a six month basic literacy programme would have been a logistical and invigilation impossibility – *Kha Ri Gude* classes of 15 to 18 people take place at varying times in people's homes, in churches, community halls, spaza shops and even at taxi stops.

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA)⁶ was able to undertake a process in which the course materials and portfolio documents were checked for their alignment with ABET Level 1 on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the first three levels of UNESCO's

⁶ The Authority is the custodian of the National Qualifications Framework

Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Programme (LAMP). A further review of the curriculum and materials was conducted in 2012 (Adler, Aitchison and French, 2012, pp. 79- 92). There was a two and a half day moderation workshop in which a three person SAQA appointed team of specialists (the senior verifiers) oversaw about 200 moderators and 20 verifiers who checked a large sample of the LAPs submitted at the end of the previous year.

The *Kha Ri Gude* verification, though it also encompassed traditional moderation, focused on a different target – the marker, not the learner.

The SAQA verification process therefore focussed initially on the marking. The ‘moderators’ were asked to moderate the marking. This of course required something of a mind shift from looking at what the learner got right or right to what the marker got right or wrong. Some counter intuitive judgements have to be made, for example that a learner who got a very low mark may indeed have been marked in an excellent way or that a learner who got a very high mark may have been badly marked. Another rationale for focussing on the marking is that the learners, once they have completed the programme, are gone for good. The markers remain – and improving their marking of the next cohort of learners is a high priority.

As a further form of verification of the authenticity of the assessment results, pilot site visits were conducted at sampled physical sites with overall attendance by learners from about 300 classes. At each site the SAQA visitors asked the learners present to complete a small set of assessment exercises (very similar in content and difficulty to some of those in the Learner Assessment Portfolio).

Kha Ri Gude has delivered comprehensive, professional and attractive published curriculum materials to every learner – workbooks and portfolio books in all eleven official languages and Braille, as well as educators’ guides. It has engineered an extremely efficient logistics system which annually distributes over 660 000 sets of materials to all corners of the country, tracks

enrolments and collects and manages the return of over 600 000 portfolios, while managing the registration and payment (mainly small stipends) of close to 40000 educators in decidedly non-formal contexts (homes, garages, churches, community halls). It cascades delivery effectively through a successful hierarchy made up of voluntary educators (responsible for the recruitment and teaching of at least 18 learners each year), assisted by local supervisors under the guidance of district coordinators, who report to national management housed in the Department of Basic Education. Finally, it has used an official moderation and verification approach linking the programme to the quality demands of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) allowing successful learners to be recorded on the National Learner Record Database (NLRD).

5. Challenges in monitoring and Assessments

McKay (2015) has written on the challenges experienced in implementing this elaborate assessment system and reports the following challenges:

- The first major challenge in assessments stems from the programme design. Kha Ri Gude is designed as a literacy and numeracy programme which imbibes schooling characteristics. It therefore lends itself to one particular type of assessment, which is examinations.
- Enabling 40 000 facilitators to administer the portfolios across the country proved to be difficult than anticipated. Facilitators needed continuous training.
- South Africa has 11 official languages and the majority of learners use indigenous languages some of which are not as developed as languages of European origin. But some African languages required the use of complex language than others in assessments and this posed some difficulty in the standardisation of assessments
- Language complexities and differences also impacted on the numeracy materials and assessments where language was relevant.

- From the start, the programme was designed as a six-month programme and in many instances this period was found not to be sufficient to achieve full literacy by adults who had other responsibilities in families and communities (Romm & Dichaba, 2015).
- The nature of the programme, which operated in such diverse settings and in small groups, put a heavy burden on assessments as a monitoring tool and all other aspects of provisioning could not be monitored.
- Anecdotes prevail about adults who were not able to complete the programme primarily because of fear of examinations which were the culmination of the programme. Other methods of assessment, which are not as intimidating, should have been explored in this programme instead.

The challenges experienced with Kha Ri Gude were not only limited to monitoring and assessments as there were bigger social challenges which could not be overcome by the programme:

- Kha Ri Gude was implemented in South Africa in order to achieve social justice imperatives. The broadly defined social justice outcomes were meant to support marginalised participants and include them more in the social fabric of society. The evaluation of the programmes shows that there is some anecdotal evidence of this happening but not to a large scale as it was anticipated. Kha Ri Gude tended to be just an education programme, which focuses on schooling education, by and large (Romm & Dichaba, 2015).
- The programme was always a two-pronged programme designed to obliterate illiteracy in the country as well as provide temporary jobs that would alleviate poverty. But the nature of its short-term nature did not help in facilitating the second goal well as facilitators lost their jobs very quickly into the programme.

- There is yet no assessment used to see if the programme graduates have retained their literacy and numeracy. We know that these skills get lost quickly if not used and it might well be that these graduates have lost what they have acquired.
- At the end, the programme proved to be a stand-alone one as it was not sufficiently connected to other adult education programmes like skills development and further education for adults
- It was in 2006 that the 4,7 million illiteracy target was set by government, in the midst of huge contestations about the real numbers of illiteracy in the country (Aitchson, 2014, 2015; Aitchson, & McKay, 2013; Gustafsson, et.al, 2010; Posel, 2011). The population then was about 48 million. In 2015, the population has grown to about 54 million and yet the target the government is working on still remains that of 2006. Questions have to be asked about the assumed static nature of the illiteracy targets, especially now that the government is set to close down Kha Ri Gude in 2016.
- In a country like South Africa with its historical political past of apartheid, there are still vast differences between the capabilities of rural and urban areas. Kha Ri Gude is about to close, only because the targeted numbers have been reached, but it is still difficult to know if these numbers reflect the reality on the ground, especially the hard to reach areas.

6. Recommendations

- A literacy and numeracy program of this scale requires huge political commitment and cannot be engineered only by the accounting authority in government.
- The program also requires huge resources in terms of money and skills and this must be taken into consideration when planning
- A program of this nature needs to be connected to the other parts of the Education and Training system in order that learners can have a sense of progressions after this initial step. They also want to use the newly acquired skill as a basis for further skills which will help improve their means of livelihoods.

- Adult literacy should be part of Adult Education and not primary education. There are more benefits in thinking about Adult Education as a system for adult learners than thinking about it as part of basic education.
- A quick-paced program rather than a stretched –out one is useful as adults have other obligations in their lives
- A program like Kha Ri Gude works well in a context of a well-developed infrastructure like, Information technology; Banking system; Logistics capability; availability of management and facilitation skills; etc.

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