**Relationship Building Advice**

- Technology access and internet in our government schools is *very exciting*. The children, parents, teachers, SMT and principals will likely be very excited about a project like this. However, building a **relationship** with the school is an essential initial and on-going investment for the success of any programme.

- We have one overarching principle: this is a supportive, learning enhancing programme and does not and cannot replace day-to-day teaching in the classroom.

- We then have four sub-principles that we think should guide any interaction with school officials and stakeholders:
  1) obtain buy-in from all stakeholders;
  2) have clear and regular communication;
  3) consistently use positive and reinforcing language; and
  4) have a reliable timetable.

- **Obtain buy-in from all stakeholders**
  - This must be obtained in *advance* of making significant investments in equipment and personnel etc.
  - Start with principal support: this is the first point of entry into any school. Introduce the programme, explain that we understand that maths is generally
feared by most of our children and that we want to decrease that fear. Explain that we think that using technology in the classroom can assist with surmounting learner fears by making maths exciting, tantalising and ensuring that they get comfortable with it.

- Make sure that the SMT and SGB are informed formally.
- Teacher support: we need to build trust with the teachers, proving that our programme is supporting the work they are doing in the classroom. The teacher should be involved as much as possible; should be coached on how the programme works, welcomed, involved in evaluations and advise us on learner management.
- Make sure that all parents and the community are notified of the project, explained how it will work and what we need from their children to make the project a success.
- Ensure that all relevant education officials (e.g. District Director, School Inspector/ Circuit Manager, curriculum officials etc.) are given a quality presentation about what is going on in their schools.

Clear and Regular communication
- The SGB, parents and community members should be regularly invited to see their children in action. They should be informed of their progress and the impact of the programme on their performance. Parent support is necessary to ensure excellent attendance of the programme. Community support is also necessary to ensure that the resources and infrastructure for the programme are protected. Their support reduces adverse security issues. (night security guards should also be employed together with the school and the community).
- Consistent and regular meetings should be held with the Principal, SMT and the teachers. These meetings should include updates but also provide an opportunity for feedback. Are the improvements we are seeing in the iiTablet Tshomiz classroom translating to improved performance in the teacher’s classrooms?
- Teachers should be consulted on learner management, informed of our needs and given the opportunity to share their needs with us. Any opportunity to support the teacher, with resources or other assistance, should be jumped on as these help build trust.

- Positive language
  - Using negative feedback about the way school runs, its teachers or learner performance is an unproductive way to use your energy and could get you kicked out of the school. In our experience, one should never assign blame and avoid getting upset or disappointed. Use positive, reinforcing and encouraging language when working with the schools.
  - Always assess how you can support teaching and learning and see yourself as a supportive system to the school.

- A reliable timetable
- Work with the school to develop this and check in regularly to make sure it still works for everyone. Negotiate with the school to continue with the programme regardless of whether they are closed for any reason (sports days, other events or if a class teacher is not there etc.).
- Secure one classroom that you can use consistently but not necessarily exclusively.