Improving Gender Attitudes, Transition and Education Outcomes (IGATE-T) Case Studies: Changing Learning

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IGATE-T CASE STUDIES: CHANGING LEARNING

The IGATE-T Teacher Professional Development (TPD) Programme, a school-based whole-school development initiative to improve the teaching and learning of Foundation Literacy and Numeracy (FLAN), has just began its third year of work in primary schools and secondary schools. In secondary schools the TPD Programme is known as the termly ‘Sprint’—referring to lean-impact and agile working methods. The TPD Programme offers structured learning activities across all ages, to address the problem of students ‘progressing’ through years of schooling without the foundational literacy and numeracy skills needed to participate fully in learning.

The IGATE Programme is a school-led initiative using IGATE modules that include FLAN activities. Teachers are supported in-school by professional development resources guiding classroom-learning activities, by two teachers working together on the Programme, and by the school head. They are supported beyond the school by termly cluster meetings or workshops, where they share experiences between schools—facilitated by project staff.

The theory of change (ToC) for this Programme assumes that teacher development activities, within school and beyond school, will enable teachers to improve the learning activities they use in their classroom practice. Improved teaching quality will lead to improvements in students’ learning of numeracy and literacy skills, reflected in learning outcomes. The mid-line evaluation of the Programme (May 2019) indicated that the training of teachers was performing well and that there were marked improvements in teaching quality, making teaching more engaging and effective and, that learners found teachers more friendly and approachable. Thus, the first two elements of the ToC had been established, but that at that time had not led to the meeting of the outcome targets for literacy and numeracy improvements. The fragile situation in Zimbabwe has caused ongoing disruption in schools and made the achievement of such targets very difficult.

The case studies presented here provide additional qualitative and quantitative evidence of improvements in learning from the first term of 2020. Furthermore, they show how these improvements are brought about. In particular, they link the other elements of the ToC (TPD and classroom practice) to the improvement of learning. As might be expected the way these links are manifest in each school are different, something that is lost in the quantitative experimental design of the external evaluation.

These studies illustrate the range of ways schools have worked with the Programme to improve the learning of their students:

- through the role of the head teacher;
- the roles of the Numeracy and Literacy Lead teachers that are established in schools;
- how the Cluster Resource Teacher (CRT) who supports several schools can change as a teacher and help other teachers;
- strategies for extending the literacy and numeracy approach to all class grades in the school (including the use of after-school sessions);
- a team approach to staff development.

In this collection, eight case studies are presented to cover both primary and secondary schools.
PRIMARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY 1: DUKWE PRIMARY SCHOOL - EVERY TEACHER GETS THE CHANCE TO BE SCHOOL TEAM LEADER!

Introduction
This case study sets out the vision of the School Head of Dukwe primary school in promoting, and participating in, Teacher Professional Development (TPD), and his realisation of that vision in improving foundational literacy and numeracy learning outcomes. This improvement is based on a dynamic school team approach focussed on classroom learning.

Context
Dukwe primary school is a rural Government school in Mangwe District, about 2 hours (mainly off road) from the District town of Plumtree. In 2019, it had an enrolment of 383 learners – 206 girls and 177 boys – from Early Childhood Development Classes to Grade 7. Despite the poverty of the surrounding community and lack of school infrastructure, it is attractive, well maintained and its colourful classrooms abound with locally made, or found, resources, posters and charts.

The School Head, Mr Khumbulani Ncube, was appointed to this role in May 2013. Most teachers have been at the school for considerably longer. There are two TPD Leads, Ms Urileng Maphosa for Literacy and Mr Interleave Ngwenya for Numeracy. Ms Majority Ngwenya is the Girls’ Leadership Mentor. Integral to this case study is the pivotal role of the school leader in improving student achievement. This has seen Grade 7 examination pass rates rise almost double from 48% in 2017 to 79% in 2019.

Synopsis
The main thrust of this case study is on teacher learning and development that is focused on practice. This learning and development is based on: classroom walks; team co-operation and improved teaching. The practice focus of the teacher learning and development is supported by the way the modules are used and the use of local resources in the classroom. The impact of this work is seen in improved learning demonstrated by the national Grade 7 examination results, published by the Government.

Key Features
Classroom-driven Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLAN) TPD
From the outset, the school embraced the idea that the classroom activities drove the TPD programme using the FLAN modules.

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1 The research team would like to extend their thanks and appreciation to the School Head, teachers and learners of Dukwe primary school.
2 ‘The Impact of Leadership on Student Outcomes: An Analysis of the Differential Effects of Leadership Types’, Viviane M. J. Robinson, Claire A. Lloyd and Kenneth J. Rowe, Educational Administration Quarterly, 2008 44: 5 , 635-674 found that School Leaders promoting and participating in teacher learning and development has the largest effect size on student achievement (double that of ‘establishing goals and expectations’ or ‘planning, co-ordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum’).
Mr Ncube, the Head, talks of returning to the school after participating in the first FLAN workshop with the TPD Leads: ‘When we [came back ... I said] don’t present this thing to staff members only, but take a class – do the practical thing with the kids ... so that we see how to tackle this thing.’

The Literacy TPD Lead shows the efficacy of this: ‘I started to try some ideas and activities and then I saw that it works in my class and so I liked to do it. That’s when I started to change my attitude, because it helped me a lot.’

The Head underlines this: ‘And we have games that we do when we are teaching these children. We discover that, once you teach a child a certain concept with a game, the child does not forget that game – he does not forget the concept, never.’

**Constant relevance of modules**
Coupled with this classroom-practice focus, there was a growing realisation that the Modules were not a conventional teacher-training course. Instead, the classroom activities in the Modules were seen as a resource bank of activities to be used according to the needs of learners at any time a teacher is teaching.

Mr Ncube explains:
At the beginning, we thought maybe after doing Module 1 going to Module 2, we are done with Module 1. But then we discovered that, when we are in Module 3, after doing something, we had to go back to Module 1, because there are some concepts ... may be where the child might have missed something there. Therefore, we had to constantly refer to those Modules.

The Modules are seen to complement the textbooks, as the Head says: ‘We discovered that whatever is there from the textbooks – something was left out from the textbooks – but, with the Modules, they were tackling everything starting from simple to complex.’

Mr Ncube sets out the impact on learning: ‘We write the monthly tests, then make a comparison of the previous performance to those particular grades, particularly when it comes to Numeracy and Literacy. Then we are seeing a great improvement in pupils’ performances.’

**Classroom learning walks**
All teachers do classroom learning walks, including observing lessons of other teachers and those of the School Head. The purpose is for different teachers to see FLAN activities in other classes to stimulate reflection and discussion between peers and as a school team.

The School Head says: ‘So it went up to the extent when learning walks were introduced. ... We are not saying the Head is the Team Leader. ... It is for all the teachers. We are interchanging who is Team Leader and who does the learning walks’. Every week a different teacher in rotation is Team Leader.

A register of the learning walks is kept – see sample in Figure 2 - showing 7 observing teachers as ‘Team Leader’. The first column (partially shown) records the date of the lesson. In the second column, the name of the facilitator (teacher observed) is given, along with the subject, the
topic, the module activity and the grade of the class. The third column gives, the name of the Team Leader – on 18th February 2020, this was Mr Interleave Ngwenya, the TPD Lead for Numeracy. Also shown is the School Head’s stamp to evidence his discussion and review with the Team Leader. In the final column, comments are made on the children’s learning, along with Module activities that will support their further learning.

The School Head continues: ‘Now, after commenting as staff members, we sit down [together] and evaluate … the outcome of the learners and we discover that some of the learners … miss some points.’ This impacts on learning, as Mr Ncube goes on to explain: ‘… as staff members, we then agree to go back to the Modules and refer to where the missed concepts are found. Then we advise each other to go and teach these particular concepts.’

Team co-operation and teaching
Running through the above account, and throughout the visit, each teacher makes constant reference to the school team.

The Head describes why: ‘FLAN is not for the Head or for the Deputy, but FLAN Is for all the teachers. When we discuss […] these things, each and every teacher puts the point and whatever point is put by the teacher we take [up] that point.’ The Numeracy TPD Lead reinforces this: ‘Even us as teachers, we are sharing those experiences and we get a lot from the way [an]other teacher does it.’

This approach has a direct impact on learning. The School Head explains: ‘There is no-one, who is 100% perfect. So that other percentage that is left is with [the teacher] to make it happen. That is why we are doing this together. If a teacher is struggling with teaching a concept, she may invite another teacher in as a specialist for that concept. That teacher may teach it to different classes. Other teachers will be other specialists.’

Resource-rich classrooms
This level of classroom activities requires many learning resources, and it is noticeable that classrooms are full of learning resources, in quantities for all learners to use.

Mr Ncube says:
As the Head of the School, I [get] comments from the teachers who are constantly asking me to provide learning materials. … [The School Development Committee] know this thing called FLAN. When we talk about the learning materials for FLAN, they are forthcoming … because they have seen that our pass rates are increasing – not only with Grade 7, but for Grade 1.

In her classroom, the Mentor points out: ‘This is our library corner – so this corner is for the kids. Each and every media which we use in teaching we put it to this corner, so that each and every child, during their spare time, can have access [to] … learning media.’

Ms Majority Ngwenya goes on to explain the impact on learning: ‘During my absence, they [the learners] use this media for teaching peers – yes, peer teaching. Even if I am not around, learning takes place. And they learn better when I am not there, when they share ideas.’
Learning Outcomes

Public examination results

The School Head proudly points to the Grade 7 results on his wall as testimony to how learners are benefitting. These results are reproduced in Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No of boys</th>
<th>No of passes</th>
<th>% Pass boys</th>
<th>No of girls</th>
<th>No of passes</th>
<th>% Pass girls</th>
<th>Total cand.</th>
<th>Overall pass%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>48.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>71.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>79.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What Next

In 2020 the Programme introduced the Diagnostic Tool, another way to find out if all teachers in the school have been using the Module activities with their classes effectively.

Mr Ncube explains: ‘The learners did the test, and we sat down as staff members and had an evaluation together … We discovered our learners [had] problems with letter sounds. We agreed that we go back to all classes. If Grade 7 has a problem, we assume all learners may have this problem, and so we will all do this with our learners.’

Figure 4: Diagnostic tool findings

The Head highlights new discoveries that were made in Numeracy:

From certain tests, we discovered that our learners have problems with … fractions. … The TPD Numeracy Lead wrote the comments … “So, you see to do Module 6 Unit 1, 2 and 3”. … We are [also] saying these kids need something in Module 2. Then we agree as staff members to talk to the teacher and advise him to go back to that module.

Dukwe primary school was one of 27 prize winners in the IGATE-T 2019 FLAN Learning Challenge.

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3 The Diagnostic Tool is an assessment of learners’ current progress in literacy and numeracy, which signposts teachers to the Module activities which will help the learners to take their next learning step.
PRIMARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY 2: MAKUBU PRIMARY SCHOOL - CHANGING TEACHING, CHANGING LEARNING!

Introduction
This case study is of the experiences of the Cluster Resource Teacher (CRT), Mr Zibusiso Sibanda, who teaches at Makubu primary school. It tells of his growth as a teacher and that of his school through leadership of various kinds. Fundamentally, his is a very hands-on approach; he gains his expertise by doing new activities with his class and then supports other teachers to do them in their classes.

Context
Makubu primary school is a medium-sized rural Government school in Mangwe District, about 110 kilometres (mainly off-road) from the District town of Plumtree. In 2020, it had an enrolment of 435 learners – 231 girls and 204 boys – from Early Childhood Development Classes to Grade 7. Classrooms are colourful, with many available classroom resources made by teachers.

Mr Zibusiso Sibanda is a longstanding staff member and the Deputy School Head, Ms Judy Madzikanda, has just started her second term at the school. There are two Teacher Professional Development (TPD) Leads, Ms Buhle Ndholvu for Literacy and Ms Primrose Moyo for Numeracy. As a CRT, Mr Sibanda has a leadership role in the Programme, supporting TPD leads in several schools through termly cluster meetings.

Grade 7 examination pass rates at Makubu school have increased from 29% in 2017 to 48% in 2019.

Synopsis
The main thrust of this case study is teacher learning and development that is focused on practice. It involves a CRT’s individual professional journey of changing understandings of teaching and learning, practising those changes, and embedding in daily teaching life. Building on that classroom practice comes collaboration with the TPD Leads in the school, extending reach to upper grade students, and going on to draw in more teachers. The impact of this work is seen in improved learning demonstrated by the national Grade 7 examination results, administered by the Government, reinforced by the views of the Education Inspector. The CRT, with Programme support, now plans to extend his role by visiting other schools in his cluster to spread good FLAN practices.

Key Features
‘Changing the way, I think about teaching’
Mr Sibanda recalls four ideas that have changed the way he thinks about teaching (questions, peer assessment, pair work and views of learning):

‘As a teacher, you have to be aware of the questions that you ask. ... I discovered that ... teachers ... myself included, [we] used to ask questions which don’t help learners – like those chorus questions. So, we said no, why not try to ask individual questions [that make learners think]. I have tried to do that, and it is really working...

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4 The Cluster Resource Teacher is appointed by the Government District Education Office to take a leading role to promote teaching and learning across a local cluster of Government primary schools; in this case the 6 schools of the Bulu cluster.
5 The research team would like to extend their thanks and appreciation to the Deputy School Head, the CRT, teachers and learners of Makubu primary school.
Pair work is very important. Sometimes, as teachers, we ... give pupils individual work and then we term that ‘pair work’ – [but we] mustn’t; if [we] are giving pupils pair work [we] must be sure that really this is pair work.’

Mr Sibanda continues: ‘Assessment, that is very important ... So, we discovered that yes, pupils, they can actually assess each other’s work ... In group work, they are given a task – when they are working together you discover that ...[a] learner will correct, will share with another. Then you, as a teacher, will just be observing, noting and noticing any difficulties so that you can include it in your next lesson.’

This has impacted on his views on learning: ‘... it is very important to let your learners do the work, let them do it, stop talking. The [less] you talk the better. Let your pupils do the learning, whilst the teacher is just facilitating.’

‘Changing what is happening in my classroom’
These understandings are clearly grounded in practice. Mr Sibanda does not just want to talk in the School Head’s office. Instead, he wants to show his classroom, his Grade 3 learners, and how they are working together. There are clear classroom routines: ‘The first thing that we usually do. I start with the sounds. I have my chart here on the wall. We pronounce the letter sounds – sounds of letters.’

The learners do this, clearly familiar with the process.

He continues: ‘We move on to the 2-letter [sounds], letters may be ‘a’ and ‘r’. Then those sounds, they also do it. I ... have them in front of my [chalk]board (Figure 5). I have those charts, so that they are easily available.’

Whilst he was out of the class, the learners were clearly busy. Mr Sibanda rejoined the class saying: ‘Currently, they are now discussing. I got it also from the Module. They are making words. They are making words from the cards.’ Excited he continues, and wants to illustrate how the learners do a numeracy activity. He says to the learners: ‘I want you to make as many [number sentences as you can] ...You throw the dice, record your first throw, throw the dice again, [record] your second throw, then you have addition sums and then your subtraction sums. Let’s work in groups of 4.’

When Mr Sibanda asks the learners to get counters, every other child jumps up, runs to the class storeroom and returns with an armful of pebbles. In 20 seconds, every group has an abundance of counters, and starts doing the activity, recording the sums in their workbooks (Figure 6). As a CRT, he is clear on the importance of such games for learning: ‘They really enjoyed the games. They sometimes play the games when I’m not around.’
‘Being part of my daily teaching life’
The activities described above, and this way of teaching, have become embedded in Mr Sibanda’s daily working life.

He sees the Modules as augmenting the textbooks, which he exemplifies: ‘In our syllabuses, especially the textbooks that we are using, they do not cover much about linking addition and subtraction. It is in our Modules. So, when we want to do an activity, which links addition and subtraction appropriately, we usually take it from the Module.’

This link to the textbooks flows into lesson planning. Thumbing through a Module, Mr Sibanda continues:
What I have discovered is that almost every day, almost every time ... you find that, when we plan, we do our scheming, when we are breaking our syllabus into simpler smaller parts, we discover that in a single [school] term, we will be concentrating on a [topic]. I will pick a numeracy [example]. You find that maybe the teacher is concentrating on addition and subtraction. So, we find out we have activities [in the Modules] that deal with addition and subtraction.

He concludes: ‘So since now we have six Modules, it is almost to me impossible not to have a lesson, a FLAN lesson, on a daily basis.’

Collaborating with TPD Leads and spreading to upper grades
Whilst developing his own practice, the CRT has collaborated with the two TPD Leads to adopt a similar approach of trying out the activities themselves with their learners to lead by example.

The Numeracy TPD Lead, a Grade 6 teacher, recalls:
For example, in my class, the teaching through games, it motivated my learners. I could see that there was now a great change. Most learners ... now come to school every day. So, we would give such testimonies, so other teachers would say - so you mean to tell me, you no longer have absenteeism in your class. I would say yes, go and try that.

The Literacy TPD Lead, a Grade 1 teacher, recounts one way in which she uses the Module activities in remedial classes: ‘For example, I was teaching reading, I select the learners that did not do well. Then, for 15 to 20 minutes, I help those with those problems. If they failed to read, for example, the words with sound ‘p’, I remain with them and assist them [using the Modules].’

Ms Moyo talks more about her Grade 6 learners: ‘I always use the FLAN activities almost every day’. Talking to a group of 7 of her learners, this is confirmed. The learners cite ‘Bingo’, ‘Add to the Sentence’ and ‘Finish the Sentence’ as favourite games. When asked to play ‘Add the Sentence’, they readily do so and Figure 3 shows the writing of each child, as the sentence grows and grows. Ms Moyo is clear of the impact on learning. For example, she says: ‘It improves pupil’s vocabulary.’
Drawing in more teachers
The new Deputy School Head, a person of influence in the school, has been inducted into FLAN and these ways of working, by the School Head, the CRT and TPD Leads. This same practice-based attitude is revealed. Ms Madzikanda explains:

‘At times you might be having the idea on what children should know, but you would not be having the idea on how you are going to make them know. Then, when using those Modules, there are exercises that are well explained.’

Results: improved learning outcomes
Every teacher interviewed talks about FLAN in the context of the Grade 7 results: increasing from 29% to 48% in the last 2 years (2017-19), as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 7 Grade 7 External Exam results
Ms Jester Gumpo, Education Inspector, wants to find out for herself by visiting Ms Moyo’s Grade 6 class. She comes back smiling and says:

I was really impressed by the performance of most of the kids in that class … I gave them a few mental numeracy problems in multiplication, division and addition. That was good. They took just a few seconds to give me the answers. Then, after that, I went on to just assess them on general knowledge, any other learning areas – the response was very good. Then I gave them an exercise on literacy. I gave them spellings … I gave them ten. Within three minutes, most kids had finished. Then I asked each of the kids to write sentences using those words.’

What Next
Mr Sibanda talks about his role:
Being a CRT teacher involves helping other teachers appreciate FLAN. I started with my school. As I was saying, I move around the classrooms … I sometimes borrow my own materials. Sometimes I prepare something and then I say to them, if you don’t mind, you can use my materials.

Beyond this … I worked with other teachers [in my cluster]. We have a group, a WhatsApp group. We formed that platform some time ago, where we share as a cluster what would be happening in our school – success stories; if we have any challenges, we share within the group. … Then I have also visited Nkedile, that is our nearest school. … I just wanted to hear how they are doing their work. Then they asked me … questions about the FLAN.’

The CRT expressed a desire for the future: ‘Maybe with time I will also move to other schools.’ Mr Sibanda sees this as an important opportunity to spread good FLAN practices across the schools in the Bulu cluster.
PRIMARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY 3: TSHANKE PRIMARY SCHOOL - ‘THEY CALL ME TEACHER FLAN!’

Introduction
This case study sets out the experiences of a new Deputy School Head at Tshanke Primary School following her introduction to the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLAN) Teacher Professional Development (TPD) Programme. It tells of how she is using the Programme to spearhead new initiatives across the school, which, in collaboration with the Cluster Resource Teacher and FLAN TPD Leads, is changing teaching and learning.

Context
Tshanke Primary School is a medium-sized rural Government school in Nkayi District, about 160 kilometres (mainly off-road) north of Bulawayo. In 2020, it had an enrolment of 447 learners – 207 girls and 240 boys – from Early Childhood Development Classes to Grade 7. In a catchment of poor rural communities, many children come on foot from more than 5 kilometres away without exercise books or pens.

Ms Pricellar Zengwe joined the school as Deputy School Head in the third term of 2019. The two TPD Leads were already appointed to their roles: Ms Silhe Sibanda, for Literacy, who teaches Grade 5, and Mr Phumelelani Nyoni, for Numeracy, who teaches Grade 6. They are supported by Ms Thobekile Gumede, an experienced Cluster Resource Teacher, who also teaches at the school.

Synopsis
The main thrust of this case study is on teacher learning and development that is focused on practice, through a whole school team approach to staff development and improved teaching. The practice focus of the teachers’ learning and development is supported by the strategies of starting the school week with dedicated FLAN lessons, infusing FLAN into English and Maths lessons throughout the week across all Grades and extending FLAN into lessons for other subjects. The impact of this work is seen through the emerging signs of improved learning in students’ work, which is monitored using the Diagnostic Tool.

Key Features
Seeing FLAN as way to achieve your goal
Ms Pricellar Zengwe joined the school with a clear vision and goal. A programme District workshop in the third term (November 2019) ignited the idea that FLAN could be a way to achieve her goal.

She explains this idea:

Right, as a teacher, before you come to a station - you have a child in mind. Otherwise you cannot do anything ... The goal we want [is] that the child has exit points, the child can pass, the child has transitional stage ... It was on 29 November, I think, somewhere

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1 The research team would like to extend their thanks and appreciation to the Deputy School Head, Cluster Resource Teacher, teachers and learners of Tshanke primary school.
2 The Cluster Resource Teacher (CRT) is appointed by the Government District Education Office to take a leading role to promote teaching and learning across a local cluster of Government primary schools; in this case the 4 schools of the HTDS cluster.
3 Two teachers in each primary school participating in the programme are identified as Teacher Professional Development (TPD) Leads – one in Literacy and one in Numeracy. Their role is to promote FLAN across the school, facilitate staff development sessions on FLAN and practise FLAN activities in their own classrooms.
4 The Diagnostic Tool is an assessment of learners’ current progress in literacy and numeracy, which signposts teachers to the Module activities which will help the learners to take their next learning step.
there, when we went for a workshop and we were told about the fundamental stages of literacy and numeracy in all grades ... [I] took FLAN as a way of achieving what we want to achieve.

This was welcomed news to Ms Thobekile Gumede, the CRT, who was already implementing FLAN with her learners and seeing changes in learners' behaviour in her class:

Because now, even when I'm not in class, I know that they will be doing something out of their own will, without me giving them instructions, do this, do that, do this, do that. The games, they can play the games outside, they can play the games indoors, they can read everywhere, there is learning.

Ms Pricellar Zengwe was enthused by these experiences: ‘Personally, I will be there for FLAN ... I want to see something happening with FLAN.’

Motivating teachers to become a school FLAN team

Back at school, the Deputy School Head (DSH) had to work out what to do. The CRT and Literacy and Numeracy TPD Leads were implementing in their classes, but other teachers, particularly those of the upper grades, were proving reluctant. But now the three FLAN implementers had a powerful ally in the DSH. Ms Pricellar Zengwe talked to the School Head:

‘It was then that we said as Admin and noticed that we should motivate by teamwork ... we just had a workshop room [a nominated classroom] with the ‘word workshop’ meaning business. But after school, so that we will be doing it relaxed, [we] make our charts. The one, who has a fine hand in writing, does most of the writing. Then the one, who have ideas, does most of the talking. Some can just talk ... but because they are there it will be happening. So, after that ... we bought stationery, it was just a little so that the workshop room goes on.’

Alongside the dedicated space is dedicated time, she continues: ‘We meet every Tuesday in the afternoon from 2 to 4 ... for flash backs, for report backs; everything which is problematic or advantages, difficulties, anything we discuss, that’s where we have the workshop. If it’s about making chart that day, we do so, and we will be discussing. If it is about another lesson, we do so.’

Another important aspect is showing relevance to upper grades. Ms Thobekile Gumede, the CRT, expands on the most recent staff development session: ‘And when looking at this last session we had on matching the, comparing ... the FLAN activities with the Grade 7 [examinations], it’s made every teacher welcome the FLAN activities in the classroom.’

Introducing learning walks and gallery walks

Both the Deputy School Head and Cluster Resource Teacher want to get into classrooms themselves. They therefore do classroom learning walks.

Ms Pricellar Zengwe expands: ‘I deroled from a Deputy Head ...to a monitor where I go through FLAN. When I go to classes, they know I no longer supervise them. Supervision is done by the Head, Mr Adams. ... Right, when it comes to learning walks, usually it’s just once a week or so ... but, for just a snap[shot], like 5 minutes or so, I can do it even almost every day.’
Teachers also do gallery walks prior to staff development sessions. She continues: ‘We have a gallery walk, that learning walk, for classrooms before we get to the workshop room. Then we identify which class doesn’t have enough to display or enough to teach ... Then we just say anyone who can write, anyone who can cut ... so that after the ... two hours’ time [on] Tuesday we have media for a certain class.’

Her enthusiasm is very visible in the school. The Deputy Head proudly says: ‘They call me Teacher FLAN!’

Creating dedicated time for FLAN and infusing throughout lessons
Some teachers were struggling to see how they could fit FLAN activities into already crowded timetables. The Deputy School Head has two clear strategies.

First is timetabling an extra hour of FLAN – 30 minutes of literacy and 30 minutes of numeracy - to start the school week on Monday mornings, as shown in the photo opposite.

Figure 2: FLAN timetable on classroom wall

She explains: ‘If we just introduce a new content and activity, we cannot make it within 30 minutes [of lesson time]. So, what should we do, let’s just say on Monday ... we have something new according to the scheme, so we should teach the FLAN way, as the Module says, so that the learners will understand what exactly we want from them ... You just have [to go] an extra mile, you go for another 30 minutes or so after to cover up for what you disturbed, just on a Monday, so it’s not much. That’s how we are taking it as FLAN.’

The second strategy is to use this as a stimulus for infusing FLAN into English & Maths lessons throughout the week. She continues:

And let’s say it’s upper grades, sentence construction - you teach the new words, then after new words, come Tuesday’s English lesson, you have to teach sentence construction using the words, those which you taught on Monday ... so that by Friday, you can build up to make a paragraph or a composition or anything according to the scheme. Your scheme will determine how far you will go, but you start from the FLAN post going forward.

Mr Phumelelani Nyoni, the Numeracy TPD Lead and Grade 6 teacher, confirms this infusion: ‘Especially this term we’ve been using it, I think almost every day ... because you can use the game in remediation lessons, you can use the game in extension lessons, you can easily teach actually a topic in a different way.’

This infusion has spread to all subjects. In her science class, Ms Sibanda wrote out new words in a lesson on nutrition, using a phonics-based approach to introduce them to her class. Meanings of the new words were taught through pointing to an example, drawing, acting, putting in a simple sentence and occasionally translating into the home language.

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5 A ‘gallery walk’ is done after classes have finished.
Embracing the Diagnostic Tool
The introduction of the Diagnostic Tool in the first term of 2020 has significantly increased focus on teaching at levels appropriate to the learners. Despite taking time, teachers very much see its value. Ms Pricellar Zengwe says: ‘You can determine where exactly the learner is. ... When it was introduced, I thought it’s too easy. It’s just hopeless. But when I came to the ground, it was not like that ... it proves challenging enough to every grade ... But the disadvantage is the time ... because, with our level of learners, some are very slow at responding. They may know the answer, but they are very slow.’

Figure 3: Extract from Numeracy Diagnostic Tool results sheet

Teachers have found surprises. Ms Silhe Sibanda says: ‘Yes, there are learners I thought cannot read anything, but I was surprised to discover that they can really read the sounds, they can read some of the words.’ Mr Phumelelani Nyoni joins in: ‘As she has said, surprises are many ... Especially with the counting back issue, [even] from 21 to 20, I managed to discover that most learners can easily count forward, but when it comes to counting backwards, it’s a real challenge.’

The Tool’s use is strongly supported by the CRT: ‘The Diagnostic Tool, I think, is very critical – that individuals or teachers should apply it to identify where the child is and then to learn to address the problem ... The Modules are there, they are giving the answers, how you can rectify the problems our learners have.’

Learning Outcomes
These new approaches have been adopted since November 2019. In March 2020, signs of increased learning are beginning to emerge.

The Grade 6 class were consolidating learning from a FLAN activity in Module 6, ‘Finish the sentence’. Having done this as group work, learners were now doing sentences by themselves in exercise books – see the example opposite.

Every child had the confidence to have a go, and learners were making up their own sentences, not just copying from others.

Mr Phumelelani Nyoni sees this a major step forward from copying off the chalkboard or elsewhere, which had dominated previously, and sees this as a foundation for building future learning successes.

Figure 4: Example of Grade 6 learner work

What Next
The Diagnostic Tool is seen as a significant guide for the next steps in the FLAN journey. The Deputy Head shows this: ‘In the pipeline is that they, the teachers will identify their readers and the non-readers, find their percentage, then after each term we will find out the improvement for each grade.’
The Literacy TPD Lead has a more immediate plan: ‘This tool helps me to group my learners.’

The Numeracy TPD Lead has another practical use: ‘In planning for our learners, because it [the Diagnostic Tool] directs us exactly to where the Module is, where we can find the activities from the Module.’

Both look forward to the future. Ms Silhe Sibanda says: ‘As for me, I think if I really, really take this FLAN seriously, [I] could have more than 75% readers, and after the [Grade 7 examination] pass rate will really improve.’ Mr Phumelelani Nyoni agrees: ‘This FLAN in 5 years’ time ... I usually take upper grades, I think I’ll be receiving learners who can read ... and I believe I won’t let them down, because I will be having [this] support.’
PRIMARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY 4: MADABE PRIMARY SCHOOL - ‘NO MORE EXPLAIN, EXPLAIN, EXPLAIN!’

Introduction
This case study sets out the experiences of three new staff members at Madabe primary school and their induction and embracing of the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLAN) Teacher Professional Development (TPD) Programme. It tells of how the Programme has made an impact on the ways they carry out their roles as Deputy School Head and Upper Grade teachers.

Context

Madabe primary school is a medium-sized rural Government school in Mangwe District, about 40 kilometres by road from the District town of Plumtree. In 2020, it had an enrolment of 523 learners – 246 girls and 277 boys – from Early Childhood Development Classes to Grade 7. Amid a catchment of poor rural communities, the school stands out. It is bright with turquoise and white classrooms and buildings, and an abundance of colourful learning resources.

Ms Joyce Charamba joined as Deputy School Head in January 2020. There are also two new TPD Leads: Ms Gadzanani Nleya, the Literacy TPD Lead, who joined in May 2019 and teaches Grade 6B, and Mr Tshidzani Sibanda, the Numeracy TPD Lead, who joined in September 2019 and teaches Grade 7A. They are supported by Ms Sibukani Naube, an experienced Cluster Resource Teacher, who teaches at the school.

In previous years only around a quarter of students passed the Grade 7 examinations.

Synopsis
The main thrust of this case study is on teacher learning and development that is focused on practice. This development is viewed from the perspective of three teachers new to the school and is testimony to how the FLAN Programme is embedded in school life. The practice focus of the teacher learning and development is supported by the way the module activities are used to introduce new concepts to students, and how students themselves make learning resources. TPD leads take upper grades, and the impact of this work is seen in improved learning demonstrated by the national Grade 7 examination results published by the Government.

Key Features
Engaging new staff members in FLAN TPD
Despite having been at the school for just a few months, each new staff member can talk in detail, and from practical experience, about the key elements of FLAN TPD. Including in-school staff development sessions, classroom activities with learners, Diagnostic Tool assessment, finding and making learning resources, and classroom learning walks.

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6 The research team would like to extend their thanks and appreciation to the Deputy School Head, Cluster Resource Teacher, teachers and learners of Madabe primary school.
7 The Cluster Resource Teacher (CRT) is appointed by the Government District Education Office to take a leading role to promote teaching and learning across a local cluster of Government primary schools; in this case the 4 schools of the Madabe cluster.
The CRT is experienced in introducing FLAN activities to staff members and has become a powerful advocate and champion. She recalls the first days of FLAN in 2018 at Madabe:

Teachers were not welcoming it very well, because they thought that maybe this thing is a lot on top of what they already have ... but, as time went on, they began to understand it and they found that the activities that are in the Modules ... are interesting and the learners ... they like them and they are bringing a lot of changes in their levels of literacy and numeracy ... and we also had the people from the Ministry of Education, they also tried to explain to them that this FLAN issue is not a separate thing. It’s just something which is coming to support those strategies that we already have in education.

Those experiences have led the CRT to be a very active support to new teachers in the school in their introduction to FLAN TPD and the use of classroom activities. Ms Gadzanani Nleya (the Literacy TPD Lead) describes how the CRT supports her:

Most times [she] even visits our classroom and tell us the places where to assist our learners, how to prepare our media and so on, how to prepare our reading corners, things like that. Sometimes, she takes us for the staff development sessions, whereby we discuss ... the challenges and the successes which we have experienced so far in our classrooms, when it comes to FLAN activities.

Mr Tshidzani Sibanda (the Numeracy TPD Lead) is keen to emphasise: ‘We always consult her whenever we meet some challenges or even for her to explain to us how we go about any FLAN activities.’

**Using Modules to introduce new concepts to learners**

Through the CRT’s leadership of FLAN, a school-learning culture has been inculcated, which sees the FLAN classroom activities as an integral part of the staff’s teaching approach. Ms Sibukani Naube gives an example: ‘These activities, in every maths lesson before you get deeper into the lesson, you find an activity from the Module which you can use to introduce [the lesson].’

Even as a new staff member, Ms Gadzanani Nleya already embodies this approach. Without having heard the CRT’s words, the Literacy TPD Lead says:

Those activities make it easy for you to explain; instead those activities are saving you energy! Instead of using your energy explaining, explaining, explaining, children understand at once when you are using those activities ... Learners are now using discovery methods. They discover on their own. For example, let us say maybe you are teaching fractions, learners will be discovering the fractions, as they are folding papers. They will be discovering on their own, instead of you trying to explain what a half is, learners will be finding out for themselves, then [learners say] this is ‘ok now I am having to participate’, they will be finding out instead of you explaining and explaining.

Ms Gadzanani Nleya sees the impact on her learners: ‘Children ... the first day they will be trying to get what you are trying to say, the second day they are trying on their own ... no-one wants to lose [in a game] – they all want to be the successors ... they are now trying, just because of those activities.’

**Resource-rich classrooms**

To support such extensive use of FLAN activities in class, many learning resources are needed for the learners. Mr Tshidzani Sibanda has 34 helpers!
He explains: ‘FLAN is also with me to discover that we can use the local environment, the materials, to help children learn around us, like maybe using empty cardboard boxes. Children, they can make cards by themselves when they get home, they see empty material, material which is no longer in use, they can use those material, bring cards and they write cards themselves.’

‘Yes, all the calendars, calendars for 2019, … they can always cut them and make learning material, which means we are using the local environment.’

Ms Gadzanani Nleya affirms: ‘The material, we just show them how to do it, then they take over the activity. They do the media themselves, then you show, [they] do the activity together, the lesson is covered.’

Classroom learning walks
As Deputy School Head, Ms Joyce Charamba has a broader school role, which includes supervision of teachers. Influenced by the practices of the CRT, she adopts a non-traditional approach to supervision that is often characterised as correctional observations. Instead she focuses on looking out for FLAN practices.

She explains: ‘And there is this thing, learning walk. At times, I pay impromptu visits. You know, I don’t have to notify them that I am coming. I just get into a class, sit at the back of the class, and make some observations, look around the classroom observing the learning areas. Then I’ll jot down some notes on what I observe. Then, maybe at the end of the day, I will call the teacher and say ok you are doing a great job there, but why can’t we improve … on something to do with the FLAN, when you’re reading or [doing] numeracy.’

These coaching conversations directly focus on teaching and learning for every grade in the school.

Targeting upper grades
The school leadership team have a clear vision on the benefits of FLAN for upper grade learners.

The CRT explains the rationale:

These learners they tend to forget. They learn these letter sounds at their early stage … If you just say, they learnt this thing in Grade 1, Grade 2, they will forget. And then, when they arrive at Grade 7, they will be failing to read. But, if you can continue teaching them these letter sounds, building some words, what, what, they will not forget. They will keep remembering …

If the learners enjoy something, they understand it better and they will never forget it. Whenever they meet such a question on the exam papers, they will remember that we once did this thing with our teacher, so they will never forget.
The school leadership’s decision to appoint Grade 6 and Grade 7 teachers to be the TPD Leads clearly demonstrates the value attached to taking FLAN approaches and using FLAN activities in the ‘examination’ grades.

**Learning Outcomes**

**Public examination results**

This practice-based TPD strategy has brought results. In pride of place in the School Head’s office are the Grade 7 examination results, showing a doubling of pass rates from 27% in 2017 to 56% in 2019.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage Pass 4 Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Grade 7 Results in last three years

When she arrived at Madabe school, Ms Gadzanani Nleya (Literacy TPD Lead) was told about the improved results by her new colleagues: ‘And, to my surprise, last year, this school was having a low pass rate, they told us so and they showed us their records, and a teacher, who was teaching the Grade 7’s, was a TPD Lead. So, since she was using those activities, so her learners did very well. The pass rate improved from 34 to 56 [%], which was a good improvement.’

**What Next**

Each of the new staff members has committed to their next steps in their FLAN journey.

The Literacy TPD Lead wants to work more with the Diagnostic Tool: ‘It made it easier to identify which concepts are you supposed to teach more ... Now we know that I should go back and look at maybe letter sounds, or I should dwell more on comprehension. Now I know the areas where I should touch more on.’

The extract from the diagnostic tool in Figure 4, which records ticks for learners able to do a particular literacy task, confirms this. Task D (reading and understanding a short text) has 9 ticks and Task A (saying the sounds of single letters) has 12 ticks. Learners perform better at the two other tasks, Task B (reading words with digraphs/trigraphs) and Task C (reading words with irregular spellings).

The Numeracy TPD Lead sees the previous Grade 7 teacher, a key advocate and implementer of FLAN activities with her learners, as an example to follow: ‘I want to copy from the previous Grade 7 teacher and then implement it as activities, so that this year we make it [the improved Grade 7 results] again.’

The Deputy School Head is taking a more inquiry-based approach: ‘I think I’m also going to carry out my research .... carrying out a research on effectiveness of FLAN activities in schools.’

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8 The Diagnostic Tool is an assessment of learners’ current progress in literacy and numeracy, which signposts teachers to the Module activities which will help the learners to take their next learning step.
SECONDARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY 1: SIBHATA SECONDARY SCHOOL - IMPROVING PRACTICES, RELATIONSHIPS AND LEARNING

Introduction
Sibhata Secondary School is a medium-sized school with 354 learners and 13 teachers. It provides day scholar facilitates to learners from poor to average socio-economic backgrounds and mirrors a typical well-kept Zimbabwean secondary school in appearance. The English and Maths departments work collaboratively to support the FLAN Programme within the school. The school joined the Sprint Programme in March 2018, and Mr Moyo and Ms Tshaka are (respectively) the numeracy and literacy leads for the school. Both teachers have led the FLAN Programme from then. Learners previously had a low pass rate in both English and Maths: Mr Moyo and Ms Tshaka found that learners joining the school in Form 1 performed at grade 4 (primary) level and lacked foundational skills needed for secondary education.

Synopsis
This case study sets out how the Sprint leads have transformed their teaching practice and delivered participatory classroom activities that changes relationships with students and engages learners and so improves learning. As a result of this change in approach, students are developing foundational literacy and numeracy skills and the school has experienced an improvement in external examination results.

Transformed teaching practice
During 2018 the teachers in the school drew on IGATE-T modules to introduce FLAN activities to Form 1 learners in the lower-performing class twice a week during free periods. Each session lasted 1 hour; half for foundational literacy and half for foundational numeracy. An additional free period was used to teach FLAN concepts that the teachers observed learners struggling to understand or simply needed extra time to grasp. Mr Moyo and Ms Tshaka also used FLAN activities to support their teaching of concepts in normal lessons with Form 4 learners. ‘I picked some of the activities in Module 1; starting with simple sentence construction because Paper 2 [of the public examination] covers comprehension and summaries.’ Ms Tshaka said she picked concepts from the modules and used activities in them to reflect those in the syllabus. She also delivered one session on Saturdays with Form 4 learners to help them grasp challenging concepts using the FLAN activities. Mr Moyo and Ms Tshaka were both able to give concrete examples of the different activities used with the Form 4 learners.

Mr Moyo and Ms Tshaka both said the IGATE modules empowered them to support learners who were previously identified as ‘beyond help’. Mr Moyo said, ‘FLAN revealed that learners can be assisted’, a revelation that he said transformed his perception of teaching: ‘we used to focus more on learners who had the ability to achieve the pass grades’. Using FLAN activities with the whole class, he ‘found that the struggling learners were able to grasp the basic concepts, and the activities also reinforced the learning and understanding of the high-performing learners.’ When asked about how he used the activities to engage learners who did well, he explained that he encouraged higher-performing learners to support peer-to-peer learning with small groups.

Mr Moyo said he realised that ‘The ability to read and write can make a child somebody in life. Learners can count their change and converse in English.’ Ms Tshaka said, ‘other teachers have seen
Changes in relationships through participatory classroom activities

Mr Moyo said that the IGATE Programme has changed his teaching practice at a more basic level. Before joining the Programme, he ‘thought he had to be serious and carry a whip, for learners to take his class seriously, but realised that learners do not understand concepts because they are too afraid ... I changed my approach to be more friendly and praised learners even when they got things wrong, to create a child-friendly environment.’ Mr Moyo related this to the use of games in the IGATE-T modules in fostering ‘a less formal environment with the teacher’. Although he encountered challenges in preparing resources, Mr Moyo said he overcame this by adapting the resources suggested in the modules. For example, ‘for the banker activity, we were supposed to have [a] circular coin, which was difficult, so we chose to turn our ‘coins’ into squares; straight lines are easier to cut. This helped me to make enough resources for 60 learners easily.’

In a previous school visit, Mr Mayo’s class was observed, using traditional snakes and ladders he adapted to teach subtraction and addition; learners were engaged and enjoyed the lesson. Although this activity was not in the IGATE modules, he credited the modules with inspiring him to use more games in his teaching to make learning fun. He reiterated that he is now ‘trying to make learning interesting’:

I have taken the model of teaching using games and created my own games using traditional [children’s] games. I’m teaching them addition and subtraction but I’m playing snakes and ladders with them; I’m teaching them logical reasoning, [and] I’m playing draughts with them.

When asked about the impact of his changes in classroom practice on learners, Mr Moyo said that ‘the learners have found it as a time for fun, something which was rare with previous teachers’. He found that ‘learners engaged more, they learned better, they asked more questions, and the learning outcome is better.’ Ms Tshaka also said, ‘learners had asked to do more “games like in their maths class with Mr Moyo” and were observed playing games used in class in the playground.’ Learners were thus practicing their learning outside of the classroom.

Impact on Learning

In 2019 the Form 4 O’level examinations showed an improvement in the pass rate from 0% to 19% in Maths, and 33% to 55% in English. Mr Moyo and Ms Tshaka attributed part of this increase to the use of FLAN activities, and their change in teaching practice, to support learning of Form 4. The new practice they have adopted focused on creating positive relationships with learners and using participatory activities to support their understanding of concepts. Mr Moyo said, ‘both of these factors have become reflected in the overall pass rate and have a positive effect on the traditional methods of measuring progress ... The 19% Maths pass rate included As and Bs; showing an improvement in teaching quality. In the previous years the pass rate, which fluctuated between 0% and 5 %, only included Ds and Cs’.
During the visit, the diagnostic tool\textsuperscript{6} was used with some of the learners who had benefitted from the FLAN activities in the last year. The two learners in the extract shown in Figure 8, who were identified as ‘average learners’, showed good comprehension skills, which was said to be an improvement since starting FLAN activities.

![Figure 8 Extract from teachers' diagnostic assessment record](image)

**What next**

The school now encourages all staff within the Maths and English department to support the use of FLAN lessons. Teachers are inducted after each Sprint workshop; as part of this process they plan specific module activities together. Since the January 2020 Sprint workshops, the school has committed to using FLAN lessons with all learners in Forms 1-4 as part of the timetable. ‘We are trying to build their capacity and scale up the progress we are seeing [with the earlier groups]’. The school has also committed to inducting all staff in the use of the diagnostic tool to help identify the needs of learners and help staff teach at the right level.

![Figure 9 'Sprint Plan' for Sibatha School](image)

The school plan (Figure 9) details its strategy to build the capacity of other teachers to deliver FLAN activities. Proposed activities included providing staff development feedback following the January Sprints workshop by 22 January 2020, orientation of the diagnostic tool to all teachers by 27 January 2020, reflection and review of all IGATE modules by mid-February 2020 and administrating the diagnostic tool to all learners by mid-February 2020.

\textsuperscript{6} The Diagnostic Tool is an assessment of learners’ current progress in literacy and numeracy by the class teacher, which signposts them to the Module activities that will help the learners to take their next learning step.
SECONDARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY 2: MADANGOMBE SECONDARY SCHOOL - CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES IMPROVE LEARNING AND BEHAVIOUR

Introduction
This case study relates the experiences of the English teacher, Mr. Dzingisai, who teaches at Madangombe Secondary school. It shows how his teaching has changed, and he has seen tangible improvements in learning, through introducing new literacy activities into his classroom practices.

Context
Madangombe is a medium-sized rural secondary school of approximately 700 learners. It has a large staff of 32 teachers—including 3 English teachers and 2 maths teachers, supplemented by 6 student teachers. The campus is large, with sufficient classrooms and almost-sufficient furniture. But as in most secondary schools, classrooms are stark and bare (Figure 10).

Many of the learners come from child-headed households. Previous field-reports note the school struggles with classroom behaviour.

Synopsis
This case study shows a secondary-school English teachers’ professional development journey, driven sustained participation in classroom-based Foundation Literacy TPD, using classroom activities to drive professional development and student learning. The English teacher worked together with the Maths teacher helping each-other explore ‘how learners can be more actively involved in lessons’, including by using classroom resources including posters and reading materials. The teacher is now reaching every class they teach with foundation literacy, including offering one-to-one support and they have changed their attitudes and practices in behaviour management. Student learning are reported through external exams and informal assessments.

Key Features
Classroom-based Foundation Literacy and Numeracy TPD
Mr. Dzingisai, the Literacy Facilitator, is an enthusiastic man in his late twenties. He and Mr. Hungwe, the numeracy facilitator, were among the first teachers to take part in the TPD Programme. From the first workshops, they embraced the notion that the classroom activities would drive their professional development and help them improve students’ learning.

Mr. Dzingisai explains how effective he found these activities, when he introduced them in his regular English lessons: ‘I started using phonics with Form 3. When we [teachers] grew up we never used ABC songs but now with phonics they learn the sounds, they grasp the concept, and they can do good spellings. I did all the activities with them, from Module 1, 2 and 3. By the end of the year, they were able to construct sentences. I’ve seen a great improvement, right from the start.’

The Head links participation in the TPD Programme to changes in teachers’ understanding and learners’ skills: ‘This emphasis on communication was not the case before the Sprint. We were exam. orientated. But now our focus is upon functional English and functional mathematics. Our
students—they used to be unable to communicate. But now if you see them, they can communicate well. The activities improve their reading and pronunciation, even in other lessons like science.’

Teachers are continuing to use classroom activities from the modules and are now being guided in their choice of activity by the results of the diagnostic assessment. Mr. Hungwe explained: ‘The reason I chose to teach ‘division’ for Form 2 was because of this sheet — the diagnostic tool — a lot of learners were having problems with division questions. They were also having trouble with comparing different fractions, which was bigger, so we needed to use a chart.’ Mr. Hungwe showed examples of student work (see Figure 11) where groups of learners had compared fractions using a folding-method from TPD activity.

Teachers support each other to improve classroom practice
Throughout the TPD Programme, Mr. Dzingisai has worked together with Mr Hungwe; helping each-other to study the modules and carry out activities in class. One of the ways they have done this is by observing and photographing each other’s lessons, taking photographs or video clips of learners’ activities. Figure 12 shows two groups of students playing a game, using cards with numbers and symbols, taking turns to set number problems for the other group to solve.

When asked why they had taken the photographs and video clips, Mr. Dzingisai explained: ‘We know better learning takes place when learners are actively involved. So, we go into each other’s classes to film. Then we look at the photos together — at least the two of us, sometimes more — and we ask each other “how can learners be more actively involved?”’. Mr. Hungwe adds ‘In the numeracy games, learners are independent. They can learn at their own pace.’

Using classroom resources
Like most secondary schools in Zimbabwe, the classrooms are stark and bare. Mr. Dzingisai and Mr. Hungwe have made posters and displays, guided by the TPD modules. Because they move from room-to-room, they cannot leave permanent displays but put posters up as needed.
Mr. Hungwe shows a number line that he hangs on a nail in the classroom (Figure 13), he wanted to make it as a long ‘strip’ but couldn’t, because there was only one nail to hang it on.

Mr. Dzingisai has found innovative ways to use limited reading resources effectively with large classes: ‘The readers are really helpful. But with a class of up to 70 learners, there are too few copies. I do a listening comprehension, using the first paragraph of the stories. I read the paragraph three times, then give the learners comprehension questions.’

Reaching and supporting learners who need help
Last year, Mr. Dzingisai and Mr. Hungwe were reaching 65 learners (10%) through a literacy and numeracy club. They decided to change their approach after the January 2020 workshop: ‘In the past we used to select just a few learners. But then in the workshop we talked about coverage and inclusion’. They realised they couldn’t provide a club for everybody, so instead they are using timetabled lessons. Mr. Dzingisai is now committing two timetabled lessons (70 minutes per week) for literacy, with every Form 1 and Form 2 class he teaches (almost 200 learners). He is also using the activities with his Form 3 and 4 classes, as required.

Mr. Dzingisai shows how he is trying to provide individualised support for literacy skills in Form 3:

The diagnostic assessment showed some Form 3 were still struggling. So, I still need to use short words and simple sentences to help them. I found there was even one child who still needs phonics — he can’t even read a word. I asked him to come and find me in his free periods. He’s come almost every day.’

Changing teaching and behaviour management
When asked how taking part in the TPD Programme had affected him, Mr. Dzingisai said ‘For me, the Programme has been an eye-opener. We had been making some very dangerous assumptions. Teachers used to shout at the front of the class, but students learned nothing... [Now] the students are really enjoying it—especially learning through games ... Sometimes they make quite a lot of noise, you ask yourself if this is right, but they are really learning’.

Improved Learning Outcomes
There are signs of improved learning outcomes from students who have taken part in new classroom activities for literacy, both in the ‘club’ and the regular classroom lessons. These signs are seen in public examination results (Table 2, below), and in the first use of the diagnostic assessment tool.
Madangombe School’s examination results in 2018 were the highest the school had ever achieved, previous results had been in the low-teens, but the 2019 results were three-times higher than these. The class of 2019 were the first students Mr. Dzingisai had taught using classroom activities from the IGATE-T Programme, when they were his Form 3 class. When these students went to another teacher for Form 4, Mr. Dzingisai helped their new teacher use FLAN activities in class, especially when they came across particular skills that students were struggling with.

The Head attributed the improved results to the TPD programme and new classroom practices: ‘Because of the Sprint [programme] last year we managed 60% in English, from 20% last year. In time we could even achieve 100% because it’s now on the timetable’.

Mr. Dzingisai had used the diagnostic tool assessment with a sample of his Form 3 students (see Figure 14). The test is in six sections, each recorded with a tick, if students get 8/10 marks or more, or a cross. Most of the students struggled with the first section (phonics) and one or more of the last three sections, on comprehension. Some only managed one or two ticks, or none.

But four students obtained full marks, getting a tick for every section (marked with a star next to their name, in Figure 13). During the previous year, all four of these students had been taught using activities from the TPD programme and were outperforming other Form 3 students. Two, Dorothy and Matifadza, were Form 3 students who had been members of the (remedial) literacy club in Form 2. Two, Shantel and Wayne, were new students in Form 1. Mr. Dzingisai was puzzled by how good some of the new Form 1 learners were compared to previous years, so he included two in the diagnostic tool assessment. These ‘high-flying Form-1s’ were from an IGATE-T primary school and were the first cohort of ‘treated’ students to enter secondary. All four students previously experiencing IGATE-T, including Form 1s, had stronger literacy skills than other Form 3 learners.

What Next?
This year the teachers are reaching all of the students they teach, but this is still no more than half of the children in the school. In order to reach everyone who needs help, they realized they needed to bring all the English and Math’s teachers on board. With the support of the Head, they had been planning the engagement of their whole departments, through the end-of-term department meeting in March.
SECONDARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY 3: SIDZIBE SECONDARY SCHOOL - EMBEDDING FLAN WITHIN THE SCHOOL TIMETABLE

Introduction
Sidzibe Secondary School is a remotely located medium-sized school in Insiza District with approximately 230 learners and 10 teachers. The school resembles a typical secondary school in appearance but is distinguished by flourishing flower gardens dotted around the school. Ms Mhlauri is the Literacy Lead and Mr Makombore is the Numeracy Lead for the school. Both teachers work collaboratively with other teachers within the English and Maths departments to deliver the IGATE Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLAN) Sprint Programme within the school.

Synopsis
This case study shows how the Sprint Leads have integrated FLAN within the school. It focuses on the adoption of FLAN sessions within the school timetable, the use of teacher-prepared learning material, and the impact all this has had on learners’ ability and confidence with literacy and numeracy.

Key features
FLAN within the timetable
When Sidzibe Secondary School joined the Sprint Programme in March 2018, Mr Makombore and Ms Mhlauri decided to adopt FLAN within the timetable with the support of their School Head, Mr Dupe. The Numeracy Lead said, ‘the Head Teacher recognised the importance of FLAN [activities] because they [Head Teachers] were included in the FLAN workshops, this allowed our ... Programme to be accepted on the master timetable.’ (They are therefore not considered as ‘extra-curricular’.)

The school is currently utilising free periods and doing FLAN activities through a mixture of classroom lessons and clubs; both are noted on the timetable. Free periods before lunch are timetabled as ‘lessons’ and free periods after lunch are timetabled as ‘clubs’. At present, FLAN lessons are delivered with learners in the lower sets of Form 1B and Form 2B and is therefore only reaching 50% of learners in Forms 1 and 2. Each week, the school offers FLAN lessons for 7 periods to Form 1B and 6 periods to Form 2B, during free periods. (Figure 1 shows these sessions.)

Ms Mhlauri said
We choose to spread FLAN across the timetable so that it wasn’t isolated and done once a week. We encouraged other teachers to do it so that learners are continuously engaged with FLAN [activities] ... when we returned from the first workshop, we inducted our colleagues on FLAN and continue to do so. As part of the meeting we suggested that if we work as a team it will be more successful.

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1 This is the teacher in the school responsible for the leading the teaching of literacy in the school for the Programme and who supports other teachers. The Numeracy Lead does the same for numeracy in the school.
The Sprint Leads have embraced the games within the IGATE-T modules to deliver FLAN and create a friendly learning environment. Ms Mhlauri describes this:

The approaches used to teach the children are interesting because it’s more of games and activities, so the children enjoy more of that than the traditional lecture style. In the process of playing they are learning something.’ The Head Teacher noted that ‘they use lots of games in the class. Learners take the lead in the classroom rather than the teacher, for example, they have an activity where they create a tuck shop. The learners are given some coins and they are asked to buy things. The teacher asks them to explain if they have the right change and how they know. So, I have observed that, through activities, learners are grasping mathematical concepts.

Creating and using FLAN learning materials

To support the delivery of FLAN sessions, the Sprint Leads have created print-rich learning spaces. They used manila paper to create numeracy and literacy charts that were stuck around the wall of the classroom. Mr Makombore said, ‘we teach the children something in the lesson but if they see it written down, they will keep remembering the concepts they have learned.’

Ms Mhlauri added that they ‘used manila paper to create reading cards, letters, numbers so that the children could familiarise themselves with the numbers and letters.’ She spoke about her experience of using these: ‘I can ask questions about any of the things on the charts and the learners know this, so they familiarise themselves with the chart. For example, I ask which is the 5th month of the year, and you will see the learners counting.’ When asked what she thought about this learning material, one of the learners in Form 1 said: ‘I like the visual material the teacher sticks on the walls in our FLAN class as I have managed to learn something from it.’

The Literacy Lead enlisted the help of the School Head in obtaining manila paper. Mr Dupe said ‘I met with the School Development Committee (SDC) we agreed to provide [it]. The SDC has supported the purchase of manila paper because they understand that FLAN is a worthy cause. Learners cannot do mathematics or any other subject without English; all subjects need English except the vernacular.’
When the School Head was asked why he found it important to provide material for FLAN lessons he mentioned that ‘Children need tangible evidence to bring concepts to life. If learners can touch, see and visualise then learning becomes easy. The charts create curiosity among the learners.’

**Figure 2: A numeracy chart made from manila paper that is displayed and used in FLAN sessions.**

**Impact on learners and teaching practice**

During the visit, we spoke with a learner who shared her experience of FLAN. The learner, who is now in Form 3, has been part of the IGATE-T programme since Form 1 and attends FLAN lessons six times a week. When asked about what she liked about the FLAN lessons she said ‘I enjoy the games very much because, not only are they fun and energize me in class but they teach me lots about English. When I grow up, I want to be a teacher, maybe even an English teacher!’ She spoke about her challenges to ‘read, write, understand and speak English when she started Secondary School and was intimidated by the subject.’ Since joining the Programme, the learner has improved her English skills and is able to interact with the visiting IGATE Programme team staff in English. She shared that she ‘had found comprehension daunting, but now enjoys reading as she can actually attempt answering questions after having understood the passage’.

The Sprint Leads have also noted a positive change in learners’ attitude towards learning. Ms Mhlauri said

...most learners are now developing a positive attitude to literacy and numeracy and they are engaging better. They are seeing the advantages of being able to read and write and subtract in life. Even if it’s club time and you are late, you will find them there waiting for you.

Ms Mhlauri also said the FLAN activities have altered her professional practice. ‘We used to think that, when a child cannot read and write there is nothing you can do but, when FLAN came in, it enlightened us that there is no child that is useless. Every child despite their academic challenges can be something in life and it’s up to us to shape them.’ Ms Mhlauri said she realised that ‘effective teaching is not about just finishing the syllabus but whether the learner has grasped the concept.’ She emphasised that ‘you must take each step at a [time] until they ... understand the concept before moving onto the next. If you rush through the syllabus and at the end the learners have not understood anything and don’t pass their exams, then you have achieved nothing.’
What next: using evidence from the diagnostic tool

Both Mr Makombore and Ms Mhlauri have used the diagnostic tool\(^2\) within their Departments to assess where the learners are. They noted an improvement in the new Form 1 learners who have come from IGATE-T feeder schools. Ms Mhlauri said ‘last year the children couldn’t even recognise the letter but [now] at least they can read [a] three-letter word. The challenge is now comprehension and that is what we are focusing on now.’

\(^2\) The Diagnostic Tool is an assessment of learners’ current progress in literacy and numeracy, which signposts teachers to the Module activities which will help the learners to take their next learning step.
SECONDARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY 4: BULU SECONDARY SCHOOL - WHEN I WALK AROUND, I SEE LEARNERS CARRYING READING BOOKS

Introduction
Bulu Secondary School is a large-sized secondary school. In 2019 the school provided day scholar and boarding school facilities to 622 learners in Forms 1 to 4. The school is well kept and prides itself on maintaining a clean environment free from litter. The school joined the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLAN) Sprint Programme in 2018. Mrs Ncube has been the Literacy Lead since the school joined the Programme. Each Form at Bulu Secondary School is streamed into 4 classes with 45 learners in each class; the first two classes are the lower-performing classes. The school currently does FLAN in normal classes with one class of Form 1 learners, and three classes of Form 4 learners; FLAN lessons take place once a week and last 35 minutes. Additionally, FLAN clubs are held with a mixture of Form 1 and Form 2 learners, twice a week lasting for approximately 1hr 45min per session.

Synopsis
This case study follows the journey of the Sprint Literacy Lead, Ms Ncube, and how she has embraced IGATE FLAN Teacher Professional Development (TPD) Programme and IGATE modules to develop her learners’ foundational literacy skills. The case study shares the personal learning and professional development of practice that Ms Ncube has experienced as a result of the TPD Programme and the impact she has been able to have on her learners by employing skills learned on the Programme.

FLAN materials develop professional practice
Ms Ncube has been a teacher for 22 years; she explained the challenges that she has been encountering in her school and with her learners.

Non-reading has always been a problem at secondary school, learners move from primary to secondary without being able to read and write. We could do something with writing, but with reading it was a huge problem because teacher training at secondary assumes that learners are able to transition from primary to secondary with reading abilities. Therefore, most secondary teachers lack the skills to teach basic reading.

She spoke about the how the IGATE Programme has developed her teaching practice by equipping her with skills and resources to teach foundational literacy and numeracy. ‘I was limited in my approach because I didn’t have the know-how [to support learners]. The IGATE Programme gave me the tools to be able to teach and unlock the potential of learners in the four skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. FLAN is helping the learners.’

She explained how she incorporates FLAN in the formal classes that she teaches. ‘FLAN can be infused in the syllabus because it has relevant activities. For example, with reading, part of it is comprehension, so I pick activities from the IGATE modules that teach comprehension.’ She emphasised that ‘you cannot divorce FLAN from the syllabus; the skills of the syllabus, those are the skills incorporated in FLAN.’

11 This is the teacher in the school responsible for the leading the teaching of literacy in the school for the Programme and who supports other teachers. The numeracy lead does the same for numeracy in the school.
FLAN materials enable personal learning

In addition to enabling her to teach foundational literacy, Ms Ncube said the IGATE Programme has supported the growth of her own personal learning which has led to a development in her professional practice. She realised that:

The weaker learners have given up on themselves and teachers need to realise and reinforce the little effort that they [as learners] make. I have realised that you need to emphasise on the good qualities in them and ignore the negative so that you always create a positive attitude in them. They need patience and perseverance; for example, mastering the [phonics] sounds took three weeks in my class. I have realised that if you tell learners they are excellent, they will become excellent.

During the school visit a positive and free relationship was observed with learners in her class, a quality which Ms Ncube strives to create and sustain. ‘The learners are free, they will tell me what they think, they will say “Ms today the lesson was good” or “today the lesson wasn’t so good”. I always get feedback from them.’

A reading culture

Ms Ncube has successfully created a reading culture within her school by establishing a mobile library and a time for reading. She explained that:

When I walk around, I see learners are carrying reading books...Thursday is a library day, the learners love books more than classes. I encourage them to visit our library. I created a cardboard box where the books are kept.

She has appointed two girls to look after the library in each class; they are responsible for checking out books for other learners, recording their names and ensuring they are checked back in. Ms Ncube has worked with the School Development Committee and the local primary schools to source books which are simple and appropriate for struggling learners. ‘The primary schools are also working with us; when we want reading material, they help us. The schools are clustered, we have 7 primary schools which are feeder schools. From time to time we have meetings and we discuss methods and ways of working in those meetings. Even when I need help to teach a topic that is normally taught at primary level, I consult the primary school for assistance.’
Impact on learners
When asked about the impact of the library she said:

I have noticed learners love a few words and pictures and you can see their expressions, they get excited. They will be saying “look at this” and laugh but, in the process, they are learning to describe the pictures and are telling a story through pictures, which is one way to develop their reading. I encourage them that when they see a word, try and sound out the words and I know gradually by the end of the term we will see the change. Once the learner finds that they can do it, their confidence grows and their interest grows.

Ms Ncube continued, ‘when we started FLAN, I had learners who are currently in Form 4 who couldn’t identify the letters of the alphabet. They have now moved from alphabet to word level, and some have moved from word level to sentences.’ The improvement made by learners now in Form 4 who have been benefiting from FLAN over the last two years was shown in the results from the diagnostic assessment tool. All learners tested were able to do the sections A (saying the sounds of single letters) and B (reading words with digraphs/trigraphs). Most learners were also able to do section C (reading common words with irregular spellings) and D (reading and understanding a short sentence or text) (Figure 2).

![Figure 2](image)

**Figure 2** Extract from Form 4 diagnostic assessment record (showing achievement in each section of assessment)

A speech written by one of the learners is presented as Figure 3. Ms Ncube spoke about this learner who has made significance progress since joining the FLAN programme. ‘When the learner, who is now in Form 4, started FLAN in Form 2 she was unable to construct sentences.’ Her progress is shown in this story that she wrote and performed for us during the school visit.

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12 The Diagnostic Tool is an assessment of learners’ current progress in literacy and numeracy, which signposts teachers to the Module activities which will help the learners to take their next learning step.
Figure 3: Extract of story written by a learner who has benefited from FLAN from Form 2 to Form 4.

What next
Ms Ncube said, ‘I am encouraging other English teachers in the school to deliver classroom sessions with learners I am not covering, so that all learners can benefit from FLAN’. ‘After the Sprint workshops I come back and give teachers feedback. We do activities with the teachers, for example, when I came back in January, I did a sentence construction exercise; I actually use them as learners. The programme is gaining momentum.’