
EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE: PROJECT CASE STUDIES



In this section of the report, the focus is on letting the project's achievements speak for themselves. From the outset, the project has aimed to find out what kind of interventions work best to promote educational inclusion in school communities that are experiencing disadvantage. This year, four major themes emerge from the project evaluation, and this section of the report is arranged to include examples of practice from the project which show that

- A whole-school approach to setting targets and monitoring results produces positive outcomes for teaching and learning in schools.
- Arts and other curriculum enrichment interventions have a positive impact on learning disposition.
- Empowering schools to respond flexibly to the needs of their learners and community has a positive impact on schools and produces good learning outcomes.
- Through the Bridging the Gap project, the University engages in a learning partnership with schools, which promotes a learning organisation culture in both the schools and the University.

The case studies that are included in this section of the evaluation are drawn mainly from the reports submitted by schools on their school and community level initiatives. These reports provide a rich and diverse source of evidence about the impact of the project in schools and their communities. Many of the school reports could be published as complete "stories" in their own right, and it is difficult in a synthesis report such as this to do justice to the work that has been done by the people who contributed to preparing the original documents. Most of these included multimedia elements, colourful graphics and examples of student artwork and artefacts. The design illustrations that are used throughout the report are based on images from the school reports, however the images used are not intended to relate directly to the specific case studies.

1 SETTING TARGETS AND MONITORING RESULTS

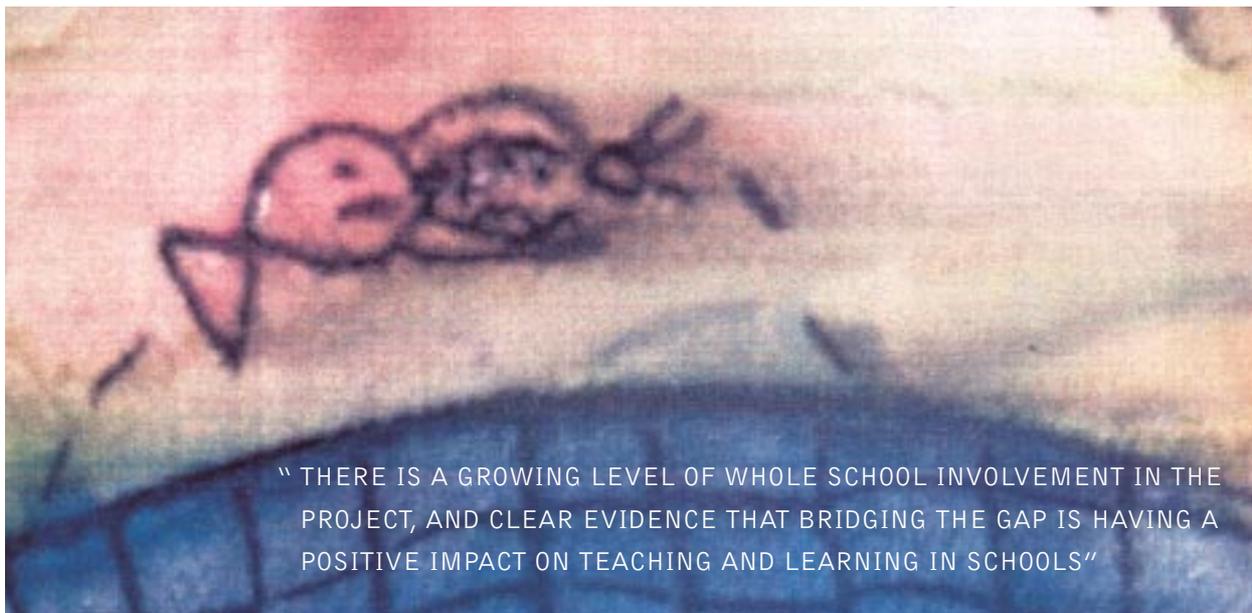
A WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH TO SETTING TARGETS AND MONITORING RESULTS PRODUCES POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SCHOOLS

In the past year, schools have focused very clearly on setting project goals and on collecting data that provide evidence of achievement. They have adopted a wide range of approaches to the collection and presentation of data, and many of the school reports provide excellent examples of collective goal setting and the use of simple measurement techniques. There is a growing level of whole school involvement in the project, and clear evidence that Bridging the Gap is having a positive impact on teaching and learning in schools.

The case studies in this section illustrate some of the approaches that have been used by the schools to collect and analyse data as a way of monitoring the achievements of the project against the set targets. In these examples, the outcomes of the project for teaching and learning are made visible and explicit. As a result, schools are enabled to evaluate their own results and to modify their targets

for the future if necessary. They are also enabled to celebrate and publicise success using objective measures.

As can be seen in the case studies, the approaches to data collection in the project schools are many and varied. Some schools have used standardised tests. In one school, special language and social skills rubrics have been developed by the teacher. Self-assessment by students is a strong feature of one of the projects in a secondary school. Teacher observations, interviews with students and teacher questionnaires have also been used. Informal tests have been developed by teachers to measure musical skills and speech and language development. Some schools have used simple measurement techniques such as "tick sheets" to monitor for example attendance, completion of homework and mastery of specific skills. Whichever approach is used, the data provide objective and quantitative evidence of the results that have been achieved.



“ THERE IS A GROWING LEVEL OF WHOLE SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROJECT, AND CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT BRIDGING THE GAP IS HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SCHOOLS ”