MOBILE LIBRARIES: TAKING RESOURCES TO THE UNDERPRIVILEGED

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1. Introduction

Mobile libraries were introduced in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) five years ago. This project emanated from a long-standing partnership between Together with Africa and Asia Association (TAAA), a Japanese-based NGO, and the KZN Department of Education.

Since 2002 mobile libraries have been donated to serve the areas of:

- **Indwedwe** (outside Durban) and
- **Mahlabathini** (in Zululand)
- Later a third mobile library was donated for **Mbazwana** in Northern Zululand.

At almost the same time, another significant development unfolded, and that was the establishment of **Education Centres** in several areas of the province. This project anticipated a roll-out of mobile libraries from these Education Centres, 12 District Education Centres were established to accommodate mobile library services as well.
The District Education Centres serve as nodes or hubs for school clusters that will be serviced by the mobile libraries. **TAAA** understood this state of readiness and pledged to donate mobile libraries for all the 12 District Education Centres, thus ensuring that each education district owns a mobile library. Nine additional mobile libraries have been received by **ELITS**.

An extra Mobile library affectionately named by **Mr. Hasinuma** as ‘**Lobola**’ will also be received late in 2007 as a standby incase one of the operational mobile libraries is in for service;

At provincial ‘**Imbizo**’s the **MEC for Education** requires that a mobile library be exhibited as an exposé of some of the departmental projects. Lobola will be used for this.
2. **Goal**
   - To support curriculum delivery and promote the philosophy of reading for knowledge and pleasure.

3. **Objectives**
   - To improve provincial **literacy levels** in response to the **Systemic Evaluation Reports of 2001 and 2004**
   - To **promote the use of libraries** as important sources of information particularly in rural schools and in those schools that have not yet benefited form the **School Library Development Project (SLDP)**
• To provide **relevant information resources** that support curriculum delivery – ECD, GET, FET, ABET

• To offer resources which support the relevant **priority subjects** such as HIV/AIDS, ICT, Career Guidance, Nutrition, etc and promoting the Whole School Information Literacy philosophy

• To **orientate teachers and learners** in the use of libraries, particularly those that do not have central libraries yet.

• To promote, through the attainment of Information literacy skills, the ability to collect, analyse, organise and **critically evaluate information** from a variety of multi-media resources, such as print, non-print and electronic sources

• To **reach learners through their well-resourced teachers** by offering a regular, timetabled mobile library service.
**CONNECTIONS**

**EDUCATION CENTRES**

**LIBRARY**

Supports functions:
- Policy implementation (School Library, Reading, Inclusive Education, ICT,
- Workshops
- Block loans
- Educational research
- Displays
- ACE support
- Reading & other educational activities

**MOBILE LIBRARY**

Books, videos, CDs, CD-Roms, Posters & charts, computer software, etc.
Transparencies, Audio cassettes, Journals, periodicals…… on wheels

**MOBILE**

**SCHOOLS**

* Teachers integrate resource use in curriculum delivery
* Learners are informed and enthusiastic readers
LINE FUNCTION CONNECTIONS

EDUCATION CENTRES

Education Centre Library
MOBILE LIBRARIES

School Principal
(as Responsibility manager)

• Teachers integrate resources into teaching and learning for effective curriculum delivery (Information Skills)
• Learners become informed enthusiastic readers (literate learners).

OUTCOMES

• Good governance
• Improved literacy levels
• Information literate teachers and learners.
• Improved grade 12 results

RESOURCES IN THE MOBILE LIBRARY
Books, videos, CD’s, CD-Roms, posters, charts, globes, maps, journals etc.
4. RATIONALE FOR THE FORMATION OF CLUSTERS

It is a well-known fact that developing countries, with a few exceptions are poor, and that the most chronic problem faced by libraries in developing countries is a constant shortage of funds (Bonazza 1986). South Africa is a young democracy that has put in place a constitution that propagates numerous rights. The most significant one’s are those that support the right to basic education, and access to information. Information is however not readily available in most schools, this is because school libraries are at different stages of development due to lack of funding. School libraries in KwaZulu-Natal are suffering a similar fate, thus in order to offer schools continued support a strategy that was to focus on education delivery at the level of school clusters was conceived. Schools were grouped together for mutual benefit, and this strategy would build on, and consolidate a number of existing synergistic initiatives.
1.1. Background

1.2. The clustering concept.

This strategy was aimed at supporting schools in rural areas in order to develop capacity, and offer access to services and resources made available through the Provincial Department of Education, other service providers, and non-government organizations (NGO’s). The schools in rural areas would be transformed into self-reliant, and effective learning institutions, and this support was in the context of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture’s (KZNDECE) policies and strategies (KwaZulu-Natal 2000 and 2003a)
The reasons for clustering were:

- To develop the capacity of school cluster communities to effectively manage and support education delivery in member schools. Departmental structures lack capacity to provide effective and continuous support to the Provinces far-flung and in accessible rural schools.

- Some rural schools lack organizational capacity, thus making it difficult to access resources.
• The lack of resources makes it necessary to share a range of educational materials.
• The isolated and often inaccessible position of rural schools make it necessary to maximize resources by clustering schools.
• To set up support networks in clusters of schools to enable educators to cope with the great pressure of the demands of curriculum 2005.
• More community involvement in schools could alleviate the security risks in schools, in terms of vandalism and lack of safety for educators and learners. (KwaZulu-Natal…1999)
• The rationale for clustering is in line with the KZNDEC’s strategic goals which are:
  • Providing learners with quality education
• Transforming the department into a high performance organization that focuses on results and quality
• Promoting opportunities for effective leadership and management development at district level
• Providing and utilizing resources to achieve redress and equity
• Promoting the advancement of women
• Developing school governing bodies into effective support structures
• Addressing and counteracting HIV/AIDS threats
• Promoting further education and training
• Promoting adult basic education and training (KwaZulu-Natal 2003a)
The cluster concept is also in line with the Government’s Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) the vision of which is to:
Attain socially cohesive and stable rural communities with viable institutions, sustainable economies and universal access to social amenities able to attract and retain skilled and knowledgeable people, who are equipped to contribute to growth and development (ISRDS. 2000:3)

Another project that gave rise to the cluster concept was the grouping of schools in order to distribute to a network of cluster schools in different areas of KwaZulu-Natal and this was initiated through the ‘Resources and Information Network’ (RAIN), a project conceived as a distribution network to reach all schools in KwaZulu-Natal. (RAIN 2004 p11)
Other cluster initiatives were developed by the District Development Support Project (DDSP) later known as the Mthonjeni Project, and the Education Library Information and Technology Services Directorate (ELITS) around resource centres involving mobile libraries.

This means that the school cluster communities evolved through different interventions, assuming different paces of development, with different levels of needs, and differing guiding principles. In essence all cluster communities will not be the same. Awareness of school clustering as a concept and practice and their preparedness to embark on clustering is likely to differ from one area to the next, and thus the dissimilarities in the formation and evolution of clusters can be expected.
The most recent cluster are the MIET clusters around Education centres. For the Mobile library project it is not necessary to establish the clusters. The project will thus inherit the clusters around Education centres.

The cluster may however be changed slightly for the mobile library because factors like terrain; distances, road conditions; may require that the route be determined to factor in the above mentioned issues.
If in the process of affirming the mobile library cluster it happens that some cluster schools due to terrain, distances or road conditions may not be reached they will automatically be resourced through the SLD project (school library development).

Each mobile library cluster therefore will be determined by the district, subject to confirmation by the service provider who will generate a map for the route (that is in the pipeline).

- Information on existing cluster
- See MIET List
- Mobile library cluster committees (must be formed by each district).
5. **What will cluster schools benefit from a Mobile Library service**

Once the clusters are formed or their existence confirmed then the following should happen.

- Orientate schools to the service of the mobile libraries.
- Resource selection. (The cluster schools need to participate in this exercise).
- Use of resources to support the curriculum.
- Reading programmes.
- Time tabled visits to schools.
- Block loans to cluster schools.
- Teacher support material.
- ICT support
6. **Lending procedures**

The circulation of mobile resources should be inline with standard library lending procedures. Depending on the individual needs of the school, two types of lending procedures could be followed viz:

- Loan to individual users
- Or block loans to a school

- **Responsibilities** (These could be determined at District level – However there should be guiding principles laid down by Head Office)
  - Principal
  - Teacher-Librarian
  - Educator(s)
  - Learner(s)
  - Parent(s)
If a new cluster is to be formed; consider the following:
• Baseline Study
• The formation of clusters must be in line with existing clusters, however other factors could be used to determine the mobile library route, for example:
• Access (no school or public library)
• Redress
• Isolation
• Matric intervention
• Special projects
• Amajuba Cluster
• Map
• Empangeni Cluster
• Map
• Ilembe Cluster
• Map
- Kokstad Cluster
- Map
- Mzinyathi Cluster
- Map
- Obonjeni Cluster
- Map
- Pinetown Cluster
- Map
- Portshepstone Cluster
- Map
- Umgungundlovu Cluster
- Map
- Umlazi Cluster
- Map
- Uthukela Cluster
- Map
- Vryheid Cluster
- Map
7. **Post Establishment**

7.1. The staff required are:

- Teacher Librarian
- 1 x Library Assistant
- 1 x Driver (Title: Mobile library operator: or mobile library support).

7.2. **Job descriptions**
8. **Management of the Mobile Library**

8.1. **Introduction**

Mobile libraries will be managed from the Education Centres. The Centre manager will oversee the entire project, but it is the Teacher-librarian, working closely with the Library Assistant who will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the mobile unit and will

- receive and execute requests for resources and services
- identify resources on request and package resources according to schools
- maintain a circulation register.
8.2. **Outreach to the clusters**

The **Library Assistant / or Teacher Librarian** will go out with the mobile library to render relevant administrative work and advise teachers on the services offered.

The **driver** will assist with **packaging, loading** and **off-loading** of loan materials, and will be responsible for the **general maintenance** of the mobile library vehicle.

It is important that ideally **one day be set** aside for stock control and general maintenance of the vehicle.
8.3 **Time Table**
- Receive requests
- Plan
- Package
- Dispatch

8.4 **School based activities**
- Preliminary meeting(s)
- Planned activities (Reading, Readathon etc).
- Block loans
- Book/resource selection
- Reading activities
9. Monitoring and evaluation

- All subject advisors (not only ELITS Advisors) must support the project closely. They must participate in the selection of resources and integrated use of those resources in teaching and learning, and as such, must regularly monitor and evaluate the project.

- ELITS advisors must ensure the relevance of stock, that reading programmes are in place and that there is sustained collaboration with relevant Languages Learning Area coordinators.

- ELITS advisors, working with the Centre Teacher-librarian, must supply the District Manager and ELITS Head Office with all the relevant statistical data on a monthly basis, i.e.
• Number of cluster schools
• Accurate school information
• Number and data of resources borrowed and returned
• Losses and damages incurred
• Subject or learning areas requiring more stock.

This information is to be accompanied by a summative report, using a recommended template. (This must form part of the “Mobile Library Guidelines”).
Advocacy

- Target group (Who)
- How (Strategies)
- Sustenance (How)
Training

• Core programme(s) (There should be standard training programmes).

**NB** Mobile libraries could be factored into one ACE Module.

• Onsite training

• Principals (involvement)
Management of Operations

- School based resources (Who?)
- Resourcing
  - Idea of ELITS depots to be explored).
Trouble shooting manual

(This needs to be developed, and form part of the ‘Mobile Library Guidelines’).
ICT (PALS)
(To be or not to be??).
HANDOVER FUNCTION

(Please invite me😊)
## MOBILE LIBRARIES IN KZN DoE: ALLOCATION LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bus Received</th>
<th>Allocated To</th>
<th>Bus Info</th>
<th>Reg. No.</th>
<th>Make/Engine No.</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three buses (existing service)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbazwana bus</td>
<td>Mbazwana</td>
<td>No p/card liaise transport</td>
<td>KZN 65903</td>
<td>Mitsubishi 4D33D47755</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bus needs p/card etc. Parked Ulundi Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inanda</td>
<td>Inanda</td>
<td>Operational</td>
<td>KZN 65812</td>
<td>Mitsubishi 4D32685522</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inanda bus – stationed Dokkies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex-Ulundi</td>
<td>Abaqulusi</td>
<td>No p/card, liaise transport</td>
<td>KZN 65904</td>
<td>Isuzu WHR55E7600960</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ex Mahlabathini bus Bus needs p/card etc. Parked Ulundi Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four buses – June 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006(1)</td>
<td>Ukhahlamba</td>
<td>Not starting has battery</td>
<td>KZN 66356</td>
<td>Isuzu NPR66L-7106495</td>
<td>L 637cm W 205cm H 272cm</td>
<td>Parked Dokkies Branded and ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 (2)</td>
<td>Umlazi</td>
<td></td>
<td>KZN 66353</td>
<td>Isuzu NKR66E-7123159</td>
<td>L 500cm W 176cm H 250cm</td>
<td>Bus was stolen. New one to be ordered 2008/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 (3)</td>
<td>Pungashe</td>
<td>Battery + starts. Cannot lock driver door</td>
<td>KZN 66355</td>
<td>Mitsubishi FE305B480971</td>
<td>L 617cm W 195cm H 269 cm</td>
<td>Parked Dokkies Branded and ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 (4)</td>
<td>Tugela Ferry</td>
<td>All OK</td>
<td>KZN 66354</td>
<td>Isuzu BL38-710047</td>
<td>L 660 cm W 220cm H 275cm</td>
<td>Parked Dokkies Branded and ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three buses – August 2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 (5)</td>
<td>Umgungundlovu</td>
<td>STOLEN</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mitsubishi (1993) FE317BN-490419</td>
<td>L 620cm W 199cm H 288cm</td>
<td>Bus was stolen New bus ordered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 (6)</td>
<td>Majuba</td>
<td>Has battery, not starting</td>
<td>No KZN</td>
<td>Toyota BU1020104598</td>
<td>L 498cm W 173cm H 249cm</td>
<td>Parked Dokkies, Need branding, KZN nr. plates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 (7)</td>
<td>Maphumulo</td>
<td>Has battery, not starting</td>
<td>No KZN</td>
<td>HINO FD3WHA-10032</td>
<td>L 750cm W 230cm H 324cm</td>
<td>Parked Dokkies, need branding, KZN nr. Plates.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NB: FIGHT WITH KHANYI AND MARIANA**