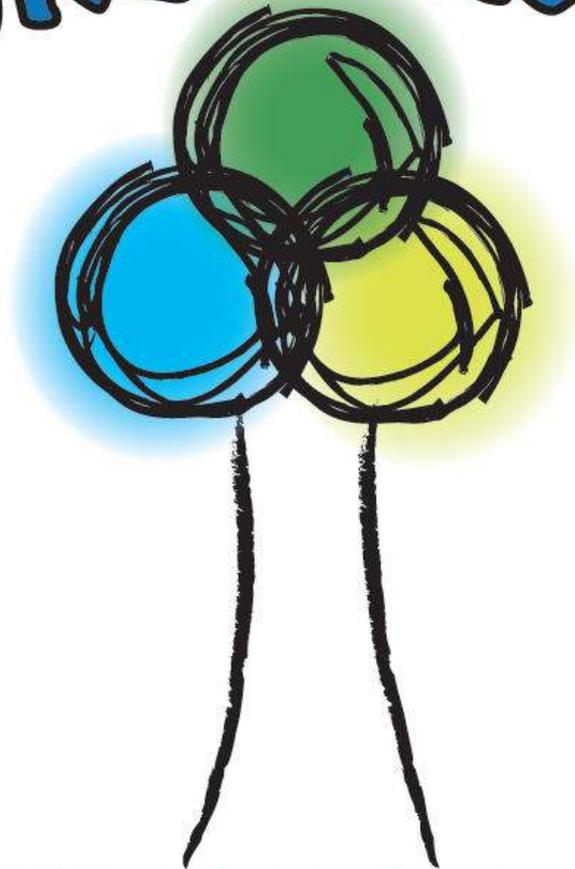


UKUFUNDA



Unlocking knowledge

Presented by:

Grethe van Zyl (Lamprecht) | 082-941-0312 | g_lamprecht@yahoo.com

Yolande Havinga | 084-573-6334 | yolande.havinga@hsrandburg.co.za

"We must invest in skills development for teachers" (President J. Zuma – August 2009)

Introduction

The aim of the education system is not only to provide academic data to learners but to produce well-rounded junior *citizens* who know what it means to be South African **citizens**. The core of achieving this is by seeing **the learner as a holistic being** consisting of **emotional-, physical and social well-being**.

UkuFunda is a solutions driven organisation that focuses on holistic learner development by **EMPOWERING EDUCATORS and schools across the country with *dedicated support, current knowledge, useful tools and required skills*** which addresses a broad spectrum of challenges that educators face on a daily basis.

UkuFunda is a *web-based* and *CD-based* program with phone support *designed for teachers by teachers, deployable to schools with or without internet access*.

The challenge facing the South African educational system

In previous years the Department of Education had a support system where they had certain professionals working and assisting educators and learners in schools. Some schools were even privileged enough to have an educational psychologist on the staff.

After the establishment of democracy in our country this service was minimised because it was thought that educators were equipped to handle the various situations. A few years later Inclusive education was implemented which meant that students with barriers to learning were to be accommodated in the mainstream classroom. Unfortunately **educators did not have the practical knowledge to successfully include all learners in the classroom**.



Inclusive education resulted in classrooms with more learners and educators with high levels of frustration.

A further challenge in the education system can be linked to the complexity of our way of living. **Parents are battling to make ends meet in the current economic climate and the community is struggling with socio-economic issues like unemployment, crime, drug- and alcohol abuse** to name a few. It is in this climate mentioned above that the learner is expected to create a space where he/she can function.

It is thus imperative that **educators and the Department of Education acknowledge** all the **different factors which influence learners and have a direct impact on their functioning** and not just focus on academic related barriers. It is important to note that, **although facing these challenges with learners daily, the majority of educators don't have any formal training to handle these types of situations.** This not only leads to frustration amongst the educators, but also limits learner support and -development.

***UkuFunda** can minimise daily frustration and maximise educator and learner support and –development in order to create well rounded citizens and affect the future of the South African economy directly.*

UKUFUNDA – The Product

At **UkuFunda** we understand the importance of viewing learners holistically and that **academic-, emotional- and socio-economic factors cannot be viewed in isolation.**

UkuFunda is divided into three key components:

- **Academic,**
- **Emotional well-being** and
- **Socio-Economic** factors.

In every component the educator is assisted with step by step instructions to handle various situations.

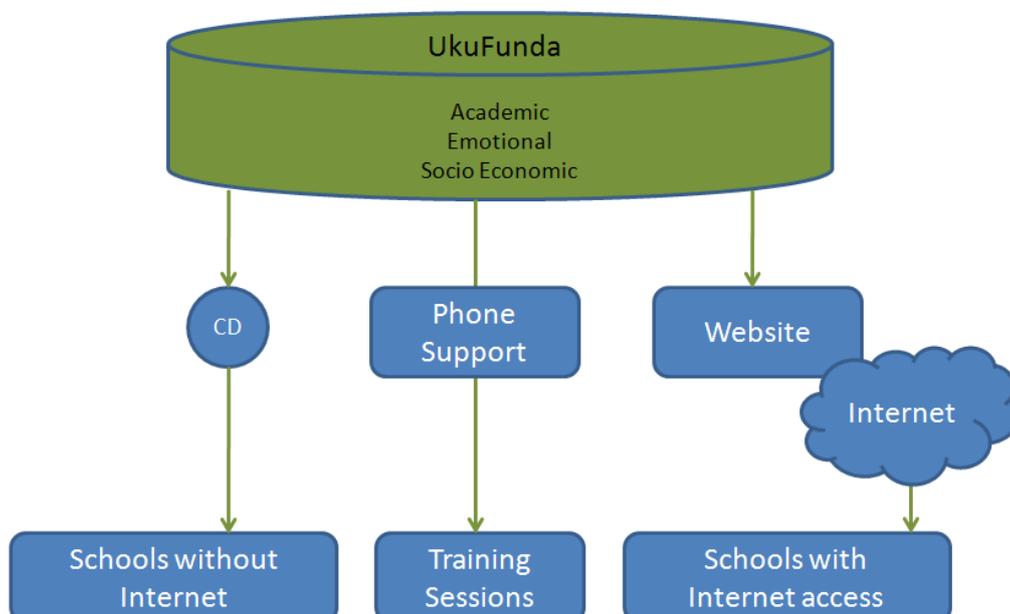


Examples include:

- subject choice for grade 10,
- inclusive education in the classroom,
- trauma or welfare situations.

The **support structures** and **developmental tools** used in **UkuFunda** have been **tried and tested** in the UkuFunda team's own school for the past few years as well as other schools in the vicinity. **Educators from as far as Polokwane have also visited this centre to help establish their own support centres** in their schools. The **UkuFunda** team have handled **telephonic support calls from schools all over the country.**

The demand for support and intensity of challenges at schools reached such proportions that the team of **UkuFunda** decided to create a company. **UkuFunda** provided the opportunity to have access to a support system for schools that will enable educators to develop learners to their full potential and can be deployed as follows:



UkuFunda is computer based software that can be accessed through CD-ROM or via the internet.

The program is user friendly and solution based and truly compliments the goals set out by the Department of Education for the **SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT TEAM** and **SCHOOL ASSESSMENT TEAM**.

Educators can log on to the system and access guidelines and supportive structures in order to handle various challenges. If the educator is unable to find a solution to his/her specific problem the **UkuFunda helpline can be called** for further assistance by the relevant **UkuFunda** specialist.

UkuFunda provides **basic training where educators will learn how to use the system** as well as **quarterly contact sessions in every participating province**, where training on a specific topic is given. Through this system the educator will be enabled to handle the challenges posed to them daily and be offered the opportunity to develop skills to assist them further. The system is **specifically developed to be extremely easy to use** so that anybody at the school with access to a computer will be able to find guidelines and support.

The UkuFunda team

In 2009 four dedicated educational professionals saw the need to share the knowledge that they had developed over the years with other educators and so **UkuFunda** was born. The name is derived from the Zulu word and literally translates to "**to learn**". The team thought this name to be appropriate since education is a **continuous process of lifelong learning to both educators and learners**.

The **UkuFunda** team consists out of four **educational professionals** that have worked together for 4 years at Hoërskool Randburg, Johannesburg Gauteng:



- **Erika Hendriks** is the **Educational Psychologist** responsible for developing the data related to **emotional challenges** that a learner might face.
- **Leonie van Straaten** has been a **social worker for almost 40 years** and specialises in **welfare situations** in the school environment.
- **Yolande Havinga** is a **educator with social work background** and has been **Academic Head** at Hoërskool Randburg for the past few years.
- **Grethe Lamprecht-van Zyl specialises** in **LSEN** (Learners with special education needs) and has her own centre for additional learning support which has been successfully operational for the past 6 years.

Grethe and Yolande are responsible for the academic component of UkuFunda and focuses on basic academic help to practical suggestions for the implementation of Inclusive Education in the classroom. Ericka focuses on the emotional challenges and Leoni on the social challenges which learners bring to educators on a daily basis. The results and changes in both the educators stress levels and the learners developments have been received exceptionally well by educators, schools and parents across Gauteng!

The Solution

As per the Request for proposal sent out in the Beeld, 30 November 2009, **UkuFunda** will be able to address the following scenarios directly or indirectly:

- ✓ Development of the Educator
- ✓ Class Sizes
- ✓ Management Capacity
- ✓ Specialising of Values for the Educator
- ✓ Schools Geographic Locations
- ✓ Schools Infrastructure
- ✓ Children on Welfare
- ✓ Children who have clashed with the law



- ✓ Education in Jails
- ✓ Inclusive Education

Conclusion

The development and improvement of the education system of South Africa is vitally important to the development of improvement of our country. **UkuFunda will focus on the development of our educators and will be able to induce vast and rapid improvement in education and reach the maximum of learners.** Empowered educators will lead to an empowered youth and thus an empowered South Africa.

Should you have any further questions you are welcome to contact us directly. The UkuFunda team request the opportunity to present this proposal with more detail to the committee.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

Old President Nelson Mandela

