

This Learning Brief emerged from the 4th After School Community of Practice held on the 16th of May 2017.

LEARNING BRIEF:

Strengthen the relationship between government and NGOs to deliver quality After School Programmes

HISTORY AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COP

The Western Cape Government of South Africa wants to expand no and low fee learner access to quality after school programmes. A project office known as the After School Game Changer (ASGC) has been set up to coordinate all stakeholders in the sector both within and outside of government. To assist in the coordination of the non-governmental sector, a key stakeholder, The Learning Trust (TLT) has partnered with ASGC. TLT brings after school non-governmental organisations (NGOs) together to facilitate learning and collaboration in the form of Community of Practice (CoP) meetings. The CoP held three meetings in the year of its launch 2016, and a symposium was convened with government. Three CoPs are planned for 2017. This Learning Brief captures the discussions at the first CoP in 2017 focused on NGO partnerships with government.

NGO PARTNERSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENT

There is recognition that the reach and quality of after school programming will come through strengthening relationships and partnerships in the sector. The most important partnership is at local level with the school. Other relationships and partnerships are with communities and NGOs. Government really values the experience that NGOs bring and the CoP meeting explored some of the many opportunities to partner with government in the after school space. Many NGOs are already working with government and show the potential for partnerships at other levels, all the way up to provincial partnerships. There is also the opportunity for both big and small NGOs to partner with government.

Eighty-five representatives from 47 different NGOs attended the CoP and there was lively engagement with government representatives from Community Safety, Education, Cultural Affairs and Sport, and Social Development. Examples of successful partnerships include The Year Beyond Programme, AMANDLA EduFootball, and Ikamva Labantwana with the government's Jobs Fund. These programmes have found that they can reach more learners and leverage more resources through government partnerships.

Effective partnerships require planning ahead. In developing partnerships with government, experienced NGOs said they started by identifying where their own strategic vision was aligned with that of government. It's important that NGOs don't see government just as funders, although it is often able to provide indirect support.

Communication is a key aspect of partnership and partners should find ways to strengthen the ways they communicate with each other. It's not only between partnerships that communication is important, communication within the sector is vital, as is communication between different governments departments. Partnerships can also be maximised through organisations really coming to understand what is working in their programmes, building an evidence base for this and using it to leverage even better quality programmes.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE AFTER SCHOOL GAME CHANGER

The target is 112 000 no and low fee learners (20%) in regular and consistent quality after school programmes by 2019. (A low fee school has an annual school fee of less than R1160).

Four pillars

Programmes within the after school space happen across four pillars:

- Academic and e-learning: homework support, extra lessons and support
- Sports and recreation: various codes offered recreationally and as a specific sport, which builds mastery
- Arts and culture: drama, dance, juggling, music, visual arts, indigenous games offered recreationally or as a specific art form, which builds mastery
- Life skills: leadership, team work, health awareness, career advice and other life skills offered as stand-alone or embedded within other pillars

Three levers

Three levers are critical for the achievement of the ASGC target:

- creating an enabling environment through leadership, safety, food, communication and ICT
- enhancing quality programmes through norms and standards, and training and support for practitioners
- expanding access through partnership and collaboration

SOME ADVICES FROM GOVERNMENT

Engaging with schools to maximise participation

Government and NGOs wanting to work in the after school space need to put time and effort into building partnerships with the school at which they are based. The partnership with the school needs to be thought through carefully, based on the needs of the school, and great care needs to be taken to build a relationship with the school. It must be remembered that a school is a complex organisation. Some basic steps to building a good relationship are outlined below.

Develop a relationship with key stakeholders

In approaching a school, consider that the key stakeholders are the School Principal, the School Management Team (SMT), the School Governing Body (SGB) and the learners.

Have a proposal when meeting with school principal or SMT

When potential programmes meet with the school principal or SMT, they should go with a clear outline of their programme and a proposal of how they want to work with the school. The benefits and / or impact of the programme should also be outlined. All schools have a School Improvement Plan (SIP) which identifies the strategic improvement needs of the school and outlines interventions to meet those needs. The after school programme should support the outcomes of the SIP.

Develop a Service Level Agreement

Once an initial relationship with the school leadership has been established, a Service Level Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding should be put together. This is a good way to ensure accountability, lock in participation, set measurable targets or outcomes and track progress on agreed goals.

Inform the WCED

Principals are ultimately accountable to their circuit managers within the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). Also, circuit managers are integrally involved in the life of the school. They should be informed about the after school programme (ASP). The ASP should also be registered on the NPO Data Base, Edu-collaborate.

Ensure regular monitoring and feedback

A high quality programme will entice learners and staff to participate. Once the programme is up and running regular monitoring and feedback to the principal and all other stakeholders should be ensured. The ASP should also become part of the broader school programme. In addition to the SIP, the ASP can be included in the school calendar, the school timetable, newsletters and other communication to parents.

MEETING TARGETS FOR ASPs

Currently, after school programmes exist in just over a quarter of the 1 048 no and low fee schools with just over 59 000 verified participants.

Target	Year	Comment
42 000	2015/16	Estimated learners in regular ASP
65 000	2016/17	Verified 59 000 learners in regular ASP
85 000	2017/18	
112 000	2018/19	

UPDATE ON SCHOOL CONNECTIVITY:

- ✓ The Western Cape plans to connect all schools.
- ✓ By mid 2017 all schools should be linked to the Internet at at least one point (usually an administration point). Full connection is provided in LAN schools - here all instruction rooms will be connected.
- ✓ The programme started in 2015 with 50 schools, 128 were connected in 2016 and 96 will be connected in 2017.
- ✓ Each year up to 100 will be added. Devices are also being rolled out to all model schools where every learner and teacher will get a device.
- ✓ Sixteen schools have already received devices.

NGO EXPERIENCES AND ADVICE AROUND WORKING TOGETHER WITH GOVERNMENT

Following the informative panel session with the government, representatives from four NGOs who have been successfully partnering with government through various programmes and initiatives shared their learnings and insights into working with government and accessing various resources. These representatives were Karl Voysey of Amandla EduFootball, Siviwe Dlukwana of Ikamva Labantwana, Shelley O'Caroll of Wordworks, and Mario van Niekerk of Great Commission United (GCU). It was an honest and much appreciated panel discussion from organizations with a number of years of experience in engaging with government at various levels. As Karl Voysey stated upfront, "There is no silver bullet. Partnerships with government work through resilience and perseverance." While it was noted that it was hard work, all of the panellists agreed it was definitely worthwhile and transformative for the organization itself. From negotiating service level agreements to the benefits of scaling up your work, below is the 'take home' version of these representatives' advices toward achieving fruitful partnerships with government.

Don't think of government as a funder

Government "is a lawn mower that clears the way, it doesn't have money." If it does have funding often this is for targeted activities or indirect support. Therefore, don't think that ASPs can be sustainably funded by government. Partnerships with government are not just about money. On the other hand, look for where government could take line items out of budgets, e.g. safety, transport, venues or food.

Show evidence that things are working

Organisations should have evidence that things are working in their programmes.

Know ASPs should be done through schools in the long term

Organisations should have short, medium and long term strategies. In the long term, after school programming should all be done through schools. Schools must own ASPs and run them. Facilities and youth centres should be part of the school campus.

Train and support young people to run after school programmes in the medium term

In the medium term young people should be trained and supported very tightly to run after school programmes. Capacity development is needed on an ongoing basis to deliver quality programmes.

Identify government priority areas and either lobby for changes or align with yours

AMANDLA EduFootball spent time figuring out government's mandates and goals in different departments. It's very new for government departments to be working together and they have neither the culture nor the training to do it. AMANDLA EduFootball worked to show government how they were helping them achieve their various mandates. These turned out to be "door openers" for the organisation.

It should be noted however that Wordworks' experience is that there is potential for sustainability and scale even with programmes that aren't a priority or high on government agendas.

Be ready for when opportunity knocks

Wordworks had a partnership with the Curriculum Directorate to do in-service training for grade R teachers. It was a challenge for the Wordworks team and they had to make lots of compromises. Essentially, they went from working with 100 teachers to 3000 teachers across the province. On the whole, the partnership took the organisation to another level. Advice to other organisations is to be ready for "windows of opportunity."

Build relationships

AMANDLA EduFootball focused on building relationships at different levels. They built key relationships on the ground and they also built politically strategic relationships at provincial level.

Develop a relationship with the districts

Although a small organisation, Wordworks positioned themselves strategically. Wordworks had a partnership with Metro South District. They always took care to tell the district circuit team manager about what they were doing although they didn't have a formal Memoranda of Understanding (MOU).

Build a relationship with the community

GCU emphasises having programme staff who come from the community and speak their language. Van Niekerk says: "Society makes gangsters. Gangsters don't make society. Gangsters are rejected kids. We employ 65 people from our community. These were kids that were written off." He also suggests that in establishing safety at the school consider speaking with the gangsters - "they are humans, they will make it safe." GCU is an example of a small programme that has successfully partnered with government.

Build a relationship with schools

In GCU's experience it takes 6 months to a year to get into a school. In building a relationship with principals, ask "how can we help you?"

Let go of your ego and ownership of the materials

Wordworks spent years developing materials but when these were used by government their name didn't appear on the materials. They had to let go of ownership and focus on the impact their materials were having in classrooms across the province.

Be prepared to be drowned out

Wordworks added that regardless of what an MOU is, in the end the process might not align. Their project was truncated with no consultation. Ultimately government makes the decisions and the NGO must live with them if they want to scale their work.

Be prepared for internal politics and bureaucracy

For Wordworks and AMANDLA EduFootball, partnerships with government mean challenging communication, lots of policies, internal clashes, lots of protocols and lots of bureaucracy. But they say this shouldn't stop organisations moving forward. Van Niekerk of GCU reminds organisations of the gangster saying, "Moenie kalla nie dalla", which means stop talking and looking beautiful and start doing.

Be realistic about what you can get from government

Ikamva Labantwana has a partnership with the Jobs Fund for unemployed youth to be recruited and trained by them to be tutors. They are realistic about what the partnerships will bring and advise being creative in looking for opportunities (e.g. they recently had their new building leased to them for no charge from government).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Following government and NGO presentations, the 85 participants engaged in vibrant round-table discussions and raised questions. Below is a summation of the questions raised by NGO's with answers from government.

Must schools have a SIP, are they available, do schools use them?

Schools are required to have a SIP and these must be obtained directly from the school principal. It's not just about improving results, we need better developed individuals.

How do ASPs challenge learners to engage with real life after they finish school?

ASPs have been shown to provide key factors which not only raise academic results but which also prepare learners for life e.g. safe nurturing places, positive role models, boosts to self-esteem. In addition to focused life skills, sports and arts develop critical life skills like leadership, team work, ability to fail and resilience.

How can we improve communication between NGOs and government?

There is the ASGC website and there are also plans to develop a newsletter. From August, as and when relevant, this will include funding opportunities, applications processes as well as criteria, and how government prioritises funding.

Does government have a centralised database to connect organisations to stakeholders with shared interests?

The ASGC is nearly ready to share the updated Edu-collaborate portal, a mapping programme with the details of all programmes, governmental and non-governmental, in the school space.

What are the requirements and how can we register as a partial care programme with the Department of Social Development (DSD) if it is at a school site?

The DSD treats any after school facility that was not started by the SGB as a community based facility. This means that the facility must go through a registration process through DSD local or regional offices. This includes the Norms and Standards Assessment and municipal health and safety requirements. The facility further needs to have a lease agreement with the school, WCED or SGB. Since the school based facility is operating from a site already zoned for school purposes, there is no need to go through the land use process. DSD will offer a monitoring service and all parents of children attending registered ASC facilities whose income is below R7500 would qualify for a subsidy of R8 per child per day.

What about ASPs for commuter learners who are bussed out immediately after school?

In general ASPs don't work in schools where learners live far away. In these cases, work needs to be done with local authorities to build programmes where learners are living. Sometimes arrangements can be made for bus services to leave the school later.

What is government doing about community safety especially in areas where children's safety is at risk e.g. when going home after the activities?

The National School Safety Framework (NSSF) provides a framework for dealing with school safety. It is very important that every school has a relationship with a local South African Police Services (SAPS) person. If there is an emergency it is best to call the SAPS call centre on 10111.

Schools should also call the Safe Schools Call Centre on 0800 45 46 47. While this centre has no reactive capacity, it holds the incident data base. Calling the Safe Schools Call Centre and getting the incident logged can influence resource allocation and get the school onto priority lists as it is the evidence base for all decisions.

In the Western Cape, further support is provided by the Department of Community Safety and Safer Schools. This support is now being coordinated under the PROVJOINTS via the School Safety Priority Committee. The basket of services is based on the schools' risk classification. i.e.: high risk, medium risk and low risk. A different basket of services is offered for each level.

How will monitoring and evaluation happen and how will we measure success rate?

Sector collaboration is planned around monitoring and evaluation which must be built into ASPs. High attendance and engaged and involved learners are two key ways to start identifying a quality programme. Later, systemic results can help to measure impact.

INFORMATION ON GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES WORKING WITH NGOS AND SCHOOLS

There are a range of opportunities for NGOs to partner with different departments in government including After School Game Changer (ASGC), Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS), Department of Social Development (DSD) and Western Cape Education Department (WCED).

Academic programmes and opportunities	
Pre-grade R ECD school readiness pilot	
<p>The pilot is to establish Early Childhood Development (ECD) English language and cognitive development programmes at 100 sites where school readiness is poor. There is support for parents with systems and tools. A proof of concept has been completed at 10 sites. Roll out to 50 sites is planned in 2017.</p>	<p><i>Pre-grade R Early Childhood Development (ECD) school readiness pilot.</i> Contact DSD Kamesh.Flynn@westerncape.gov.za</p>
Grade R - 3 100 schools project	
<p>The 100 schools project provides structured support to improve learning in 103 schools with a focus on strengthening Language and Maths. There are 42 sites which include eLearning using 99 tablets per site. Work is been done with NGOs to train teachers and assistants.</p>	<p><i>Grade R- 3 100 schools project</i> Contact WCED Debbie.Lewis@westerncape.gov.za</p>
YearBeyond	
<p>The YearBeyond focuses on Grades 1 – 4 and 8 - 10 with an English and Maths programme implemented by NGOs in after school hours in 20 schools in the Metro.</p>	<p><i>YearBeyond</i> Contact DoTP Ammaarah.Kamish@westerncape.gov.za</p>
Maths eLearning	
<p>The Maths eLearning programme is focused on self-directed maths supported by using technology-based programmes at 19 schools with good Internet access.</p>	<p><i>Maths eLearning</i> Contact ASGC Jacqueline.Boulle@westerncape.gov.za</p>
Grade 4 and 5 catch-up	
<p>Grade 4 and 5 catch-up is a teacher assistant based programme working with NGOs to assist with training and support in 10 Cape Winelands and Metro North Schools.</p>	<p><i>Grade 4 and 5 catch-up</i> Contact ASGC Jacqueline.Boulle@westerncape.gov.za</p>
eLearning Game Changer	
<p>eLearning is being tested in 16 model schools with full access to devices.</p>	<p><i>eLearning Game Changer</i> Contact Clinton.Walker@westerncape.gov.za</p>
School based homework clubs	
<p>Individual schools use teachers to offer homework and academic support after school.</p>	<p><i>School based homework clubs</i> For school based homework clubs contact schools directly.</p>

Other opportunities

Western Cape Peer Education Programme

Peer educators get training and support to teach, mentor and be activists and role models. Peer educators are currently based in 120 schools. NGOs/NPOs with evidence based experience in offering peer education programmes can apply for funds for the stipends for the peer educators (R4000 p/month) and materials and refreshments. The programme runs April - October with training to happen before that.

Western Cape Peer Education Programme
Contact
Frederick.Mitchell@westerncape.gov.za

Western Cape School Support Programme (Jobs Fund)

The Jobs Fund has the WC School Support Programme providing matriculants with job opportunities in schools. They place 3000 young people per year with two more years to go. The funding is for stipends for 18-25 year olds to work in schools. They get R1500 p/m for 6 months and there is a R1 000 management allowance. A minimum of 10 posts per organisation are required, also that 30% of candidates must get into jobs assisted by the organisations, and attendance must be tracked.

Western Cape School Support Programme (Jobs Fund)
Contact ASGC
Wayne.Blauw@westerncape.gov.za

DSD partial care centres

Programmes for school-going children in the afternoons and during school holidays offer a protected environment with attention to homework and constructive use of free time. NPO/NGOs who are also registered with DSD as partial after care centres can apply for R8 per day per qualifying child. (See Q & A panel for more.) Registration runs throughout the year. A call for funding proposals will open in June 2017 for the next three year cycle.

DSD partial care centres
Contact the local DSD office which will advise.

Youth Café

A Youth Café is a one-stop hub where young people can come together and access services, opportunities and support provided by the public and private sectors. DSD funds the construction of a unique, vibey space to attract young people. Youth Cafes didn't start off in the after school space but have moved there due to demand from young people. Funds are allocated for programmes, computers, internet connectivity, staff, coffee, snacks and *zlat* prizes. DSD is not currently open for applications but NGOs/NPOs with a proven track record in rendering social welfare services in the youth development field were considered. There are now 7 youth cafes in the WC with 10 to be established by the end of 2017.

Youth Café
Contact
James.Albanie@westerncape.gov.za

Showcasing arts and culture through mini festivals

There are a series of mini-festivals for showcasing arts and culture and creating platforms within communities.

Showcasing arts and culture through mini festivals- see DCAS website

ABOUT THE AFTER SCHOOL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The After School Community of Practice was launched in Salt River on 30 March 2016, by The Learning Trust, in partnership with the Western Cape Provincial Government After School Game Changer.

The objective of the CoP is to strengthen the outcomes of the sector through strategic collaboration models that are able to take best practice methodologies and programmes to scale. This objective feeds into the provincial government's larger strategic framework for the AS sector.

The aim of the CoP is to create space for:

- 1) Showcasing best practice models and potential for collaboration models;
- 2) Sharing and learning about successes and setbacks of models, to strengthen programmes;
- 3) Advocacy to showcase the potential of the sector for formal partnership with local and provincial government authorities and collaborations with civil society; and
- 4) Collaboration in content and information that will leverage the quality of programmes and also create opportunities for partnerships and collaboration in the sector.

THANK YOU FOR PARTNERING WITH US!

A very special thank you to Rhetabile Mashale-Sonibare of Thope Foundation for facilitating both the panel sessions, to Gabeba Gaidien of the Learning Trust for facilitating the opening and closing sessions and to the government representatives and NGO panellists, your time and insights are very much appreciated!

We are really grateful to all the representatives of the following organisations who participated in the 4th After School Community of Practice meeting on the 17th of May 2017:

2 Oceans Education Foundation, 9 Miles Project, Afrika Tikkun, Amandla Edufootball, Amy Foundation, Beautiful Gate SA, Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Butterfly Art Project, Cape Craft and Design Institute, Community Action Partnership, CoolPlay, Delivery Support Unit, Department of Culture, Arts and Sports - MOD Programme, Department of the Premier, Western Cape Government, Department of Health - Youth Health Programme, Dreamfields, Fight for Peace, FunDza Literacy Trust, Great Commission United, Ikamva Labantwana Bethu, IkamvaYouth, Ithemba Lethu Learning Centre, Jungle Theatre Company, Kronendal Music Academy of Hout Bay, Lalela, Learning In Reach, Mellon Educate, Nal'ibali Trust, Numeric, Oasis Reach For Your Dreams, Partners for Possibility, Partners with After School Care Projects Trust, Purple Circle Coaching, South African Education and Environment Project, Scouts South Africa, Seven Passes Initiative, Students' Health and Welfare Centres Organisation (SHAWCO), Siyakhathala We Care, Sporting Code, The Learning Trust, The President's Award for Youth Empowerment, The Social Project, Thope Foundation, Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading (VPUU), Vision AfriKa, Waves for Change, Western Cape After School Game Changer, Western Cape Government Provincial Treasury, Women for Peace, Wordworks, Young Filmmakers Programme.

If you would like to find out about joining the CoP, please contact Mingah at The Learning Trust. Tel: 021 709 0420, email: mingah@thelearningtrust.org.