Background

The Thandulwazi Teacher Development Programme, established in 2006, aims at providing professional development and up-skilling workshops for teachers currently employed as educators, mainly in poorly resourced schools, and a leadership programme for current principals and aspiring school leaders.

It is a truism that an education system is only as good as its teachers. In 2007 the International Labour Organisation (ILO) advocated that “the quality of teacher, the kind of people attracted to teaching and the way they are taught is at the heart of all problems of educational quality. No reform of education is worth its salt if it does not address itself to this range of questions.” (http://archive.lib.msu.edu).

Thandulwazi recognizes that teachers are at the centre of our country’s struggling schooling system. The introduction of CAPS and yet another “version” of the new curriculum fails to address the inherent problem of inadequately trained teachers and indeed ignores the Ministerial Review’s recommendation that educators should be given “targeted subject-specific training especially in numeracy/Maths and literacy/English”.

"Teachers touch the future" and funding spent on teacher training and development has long-term and far reaching benefits for both learners and the education system in general. Teachers are agents of change, whose impact on their learners in class daily, fellow teachers in their schools, and colleagues in the profession is exponential. The Darling-Hammond analysis of data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (USA, 2000) found "that the effects of well-prepared teachers on student achievement can be stronger than the influences of student background factors, such as poverty, language background, and minority status".

“From education, the soul of a nation mirrors itself. He who dares to teach must be willing to learn- for education is not just a preparation for life, but life itself. For us to move forward and ensure improvement in the way we teach in the classroom, we need to have a professional teacher who is continuously in search of better ways to teach our children effectively...”

*Prof P Kuzvinetsa, Exec Dean, College of Education, UNISA (2012)*
THANDULWAZI-ROKUNDA TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME - 2013

Vision
To positively impact the teaching and learning of Maths and Science in and around Gauteng.

Mission
The Thandulwazi Maths and Science Academy’s mission is to improve the quality of Maths and Science teaching and learning, among the group described as historically disadvantaged South Africans (HDSA), mainly from under-resourced schools in and around Gauteng, through targeted interventions aimed at teacher training; professional development of current educators; and the provision of quality extra tuition to FET phase learners on Saturdays.

Thandulwazi-Rokunda Teacher Development Programme
Established in 2006, the Thandulwazi-Rokunda Teacher Development Programme focuses on providing up-skilling workshops for educators currently working in schools in previously disadvantaged areas and providing professional development for these teachers.

Workshops are held on 11 Saturdays during the academic year from 08:30-13:00. Sessions concentrate mainly on numeracy and literacy in the Foundation Phase; Maths, Science and Technology at the Intermediate and Senior Phases; and upgrading the computer skills of educators. Workshops are facilitated by highly experienced teachers, who are all experts in their field.

The programme has grown from 80 teachers in 2006 to over 970 teachers in 2012 from schools across the Gauteng Province, and as far afield as Limpopo, Mpumalanga, the Northwest and even KwaZulu-Natal. In 2013, over 1,000 teachers and principals from 400 plus schools registered at Thandulwazi on 09 February for up-skilling workshops.

Two years ago, Mathletics was introduced to the programme, as a teaching tool for Maths teachers. Mathletics is an internet-based mathematics programme, which has been developed in line with the national curriculum. All teachers have access to Mathletics training at the Thandulwazi workshops and are able to access this system at home or school. This tool was provided for teachers again in 2013.

Given the importance of environmental education for Africa, workshops for educators are also offered on how to teach learners about climate change and global warming; as well as energy saving and how to undertake energy audits in schools.

“No matter how much curricula are updated, no matter how many equity and quality improvement programs are implemented …. if we do not recognize teachers as the central factor in change, the changes that we most need will not take place’. To achieve significant and effective improvements in the quality of our education system, we must give much more attention to teaching as a profession.”

Professor Cheryl de la Rey, Vice Chancellor and Rector of the University of Pretoria, 27 October 2012
Leadership Programme

The McKinsey (2010, 63) study on high performing education systems around the globe found that “apart from classroom teaching, nothing influences improvements in school standards more than the quality of head teachers.” (http://www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2011/01/13092132/1). With this in mind, school principals are encouraged to attend Thandulwazi with their teachers.

Leadership Workshops are offered for Heads and aspirant school leaders on key leadership topics, such as budgeting; strategic planning; how to deal with bullying; goal setting etc. In 2011, eighty principals/aspiring school leaders attended the leadership workshops; in 2012 the leadership programme grew to 172 participants; and this year demand for places at the Leadership Workshop remains high. The Leadership Programme has been refined, streamlined and expanded to include formal leadership workshops; a principal-to-principal mentorship component, in which retired principals mentored small group of current principals, offering personal support, guidance and assistance in handling difficult issues. In addition school leaders are encouraged to form Communities of Practice (CoP) to share best practice and lend support to each other.

What makes the Thandulwazi Teacher Development Programme different?

Innovative features of the programme include:

- The size and scope of the programme: teachers travel from all over Gauteng (Johannesburg CBD, Soweto, Ivory Park, Tembisa, Cosmocity and Diepsloot), and some from afar a field as Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and the North-West to attend Thandulwazi.
- There is no registration fee or charge for the Saturday workshop sessions, which ensures that those who are already marginalised by socio-economic circumstances are not further disadvantaged or denied access to the quality education programmes offered by Thandulwazi.
- This is an inclusive programme catering for all educators, teaching across the educational phases, in a caring, non-judgemental and inclusive environment, where teachers are made to feel special and important, teachers are empowered, and encouraged to become the best professional educators they can be.
- Teachers self-select to attend workshops on a Saturday and make a personal commitment to become better educators and improve their teaching skills. They are not charged for workshops.
- The programme caters for both principals and educators and encourages school leaders to attend the programme with their staff.
- By teachers for teachers: the programme is facilitated by teachers working daily with the curriculum and learners; teachers who are passionate about their “craft”, who pass on methodologies that work and provide practical tips/ideas that can be used in the everyday classroom.
- In addition to the content-based workshops offered in Maths, Literacy, Science and Technology, educators are exposed to best practice; introduced to new technologies that can be implemented in the classroom (e.g. interactive Smartboards; IPads and apps; Classmates/ tablets); new educational trends (e.g. creating an environmentally-friendly school) and how to teach difficult contemporary topics/themes, such as Global Warming and Climate Change, to primary school learners.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The efficacy and impact of workshops are monitored weekly by the programme director.
- Visits each term by the Programme Director and workshop leaders to participating schools, to assess the impact of the workshops on the individual teachers in their classrooms; their peers/colleagues; and the schools.
• Monitoring teachers’ understanding/content knowledge of Maths through the internet-based Mathletics programme.
• An assessment of portfolio of work/lesson planning exercise is completed and shared by teachers.
• All the participating educators were required to complete a survey and evaluation form in October and this feedback is being analysed by an independent evaluator.

Funding for 2013
The budget for the expanded 2013 teacher development programme is: R1,68 million, based on 1000 educators and school leaders attending 11 Saturday Sessions.

This equates to a cost of R152 per teacher, per Saturday and includes the provision of the following:
• Two 90-minute workshops per session
• Basic stationery; Mathletics Licence (log-ins for teachers); and a flash-drive for each teachers onto which relevant curriculum and resource materials are loaded
• Refreshments
• Transport via bus for teachers travelling from Soweto; Diepsloot/CosmoCity; Tembisa/ Ivory Park
• Security and the provision of access cards
• Operational expenses (printing, SMSs to teachers, closing ceremony, guest speakers)
• Monitoring & Evaluation

Strategic partnerships for the year ahead include
• Wits University and UJ’s Education Faculties’ - Teachers’ Forum Workshops
• Mathletics
• Microsoft Partnerships in Learning
• Eskom Holdings (Integrated Demand Management) – school energy education programme
• Future Comprehensive School (Limpopo)
• BRIDGE Forum (Monitoring & Evaluation; Maths & Science Community; Tertiary Colloquium: Saturday School Programmes; Linking Innovators in Education Forum)

Expanding the Thandulwazi Footprint in 2013
For a number of years, large numbers of Limpopo-based teachers have travelled to Johannesburg to attend the Saturday teacher workshops. Given the ongoing educational crisis and demand for teacher development workshops in that region, in 2013 the Thandulwazi Teacher Development Programme is running a pilot in partnership with the Future Comprehensive School (a small, independent school based in rural Limpopo) and a number of donors, to test whether the teacher workshops could be offered to 400 Limpopo-based primary school teachers. Two workshops were held in April 2013 and a further two are planned for August 2013. Thereafter the pilot will be evaluated and a decision taken on whether or not to continue with this project in Limpopo.

Feedback from teachers
At the end of 2012, many of the Thandulwazi beneficiaries wrote inspirational and moving letters of thanks to the Thandulwazi Director and the donors, whose funding made these workshops possible. Extracts from a few of these letters are included below:

“A good teacher is like a candle – it consumes itself to light the way for others”

(Author unknown)
At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each one of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us – this is what the Thandulwazi Teacher Workshops meant to me... The Saturday Workshops have helped me to become a better educator and to implement what I have learnt during all our sessions both in my grade 3 class and as deputy principal ... I would like to thank the Thandulwazi Rokunda sponsors once again. You may not see the fruit of today’s work but you have seeded a lifetime of knowledge within us and we will always treasure it wherever we go. As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”

Ms Roewayda Areff, Newclare Primary School

“We feel privileged to be associated with such a wonderful programme. The programme has had an impact on the way of life at our school even though we are so far away ... The information we have collected/amassed has helped our management, teachers and learners to be co-participants in the learning areas and management (of our school) ... Thank you for having allowed us to take part in this wonderful initiative.”

Mr Patrick Magowe, Principal, Future Comprehensive School (Limpopo)

“I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude for the opportunity to better myself through this program. Coming to Thandulwazi I was computer illiterate, but now I present to you a letter typed by yours truly. I will be joining the program again next year. Attending the exciting, stimulating workshops has made me one of the most favourite teachers to the kids. I now have excited, enthusiastic and eager to learn pupils ... through this program you did not only upgrade us teachers but you have helped tomorrows (sic) generation...”

Ms Elizabeth Dube, Smedmore Nursery School
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- Thandulwazi Teacher Development Programme – Karen Walstra
- Thandulwazi Saturday School – Mahlathi Khoza
- Thandulwazi Intern-Teacher Programme – Thobeka Zuma-Mngambi

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Nature of Legal Registration of the Organisation
Registered Educational Trust – Thandulwazi Trust Registration No. IT 3025/2010
PBO No. 930037387
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Section 18A Status
Approved educational trust in terms of Section 18A of the Income Tax Act
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Account Number: 221043209
Bank: Standard Bank
Branch: Randburg
Branch code: 018005