



**TECH4RED**  
ENHANCING EDUCATION

## ICT4RED TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

01 FEBRUARY 2014 - MODULE 7&8



### Background

Teachers in the Cofimvaba ICT4RED project schools have been methodically working through modules of their professional development course since July 2013.

The seventh and the eighth module sessions of the ICT4RED Cofimvaba Teacher Professional Development were conducted at Queens College in Queenstown on a Saturday of February 01, 2014. Module 8, which was conducted in the morning session, concentrated on the Gallery Walk teaching strategy. The emphasis was on the Gallery Walk as a teaching strategy and how it can be used in the classroom to engage learners in critical discussions and/or real life topics. It involved creating a Gallery Walk session in a classroom, using social media platforms to participate in educational online discussions. Another activity that was important in Module 8 is how a professional learning community or network works and how it can develop teacher professional learning.

Module 7 is the Scavenger Hunt strategy that allows the class to go on a Field Trip to have real experience related to any academic content area. The Scavenger Hunt also helps as a basis or template to design other possible field trip ideas that can be adapted for classroom work. This is a way to enhance student learning in a good number of learning areas.

### Event

Queens College, hosted the ICT4RED team and the teachers of the 11 schools in Cofimvaba that are involved in the project. All facilitators from the 11 schools had a short briefing in the morning with Hlengiwe Mfeka, the project manager from SchoolNet SA, and also to hand out facilitation resources for the modules.

Each facilitator was assigned with a number from 1 to 9, according to the number of schools involved. For Module 8, the first session, numbers were assigned according to schools involved,

then later in Module 7, the second session, numbers were assigned based on the activities that would be done. In the first session Khwaza (15) and Siyabalala (6) were combined in one classroom because the Siyabalala facilitator had been unable to attend the train the trainer session for these modules. There were 14 student assistants, provided by Queens College to mainly offer support in the classrooms. Each facilitator was assigned one student assistant and two in bigger groups. The remainder were assistants on call, in cases of emergency or other services, such as catering.

### Venue

Queens College is located in Queenstown at the foot of the Stormberg Mountain. The school was established in 1858 and the school is the oldest school on the border (wikipedia). In recent years the school has hosted successful events such as sports festivals as well as the ICT4RED launch of the current Cofimvaba project and later the ICT4RED clustered teacher workshops.

### Attendance

The teachers started to arrive as early as 8h00am and by 8h30am facilitators fetched them from the hall to take them to their allocated classrooms.

Attendance was satisfactory for all schools except for Bangilizwe where 10 teachers including the principal were absent without prior notice. They had only informed the facilitator that morning that they were attending a funeral. Mr Roy Kattukanal, the circuit manager promised to visit the school/s to follow-up on the matter including individuals who were absent. The overall attendance figures were as follows:

School	Total Number of teachers	Total attended
Mthimbini JPS	3	3
Gudwana JSS	8	5
Mgcawezulu JSS	16	14
Bangilizwe JSS	17	7
Siyabalala SSS	8	6
St Marks JSS	12	8
Gando JSS	18	13
Khwaza SSS	16	15
Ntshingeni JSS	16	12
Mvuzo JSS	12	11
Zamuxolo JSS	15	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	141	<b>108</b>

### Module 8: Gallery Walk

Prior to the start of the session, facilitators together with their student assistants had set up different exhibits for the Gallery Walk in the located classrooms. The first session started around 9.00am with a very short introduction to the Gallery Walk activity. Facilitators were to work out how they would divide the groups according to the number of teachers in their class in order that groups are able to collaborate and visit four displayed exhibits. The exhibit displays consisted of the following:

### **Exhibit 1:** Digital Identities

### **Exhibit 2:** Phishing

### **Exhibit 3:** Personal and Learning Communities

### **Exhibit 4:** Online Safety

An hour was allocated to finish the Gallery Walk activity whereby group participants would move from one exhibit to another analysing and commenting on what they understood and what the other groups were doing. Each group would stick its comments next to each exhibit. The Gando facilitator mentioned that at the start of the Gallery Walk teachers seemed a bit confused about commenting on the displays. That was evident because the first groups in each Exhibit did not have as many comments as when they went on to the subsequent Exhibits. 'Phishing' was new terminology learnt by some but after the explanation was



reinforced with examples, it came to light that it was something they had heard of, or had experienced. The facilitator at St Marks pointed out that some of the teachers indicated that it was their first time to learn about professional learning communities. They considered joining those that they would find the most beneficial.

In all classrooms teachers showed much interest in what they were learning from different exhibits as they were observed, discussing strongly the topic provided in each exhibit.

At the end of the Gallery Walk activity, teachers were expected to post their comments online via the ICT4RED blog site. In the next part of the module, teachers were requested to create online profiles and interact with colleagues online.

A teacher personal Google account was required for these activities. Common challenges experienced in most classrooms during these two activities were:

- Some of the teachers had forgotten their log in details
- Some accounts had expired because they were inactive
- Some teachers did not have Google accounts
- The Google+ app in most tablets was outdated and required downloading an updated version
- The Internet was not consistently available resulting in participants failing to do their work.

Due to these above-mentioned challenges there was a delay. Teachers were keen to create new accounts in order to upload comments. Some of the facilitators were able to assist those who required password retrieval or reminders. The Mgcawezulu and Mthimbini facilitator reported that another delay was due to the fact that some teachers are still slow when it comes to typing. However some of the teachers were able to post their comments on the blog and interact with others and were also able to create their online profiles. Those teachers were all smiles and proud of themselves.

Teachers who experienced technical problems with their tablets with regard to Google accounts or anything technical related, were sent to the central Tech support classroom. The technicians were able to assist some of the teachers but not all. Unfortunately while those teachers were receiving technical help, they missed some of the training aspects. ICT4RED had provided a v-satellite connection for internet access. There was also the school's wireless access points that were available. Despite all these efforts, there was a major problem of connectivity, mostly related to SPEED not necessarily connection to the network. Most classes were able to connect to the wireless network, but the speed was very slow. It was inevitable that 600 devices simultaneously updating apps would affect any network and it was therefore only later in the day that a reasonable speed of connectivity was stabilised.

In conclusion, some of the facilitators took some time to explain to the teachers how to implement the teaching strategy in a real classroom scenario and to provide examples to specific learning areas. The pedagogical aspect of this strategy was also discussed. Teachers acknowledged that the Gallery Walk teaching strategy could be integrated across the curriculum and highlighted that setup and thorough preparation would be required. However, in some classrooms, the time was never enough to emphasise the pedagogy and implementation around the teaching strategy.

### Module 7: Scavenger Hunt

This could have been the highlight of the day for most participants. They enjoyed the 'inclusivity' aspect of the module. It started with participants being divided into groups soon after lunch at the hall. Then each group number was further divided into animal names of; Lions, Elephants, Leopards and Rhinoceros in the classrooms using a QuickMark QR code scanner. Participants were excited after they created their own QR codes containing their personal information. After an explanation and understanding from the participant's side about what a Scavenger Hunt entails, they were released to do the practical aspect of the module.



Only God knows what this group was trying to do here

Scavenger hunt activity: a group photo twisting faces

Despite the afternoon heat, participants took to the field and were seen doing all it takes to collect maximum points for the group. The Scavenger Hunt gained so much popularity that every participant had a role to play regardless their age and size. Of major assistance were the QC boys and the ICT4RED Team who helped take pictures for the groups. An exciting video was captured of someone who was literally testing a leaf and had to spit it out because it was so unpalatable. They were wild, climbing trees like real monkeys and running around the campus. The Queens College premises buzzed with noise and laughter - It was all fun!!

The activity lasted for 60 minutes, the score sheet was exchanged by the groups and one group representative had to follow their scoresheet where it was marked. The incorporation of peer assessment in the Scavenger Hunt was a huge strength, as it encouraged 21st century skills which included communication, critical thinking and decision-making. Again some facilitators facilitated discussions on how this teaching strategy could be applied in classrooms and also how it would enhance the learning aspect of the exercise. Teachers also contributed well to the discussions by giving examples of how they could adapt the strategy to the subjects in classrooms.

### Conclusion

The two modules, the Gallery Walk and the Scavenger Hunt were very much appreciated by the teachers in the ICT4RED project in Cofimvaba. They learnt a lot of new skills and went home more informed than when they came. The afternoon session was fantastic. They had a blast! They were very energetic and pleased with the activities in which they were engaged. They all left motivated and positive about the project. This time they were not anxious to leave in the early afternoon, compared to previous clustered sessions.

It is hoped that these two teaching strategies will be applied in schools and receive even higher popularity among learners.

### Highlights

- Teachers are gaining more confidence in using a tablet – they are able to navigate their way around to find apps in their tablets.
- Scavenger Hunt winners in each classroom were each awarded with a slab of chocolate – they were very excited as it was an unexpected gift
- Efforts by QC boys to participate throughout the session by offering support to facilitators and organising refreshments for the teachers were acknowledged by each of them receiving a token of appreciation at the end of the session – they were over the moon and one of them gave a thank you speech
- Facilitators appreciated a debrief session after the workshop which highlighted an appreciation for their hard work. They were encouraged to support their teachers in between the sessions via sms or WhatsApp. They were also reminded about the importance of emphasizing the pedagogy and to continuously implement these teaching strategies, not only do them to earn badges
- Two daddies (Obert Gara and Soso Mfamana) were congratulated by SchoolNet and the team and each baby was showered with a gift.

### Administration

- Facilitators received all the relevant working materials they normally use for workshops and no school was short of material
- All the schools received their packs of chocolates and sweets
- Verification of serial numbers for tablets was carried out successfully
- Only one school (Bangilizwe JSS) was not completed, due to time constraints and the fact that more than half of the teachers were absent
- Attendance registers were collected and changes of names or contacts were tracked

- Only 8 principals submitted domain application forms and the others had left it at home. Therefore Ms. Sindiswa Sibawu (district official) was requested to collect the three outstanding school, Gando, Ntshingeni and Mvuzo.

H Mfeka  
12 February 2014