Independent Evaluation of Symphonia for South Africa’s Partners for Possibility Programme

“\textit{A principal in an under-resourced school has the most difficult leadership job in South Africa today.}” - Professor Brian O’Connell, former rector of the UWC (shared on Twitter by Ridwan Samodien, 7 Feb 2016).

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Acknowledgements

The evaluators would like to thank the principals, teachers and learners from each of the participating schools for so generously taking time out of their busy schedules to speak to us. The work you are doing is hugely inspiring. We are grateful also to the business partners who were interviewed, and to the PfP Learning Process Facilitators: Merridy Edgson, Veronica Wantenaar and Stephanie Dawson-Cosser for their valuable inputs. In particular, we would like to thank Gail McMillan, PfP Regional Operations and Monitoring & Evaluation Manager, and her team for their tireless support throughout the evaluation process. We would also like to thank the D.G. Murray Trust for funding this evaluation.

Abbreviations

CoP Community of Practice
LPF Learning Process Facilitator
MGSLG Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Government
NELI Norkitt Educational Leadership Initiative
NGO Non-governmental Organisation
OBE Outcomes Based Education
PoE Portfolio of Evidence
PfP Partners for Possibility
SADTU South African Democratic Teachers Union
SGB School Governing Body
SMT School Management Team
SSA Symphonia for South Africa

Evaluation Team:

Dr Andrew Hartnack (Lead Evaluator)
Mr Anthony Muteti (SLF Researcher)
Executive Summary

Background to study

Partners for Possibility is a programme that enables co-learning and co-action partnerships between school principals of under-resourced schools and business leaders.

Through this formal programme, which is explained in more detail at the end of this summary, business leaders and school principals join in a formally managed partnership programme designed to improve both partners’ leadership skills and address the unique challenges facing each school.

Since forming the first partnership in 2010, Partners for Possibility (PfP) has been scaled rapidly across South Africa, growing to over 430 schools by the date of the publication of this research in June 2016. During the first five years, the programme has also expanded its reach to include the Western and Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga, gaining both local and international recognition from organisations such as the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, the global WISE Awards, HR.com and Unashamedly Ethical.

Amid the recognition, PfP realised the importance of an external evaluation and independent validation of the programme and its effectiveness. This was made possible by the D.G. Murray Trust, which committed funding for the study and commissioned Dr Andrew Hartnack of the Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation to conduct the research. Dr Hartnack was supported by Mr Anthony Muteti, a researcher at the same foundation.

As part of the study, the research team conducted an in-depth review of 20 schools that had participated in the programme. These schools were chosen by the researchers based on a number of selection criteria. In addition, the researchers evaluated data on 288 schools that had completed the PfP process by May 2016 to gain a broad a perspective of the programme’s achievements and dynamics to date.

Highlights from the study

The in-depth evaluation of the 20 schools found that participation in the PfP programme had been overwhelmingly positive for principals and their schools. These 20 schools were measured on leadership impact, the success of the partnership in working together and addressing the challenges facing each school in the first year, and on the existence of a successful on-going partnership after the formal programme ended. The study also evaluated beneficial spin-offs to the school in the form of improved educational outcomes, community and parent involvement and school direction, and whether the PfP values remained apparent at the school after the partnership had run its course.
The study also found that most participating schools in the wider cohort of PfP schools that had completed the programme had benefitted. Of the 288 partnerships for whom tracking data was available, 84% had completed the formal, year-long PfP programme successfully and 88% of successfully participating schools found the programme beneficial.

It was also found that of the most successful partnerships, 68% (196 schools) continued their partnership for a second year beyond the formal intervention by PfP and 63% of partnerships completed three years together. The success of the programme in the majority of schools, as well as in the sample of 20 schools, points to a sound theory of change and a successfully implemented programme.

**Methodology**

At the core of the study is an in-depth qualitative analysis of 20 schools that have participated in the Partners for Possibility programme. These schools were selected by the researchers to be representative of various socio-economic and demographic scenarios and to represent a full range of both older and newer partnerships.

Of the selected schools, 10 are in the greater Cape Town area, nine are in Gauteng and one school is in KwaZulu-Natal. All of these schools, like other schools on the programme, are challenged by social problems such as general unemployment and poverty in the community, gangsterism, teenage pregnancy and drug abuse. Selected schools also faced operational challenges prior to joining the programme, including overcrowding, a lack of adequate infrastructure and a general loss of class time due to teacher morale or other factors.

Each of the selected schools was visited by the evaluation team between February and April 2016 and 120 people were consulted through structured interviews and focus group discussions.

The 20 schools were evaluated for potential impacts using the following criteria:

1. Leadership change (Principal)
2. Leadership change (School Management Team (SMT) and School Governing Body (SGB))
3. A change in vision / ethos at the school
4. Impact on educational outcomes at the school
5. Parent and community involvement
6. Material gain or a connection to assistance with the school’s physical needs
7. Continuing supportive partnerships
Listed below are the participating schools, represented by province and year of joining the programme. Included on the x-axis is a representation of the organisation’s growth over the first five years of its existence, measured on the number of schools that have participated.

Summary of findings

The feedback from school principals at the 20 schools was overwhelmingly positive. All participating principals found the programme highly beneficial in assisting them to manage the schools better for the benefit of the schools’ learners and staff.

The study found that:

- 100 per cent of the 20 principals interviewed enthusiastically reported that the programme was relevant, stimulating and beneficial for them and their schools;
- 100 per cent of the 20 principals were very positive about the content and experiential learning workshops;
- 100 per cent of the 20 principals found value from being part of a Leadership Circle and attending Community of Practice sessions;
• 100 per cent of the principals found value from having a business partner.

The following improvements in the seven areas of focus were recorded:

1. **Leadership impact (Principal)**

Across the board, principals testified that their participation in the PfP programme has assisted them to become better leaders. The benefits of these improvements in leadership skills were evident in the more effective management of the school, better staff morale and the esteem with which the school is viewed by the community.

Principals reported becoming:

- Better listeners;
- Active contractors of teachers and community;
- More open to new ideas, more democratic/less autocratic,
- More relaxed and able to delegate;
- Less threatened, more nurturing; and
- Better organised and more confident.

2. **Leadership impact (School Management Team and School Governing Body)**

The programme aims to make the SMT more cohesive and aligned and to ensure that teachers are energised and motivated, leading to improved curriculum coverage, less absenteeism and more participation in extra-curricular activities.

About half the schools reported a significant improvement in the leadership and coherence of their SMTs, while the other half reported that they had not (yet) experienced this outcome to a significant degree. The same percentage of SMTs (50%) reported benefitting directly from leadership training exercises.

All the schools reported a positive outcome, albeit of varying significance. All senior teachers and SMT members interviewed reported benefitting through lessons shared by principals, through changes in leadership style and re-visioning and planning exercises.

3. **A change in vision / ethos at the school**

Many schools reported that positive changes to their vision and direction had occurred as a consequence of improved leadership. In some cases, these beneficial developments built on pre-existing plans and programmes, but it was found that 55 per cent of the schools had reworked their vision and mission, drawn up strategic plans, formed committees and enhanced the skills of SGBs.
Specific activities that contributed to a positive change of direction include strategic planning and goal-setting initiatives, co-opting the business leader on to the SGB, improving administrative and planning processes and adapting the school vision to align the aims and activities of teachers and SMTs.

4. Impact on educational outcomes at the school

An evaluation of the educational impacts of this programme was hampered somewhat by limited hard data on measurements such as teacher absenteeism and curriculum coverage, but improvements were reported by teachers, the SMT and school principals.

While analysis of standardised test scores such as ANA or NSC results was possible, comparative pre- and post-intervention evaluation were clouded by macro-level changes, such as departmental decrees to advance all students to a higher grade, which negatively influenced subsequent measurement scores and changes in curriculum.

Notwithstanding these limitations and caveats, it was found that the programme had a strong positive impact on the holistic educational environment of over 70 per cent of the schools, while 30 per cent of the schools reported that their school results were directly positively influenced by PfP involvement.

Principals, SMT members and ordinary teachers at most schools felt that, due to the positive impact of PfP on the school leadership, management, vision and resources, there had been a resulting positive impact on the educational environment and the performance of teachers and learners.

5. Parent and community involvement

Three-quarters of the schools in this sample reported that whereas they had previously, struggled to encourage involvement by parents and community members, since participating in PfP, they were doing much better.

This was due in many cases, to a change in approach from simply informing parents about meetings to inviting them properly, holding exciting events; making meetings more meaningful and engaging parents through techniques learnt in PfP workshops.

In the most successful schools, those schools have become effective ‘community hubs’ and the community has benefitted from being part of those schools. In the example of Yeoville Boys Primary, the school arranged for Department of Home Affairs’ officials to regularly help immigrant parents to obtain their required documentation and thereby built a tight-knit community around the school.
6. **Material gain or a connection to assistance with the school’s physical needs**

Material gain is not a focus of the PfP programme, which explicitly focuses on supporting and equipping school principals and mobilising active citizenship around the school. Despite this, the connection between the school and business leaders often generated material gains.

These benefits were very important for nine of the schools, while another five received a modest benefit and six received minimal or no material gain as a result of their PfP involvement.

Material benefits recorded at the schools include: computers, musical instruments, playgrounds and equipment, Internet access and Wi-Fi, food gardens and feeding schemes, overhead projectors, white boards, libraries, science equipment and fully equipped science laboratories, sports equipment and building materials.

Importantly, many of the schools also reported forming many more partnerships with other organisations and sponsors who could build on the fertile foundations laid by the PfP programme.

7. **Continuing supportive partnerships**

All of the 20 partnerships lasted the full official year of the PfP programme, and in only two cases among these 20 did the partnership not continue meaningfully beyond that.

Over half of the schools still enjoy very supportive and beneficial partnerships, although not all of these are in the “very active” category. It seems that the “very active” partners enjoy a particular kind of chemistry and commitment to their friendship and each other’s lives which has sustained them, despite other commitments and the passage of time.

The closest relationships, which kept going after the PfP year ended, were able to transcend the challenges of distance, busy lives and professional commitments, difficult local conditions, and differences in approach or opinion.
Validation of the Partners for Possibility theory of change

The study has essentially validated Partners for Possibility’s formal theory of change:

By drawing on the corporate sector and effectively bridging the gap between under-resourced schools and this well-resourced sector, Partners for Possibility is able to drive improved educational outcomes, despite the often challenging local context.

Evaluating the PfP methodology

Structured as a leadership development programme, Partners for Possibility connects business leaders with school principals in under-resourced schools in a year-long, part-time leadership development process consisting of formal training, action learning and coaching.

The programme comprises several components that strengthen the leadership capabilities of both principals and business leaders. This generates improvements at various levels in schools and ultimately contributes to improved academic outcomes and future prospects for learners.
The elements include:

1. **PfP content and experiential learning**

This includes five full days of formal training in internationally recognised content, including *Time to Think, Flawless Consulting, The Art of Possibility* and *Community: The Structure of Belonging*.

2. **Being part of a learning community and attending Community of Practice (CoP) meetings**

These groupings of partnerships, which are formally managed and facilitated, are reported to be crucial to the success of the programme.

In all cases, principals found it extremely valuable to leave their school environments, go to other schools, meet and build relationships with other principals and other business partners, share problems and solutions together, and offer support to one another in these learning communities.

The principals were also overwhelmingly full of praise for their respective coaches, known as Learning Process Facilitators (LPFs), who ran these circles and also met regularly with each partnership throughout the year.

3. **Action learning**

As part of their programme, principals and business leaders were required to create partnership plans on which their action learning programmes were based. These led to many different activities, including workshops with staff and involving corporate evaluation and facilitation functions to improve aspects of the school leadership and management.

In many instances these action learning programmes laid the foundation for the trust and long-term relationships between the Principal and business partner.

4. **Reflection and Sense-making**

Partners are required to reflect on their learnings and keep a journal and a compilation of their activities, in a Portfolio of Evidence. The Portfolio of Evidence is presented for evaluation at the end of the formal year. The evaluation found that this aspect of the programme could be strengthened in order to realise the full potential of reflection as a learning process for partners.
5. Being in a co-learning and co-action partnership

This varied significantly between partnerships and included some partnerships that met weekly and some that met far less frequently. The frequency and nature of meetings strongly influenced the nature of the partnership, which varied from close-knit thinking partnerships to more task-orientated partnerships focused on specific improvement plans.

Conclusion

Partners for Possibility clearly has a well-articulated and successfully executed Theory of Change. The programme draws on the leadership capabilities and resources of the corporate sector and leverages the power of partnership to effect change at under-resourced schools.

The closest relationships, which kept going after the PfP Leadership Development and Principal Support Process ended, were able to transcend the challenges of distance, busy lives and professional commitments, difficult local conditions, and differences in approach or opinion. Schools where partnerships had not continued at the same level were still found to have benefitted, but not to the same degree or to their full potential.

This independent evaluation has found that the PfP programme has had a very positive, albeit varied, impact on participating schools. There is no doubt that principal support and leadership development, along with the creation and support of partnerships between under-resourced schools and sectors of society that have access to skills and resources, is a crucial catalytic intervention in the education system, which can have profound positive impacts on struggling schools. The PfP model is a very sound, home-grown and affordable intervention that seeks to achieve these goals and has enjoyed considerable success so far, as this evaluation has found.

As PfP pushes towards its goal of involving 10 per cent of schools in South Africa in its programme, it is hoped that many of the lessons emerging from this evaluation will feed positively into the process, and PfP will be able to build on the successes of its model to date and mitigate any limitations effectively. It will also be crucial as the organisation seeks to take the programme to scale to hold on to the key ingredients of what makes partnerships successful in each local context, so as not to sacrifice quality in the quest for quantity and a more systemic impact.
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1. Introduction & Background

This report presents the findings of an independent evaluation of the impact and outcomes of Symphonia for South Africa’s (SSA) Partners for Possibility (PfP) programme.

The Partners for Possibility (PfP) programme, which was launched in 2010, is designed and implemented by Symphonia for South Africa (SSA), a registered non-profit organisation whose headquarters are in Cape Town. The programme, whose vision is a “Quality education for all South African children by 2025”, seeks to respond to the well-documented crisis facing South Africa’s education system through an intervention which aims, primarily, to catalyse a radical change in the quality of school leadership. Most principals of schools in under-resourced areas are – often despite their best efforts – fundamentally unprepared to play the highly specialised, complex and vital leadership role that is required for their schools to function successfully. Without effective leadership, School Management Teams (SMTs) and teachers lack the motivation, commitment and direction to provide the quality of education that is required and to tackle the many challenges faced by their schools, their learners and the communities they serve. PfP seeks to address this problem through a specially tailored twelve-month leadership development process in participating schools in which school principals are partnered with South Africans who have often already gained leadership skills and experience in their role as business leaders and captains of industry. Through this 12-month leadership development process, these principals are equipped with the confidence, skills and competence to become leaders who can change their schools for the better. Partners (principals and business leaders) are expected to work together (for between 3-5 hours per month) to stimulate change at four levels: the principal (to become confident and energised to lead); the SMT (to become an aligned and cohesive team); the community of teachers (to become energised and ready); and the parents and wider community (to become engaged).

Together, they are pushed out of their “comfort zones” through new insights provided through world-class leadership content, stimulating workshops, energising interactions in communities of practice (CoPs) with other principals and business partners, and face-to-face meetings. This evaluation provides an insight into the outcomes of this developmental process.

1.1 The Partners for Possibility Programme: Problem Statement & Theory of Change

Many historical and on-going structural factors, among others, are to blame for the South African education system’s failure to meet the needs of the majority of young people. In spite of high spending on education and some notable policy innovations since 1994, there are
many clear indicators that the education system in South Africa is in crisis.\textsuperscript{1} Up to 75 per cent of South Africa’s schools (approaching 20 000) are considered to be dysfunctional,\textsuperscript{2} while over 50 per cent of the children who start school never finish and only 35 per cent receive a Grade 12 certificate. The World Economic Forum \textit{Human Capital Report} for 2015 ranks South Africa’s education system third last out of 124 countries.\textsuperscript{3} According to experts, South Africa’s education system, which ranks the worst out of all middle-income countries, is currently “grossly inefficient, severely underperforming and egregiously unfair”.\textsuperscript{4} Such a system has profound implications for the life chances of the majority of South Africa’s young people.

This scenario requires a multi-dimensional and radical solution which no single intervention alone can address. One area of crucial focus relates to school leadership, which is acknowledged in a growing body of literature as one of the critical factors in turning around an education system in crisis.\textsuperscript{5} Research also shows that the leadership of school principals has a direct and substantial effect on learner achievement.\textsuperscript{6} In addition, there is increasing recognition that the role of school principals is not only critical, but also highly specialised. However, in South Africa the majority of school principals are not being sufficiently equipped with the knowledge, skills and expertise required for their specialist role,\textsuperscript{7} let alone with the ability to lead the major turnaround that is required in the education system.

Many principals and their staff have the passion and commitment to make a difference in the lives of South Africa’s youth. However, under-resourced schools face a plethora of problems which often make playing this crucial role impossible. These include problems faced at community-level (crime, substance abuse, gangsterism, violence, poverty, lack of skills, low interest in education), as well as broader factors to do with policy and the regulatory environment (frequent changes in curriculum and policy, high government expectations coupled with inadequate support, union activity). Such problems have typically led to a lack of motivation among teachers, resulting in high teacher absenteeism, poor curriculum coverage and inadequate contact time in class. Sound leadership is crucial to manage not only


\textsuperscript{3} \textit{The Human Capital Report 2015}, World Economic Forum.

\textsuperscript{4} Spaull (2013: 3).


the school, but also many of the broader issues which are part of the unpredictable, fluid and difficult context which under-resourced schools find themselves in.

Symphonia for South Africa seeks to leverage the resources available in the local business sector which, in terms of global rankings, is in many respects the opposite of the education system. The potential of highly skilled and experienced business leaders, who often acquire on-going professional training and development, has seldom been tapped into in the past. Although there are major Corporate Social Investment (CSI) budgets and initiatives targeting needy South Africans, such projects largely do not involve the transfer of leadership skills, nor do they make as much of a transformational impact as they could do. Many business leaders have never been challenged to move beyond their “comfort zones” and become engaged in meaningful partnerships which could go beyond the occasional Mandela Day painting or cutting the ribbon on a new infrastructure project.

The disjuncture between this clear need in the school system and the abundance in the business sector is what PfP seeks to turn into an opportunity. But rather than foster a paternalistic one-way mentoring process, in which business leaders are assumed to know everything, and principals are seen in patronising terms, PfP seeks to bring two people from these separate worlds – both of whom come from a place of “not knowing” about each other – in a “thinking partnership” relationship which can benefit both parties, and both sectors. In the context of radical separation and inequality, fostered over generations by apartheid, such partnerships also have the potential to play a major role in nation-building and bridging the divides which still exist in society. A very sound and well-theorised leadership development process informs the PfP programme. Figure 1 describes the theory that underpins the design of the PfP programme and Figure 2 summarises the PfP curriculum.

Figure 1: Leadership Development Hierarchy of impact

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The PfP programme is underpinned by a theory about leadership development: Leaders do not develop their capacity to lead by reading books or attending courses alone. Rather, there are nine aspects of the leadership development process. By weaving these aspects together in a carefully designed process, the chances of impact are significantly improved. The year-long PfP programme is designed to take both the principals and the business leaders through a process of development that incorporates all nine of the above-mentioned aspects. It is a multi-faceted approach, combining one-on-one meetings, world-class leadership content, creative learning workshops, the opportunity to apply lessons to the school context, and supportive and energising collective learning “communities of practice”. These nine different but interlinked learning processes build on each other and are designed to become more impactful at each stage. Partners learn not only from reading and workshopping new ideas, but from applying such ideas to the school context, learning in community with other partners, being pushed out of their “comfort zones” and reflecting on the process.

**Figure 2: PfP Leadership development and Principal support process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A transformational leadership development process</th>
<th>1 year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Community of Practice/ Learning Community</strong></td>
<td>8–10 partnerships in a Leadership Circle. Every Leadership Circle operates as a Community of Practice. 2.5 hour meetings every 6 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Content</strong></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Books" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Experiential Learning (structured processes)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Action Learning (grapple with real challenges and lead change at the school)</strong></td>
<td>3-5 hours/month x 11 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Coaching</strong></td>
<td>10 x 1 hour coaching sessions (virtual/face-to-face)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Reflection and Sense-making</strong></td>
<td>Journaling and monthly reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7. Celebration and Feedback</strong></td>
<td>Feedback on outcomes achieved from the year-long journey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Skilled Learning Process Facilitators (LPFs) lead each partnership through this process. The envisaged outcomes of this year are illustrated in Figure 3:

**Figure 3: Envisaged outcomes from the first year of the PfP process**
Figure 4: PfP Theory of Change
Figure 4 (above) presents the PfP theory of change, which shows that the programme seeks to make a range of short, medium and long-term impacts on each school it works with. Most of these envisaged outcomes and impacts relate to changes in the quality of school leadership which in-turn impact positively on the whole school and the quality of education it offers. Ultimately the programme seeks to have a more systemic impact on the entire education system by reaching and changing 10 percent of schools in South Africa for the better.

The PfP programme had, by 31 May 2016, initiated partnerships in 429 schools which are located mainly in Gauteng, the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. Eighty per cent of the schools targeted by PfP are primary schools because it is crucial that such change occurs at the earliest stages of the educational system, where crucial foundational learning occurs. This is also a sound approach in light of recent research confirming that a failure to acquire key foundational skills in reading, writing and numeracy by grade four will condemn most young people to failure throughout their entire school career.9

1.2 Background to the evaluation

In 2014 an internal evaluation of the PfP programme was conducted, which showed that PfP had made great progress in achieving its primary goals, as well as indicating that various multiplier effects were being experienced in participating schools. Furthermore, SSA has recently published a book which documents its model and the progress PfP has made so far.10 It was felt, however, that an independent third-party evaluation could better provide validation of the PfP model and its impact so far, and ultimately enable the programme to attract more support in order to up-scale its efforts and achieve systemic change in the education system.

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned publications, SSA also felt that not enough school stakeholders had yet been consulted on PfP’s impact beyond principals and business partners. Furthermore not enough, besides anecdotal evidence, was known about what happened to partnerships after they completed the official PfP year and whether documented benefits continued to accrue in the longer-term. Finally, limited hard evidence existed about multiplier benefits beyond the core intended benefits of the programme.
Terms of Reference

In late 2015, Dr Andrew Hartnack was approached by SSA to conduct this independent programme evaluation. A proposal was consequently put to the D.G. Murray Trust (DGMT) to fund the evaluation. This proposal was successful and work commenced in early 2016. The following terms of reference were given:

- To assess the primary and secondary (multiplier and systemic) impacts of the PfP programme at selected schools which have so far participated. In other words, the evaluation will assess how far PfP has managed to stimulate the leadership of school principals through its programme (primary goal), and to what extent, and in what ways, the leadership partnerships have led to further changes in the schools among the SMTs, community of teachers, the learners, and the parents and wider community (secondary goal).
- With the assistance of PfP, to identify 20 schools based in Cape Town and Gauteng at which to conduct the assessment.
- To design appropriate data-gathering tools, including interview and focus group discussion protocols.
- To visit the chosen schools and conduct interviews and other data-gathering exercises with a range of informants with insight into the partnership and its impact at each school.
- To gather information on key objective indicators from schools such as pass rates, dropout rates, teacher absenteeism and so on.
- To compile a comprehensive report (of approximately 50 pages) detailing the findings of the evaluation and providing recommendations to SSA.

Evaluation Sampling & Methods

This evaluation adopted a qualitative approach to understand the impact of the PfP programme. Twenty schools were selected for the study. In order to understand the outcomes of the whole year-long process on principals and schools, only partnerships which had completed the process were selected. Furthermore, the lead evaluator specifically chose schools to represent a full range of both older and newer partnerships so that the impact over time could be measured, as well as to what extent the programme has evolved its process since commencing in 2010. It was also agreed that six secondary schools would be selected to show the dynamics of partnerships in these different settings. Schools were also selected so that a range of socio-economic and demographic scenarios were included in the sample.

Ten schools in the greater Cape Town metropole were chosen, with four being located on the Cape Flats, two towards the city centre, two in the township of Du Noon, one in the Durbanville Winelands, and one in Hout Bay. These thus represented a full spectrum of socio-economic dynamics, enhanced by the fact that a number of formerly “coloured” schools were now commuter schools with learners largely from black townships. Nine
schools in greater Johannesburg were also chosen, again representing a balance between
township, suburban, peri-urban and city scenarios. One school in Durban was chosen when a
previously selected Johannesburg school dropped out of the study. It must be noted that
SSA did not dictate which schools would be chosen by the evaluator, but that a range of
schools – from those in which the model was thought to have worked well to those in which
problems had been experienced – were included.

Each of these schools were visited by an evaluation team during the course of February-April
2016. During the visit, principals were interviewed at length using a detailed discussion
guide. Members of the SMT, senior and junior teachers, learners and, in some cases, parents
and School Governing Body (SGB) members were interviewed, or included in focus group
discussions. In total, 120 persons were interviewed or included in discussions at the schools
during the evaluation (see Table 1, below). School tours were also conducted to view spin-
offs which had occurred because of the partnership. In addition, the lead evaluator
interviewed several business partners and PfP Learning Process Facilitators (LPFs) to gain
additional insight into the impact on each school. Material on each school on the PfP website
and in its various publications was also studied and compared with the findings of the
evaluators. As an exercise to obtain extra insight into the PfP process and its impact on other
schools, the evaluators attended a CoP event in Mitchells Plain, and a celebration event in
Paarl. Thus, the evaluators got first-hand insight into the impact of the programme on a
further 12 different schools, which added to their findings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Informant engaged with</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School principals</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMT members/teachers/SGB</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGB members/parents</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners</td>
<td>37 (focus discussion participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Process Facilitators</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Partners</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA Staff</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO staff (from NELI)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total engaged:</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following methodological approach was followed for this evaluation:

1. **Desk study of all available hard and soft-copy resources on the PfP programme:**

The desk study component of the review involved studying existing internal programme
literature (hard and soft-copy), and previous reviews and articles on the PfP programme, as
well as the book which has been published. In addition, literature on or about the selected
schools was studied (mostly found on the PfP website), as well as objective data that was
available, such as pass rates, drop-out rates, absenteeism. Apart from data on pass rates,

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11 See Table 3 (below) for details of the selected schools.
which was generally available, the evaluators found that most schools did not have readily available statistics on drop-out rates or absenteeism. They were only able to provide a more anecdotal indication in most cases.

2. Discussions with key PfP Role-players

The lead evaluator held three meetings with Gail McMillan and Merlinda Abrahams to discuss the programme and the approach for the evaluation. During these meetings, programme documentation was shared and core aspects of PfP discussed. In addition, frequent follow-ups and questions were asked over email throughout the process. The lead evaluator also presented the preliminary findings to a high-level SSA group in May 2016. The discussion and feedback from this session fed back into the final report. Finally, three LPFs were interviewed (over email), to obtain their insights into the PfP process and its impact on the schools they had worked with.

3. Selection and Site-visits to 20 schools

As described above, 20 schools were selected for this evaluation. These schools reflected the broader dynamics of schools in which PfP has so far worked, in terms of location and the socio-economic dynamics facing them. In the course of February – April 2016, site visits were conducted at each of the 20 schools. Several hours were spent at each school by the evaluation team, during which interviews and focus discussions were conducted and school tours were taken.

4. Interviews and focus groups with key individuals/groups at schools

One-on-one in-depth interviews were conducted during site visits with school principals, school management team (SMT) members and other teachers, and in some cases parents and school governing body (SGB) members. Interviews with principals were the longest, taking approximately 50 minutes to an hour. Interviews with SMT members and teachers took only 10 – 15 minutes. Focus group discussions were also held at most schools with senior learners to ascertain their impressions of the school leadership. These were mainly conducted during break time and took less than 15 minutes so as not to impact on their learning. Comprehensive interview or discussion protocols were developed for such interviews and focus groups (see Appendix A).

5. Attendance at a Community of Practice and Celebration event.

The evaluation team attended one CoP, held at Cornflower Primary School in Mitchells Plain, during the evaluation. The lead evaluator also attended a celebration event at the Noorder-Paarl Secondary School in April 2016. These events strengthened the insights gained on the impact of the programme.

6. Collection of photographic and other evidence

During the site visits, photographic and any other forms of evidence (e.g. school magazines, flyers etc.) were be gathered, illustrating the impact of the PfP programme.
Limitations and Challenges

The evaluation was largely free from problems and proceeded very smoothly, despite some initial problems getting hold of some principals. It is an indication of how well the PfP programme has been received and experienced by principals that it was so easy to obtain permission to visit schools and take time away from their busy leaders and staff. Even in the few cases where the schools initially selected were unable to participate in the evaluation, a great amount of enthusiasm was expressed for PfP and a similar amount of regret at not being able to participate was expressed. Only in one case – that of Steenberg High School – did a school visit not really work out as planned. Due to various constraints at the school, the evaluators were only able to interview the principal fully, but not other members of staff or stakeholders, despite visiting the school on two occasions in the hope of doing so.

2. Evaluation Findings

2.1 Twenty Partnerships in broader context of PfP

Before we consider the dynamics of the 20 partnerships which were evaluated in-depth, it is important to consider how these compare to the other partnerships SSA has initiated thus far. This will put the 20 evaluation partnerships into greater context in terms of both the issues faced in the schools and with partnerships, and in terms of the overall success of the PfP model.

SSA, through its monitoring and evaluation unit, has endeavoured to keep track of the outcomes and impacts of the partnerships it has launched through a variety of mechanisms. Not only are all partners expected to submit partnership plans and self-reflections, but reports and feedback from Communities of Practice (CoPs), Celebration events and meetings are compiled by the LPFs to feed back into the programme. Although not compulsory, partners are encouraged to submit a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) at the end of their year together. In addition, PfP has also since 2015 conducted exit interviews with participants where possible. From this rich information on each partnership, SSA is able to compile a database to monitor the overall outcome and progress of the partnerships it has initiated.

The lead evaluator studied one spreadsheet, entitled “Partnership Status as at 13 May 2016” to gain an insight into the partnership dynamics of all the partnerships entered into by that date. On this spreadsheet 346 partnerships are recorded, including those launched at the outset in February 2011, right up to the most recent partnerships launched in September 2015. Of these 346, the spreadsheet contains data on 288 partnerships; being those launched prior to May 2015 and therefore running long enough for data on their performance to have been captured. These data, on the 288 partnerships up to May 2015, provide an indication of the partnership outcomes from the first five years of the programme.

Overall, 243 partnerships (84%) completed the PfP leadership development year (see Figure 5). Only 29 definitely did not complete (10%), and in a further 16 cases (6%) SSA is unsure
if the process was followed satisfactorily, largely because communication was lost with principals or partners or, as happened in one or two early cases, the LPF did not manage the process effectively. Nevertheless, 252 (88%) are recorded as having definitely “benefitted” from being involved in the PfP programme, and in only six cases (2%) did participating schools say they did not benefit from being involved.\textsuperscript{12} Thus, the spreadsheet records that the PfP programme had an excellent success rate in its first five years, in terms of partnerships being established, completing the programme and reporting that the process was beneficial for the participating schools.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure5.png}
\caption{Partnership Status}
\end{figure}

Indeed, in 196 cases (68%), the spreadsheet shows partnerships which appear to have worked particularly well (so far). They completed the year and survived beyond the official end of the programme, with no problematic issues raised in these cases.\textsuperscript{13} All of these had completed the year and all principals are recorded as having benefitted in some way. Furthermore, 63 of the 92 unproblematic partnerships launched up to June 2014 definitely completed two years together (68%); and 39 out of the 62 unproblematic partnerships which had been launched by May 2013 had stayed in relationship for three years (63%). In the 92 cases where concerns with partnerships were noted, partnership success and longevity drops markedly. Nevertheless over half of “problematic” partnerships still enjoyed qualified success, with 48 out of 92 (52%) completing the first year, and 53 out of the 92 (58%) claiming to have benefitted. In many cases, partnerships survived despite hurdles they faced along the way, indicating that they were quite resilient.

It is also clear from the spreadsheet that most issues with partnerships are recorded in the early years of the programme. Thus, of the 149 partnerships launched up to October 2013, there are 82 which have issues or concerns flagged (55%), whereas after this date, there are only ten problematic partnerships noted out of 139 partnerships (7%). While this is partially

\textsuperscript{12} In 30 cases (10%) it is unclear if the school benefitted or not from being part of the PfP process.
\textsuperscript{13} Although, it is too early to tell if partnerships which completed their official year recently will survive.
due to the fact that these latter partnerships were more recently launched (and thus had not had the same amount of time for problematic issues to emerge), it also suggests that SSA took many of the lessons from the early partnerships and ensured that these lessons were incorporated into its practice. Such lessons were often around issues to do with selection of principals, LPFs or business partners. In many cases it is not noted on the spreadsheet why a particular partnership had an issue, but the comments that are recorded show that in most cases (29) the issue had to do with the business partner, in slightly less it had to do with the school principal (22), and in 12 cases, with the LPF. Table 2 shows some of these comments and issues.

Table 2: Issues affecting partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues with Principals (22)</th>
<th>Issues with Partners (29)</th>
<th>Issues with LPFs (12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Another concern about principal selection</td>
<td>• XXXX started own business, got very busy</td>
<td>• XXXX exited because he did not find the process valuable. LPF disaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• XXXX got very ill.</td>
<td>• African Bank went through a difficult time (x3)</td>
<td>• XXXX was a bad choice as a LPF &amp; the LC did not even have a closing event (x5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• XXXX was desperately unhappy with the principal. Principal selection issue</td>
<td>• Became very busy with an international conference. Principal talks eloquently about the value he got from PIP (without Partner)</td>
<td>• LPF did not challenge partner to learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal died soon after the PIP process</td>
<td>• XXXX went to work in Gauteng</td>
<td>• LPF did not work for this LC. Much learning from this failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal discovered that he hated his job &amp; is now working as a grade 1 teacher at a Montessori school</td>
<td>• XXXX left job</td>
<td>• LPF disaster (x3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal left the country</td>
<td>• XXXX realised that she wanted to ‘fix’ the principal. He did not really want to be part of the PIP. He excited quite early</td>
<td>• They were in partnership for a while but then XXXX was cross because her PoE was not marked in time. General check-in with her would be great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal realised that he was not coping and left the school &amp; WCED employment</td>
<td>• XXXX disengaged. Not sure why?</td>
<td>• XXXX felt that it was just not working for her. LPF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal retired (x5)</td>
<td>• XXXX was stretched way outside of her comfort zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal selection &amp; LPF issue</td>
<td>• XXXX found the process very difficult. Not sure what the final outcome was</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal selection was a big issue</td>
<td>• XXXX was sponsored and his heart was never really in the relationship.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Principal wasn’t really committed to the relationship</td>
<td>• XXXX became fixated with her own career</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partner was very unhappy with principal. Principal selection issue</td>
<td>• XXXX should never have been on the programme. He felt coerced by his manager. His heart was not in it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Much unhappiness about the selection of the principal</td>
<td>• XXXX left Spar &amp; disappeared off our radar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Much unhappiness from the partner (who paid for herself) about the principal not stepping up</td>
<td>• XXXX is doing her doctorate and very busy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• XXXX exited - felt pressured by XXXX. Not XXXX’s fault. This is when principal recruitment became a priority for us - we became more discerning</td>
<td>• XXXX left Hollard - we don’t have contact with him anymore</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fraud case against the principal. Principal finally reinstated after 2 years</td>
<td>• Partner had to pull out due to work pressures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Partner should never have joined the programme. He did not really want to be part of it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• XXXX left Nedbank</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• XXXX got very busy at work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• XXXX did this as a trade exchange. He should not really have been a PFP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• XXXX died</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• XXXX heart was not really in the programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• XXXX left A&amp;G to join Betterbond as CEO. Could not continue relationship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• She left her job, got married, spending a lot of time traveling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• XXXX’s company went into liquidation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• They had a bit of a wobbly because the partner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2 Overview of the 20 Schools Evaluated

The 20 schools chosen for in-depth evaluation are representative of a range of schools, as well as partnership types, dynamics and outcomes. They also span partnerships launched right at the beginning of the PfP programme, up to those launched as late as 2014 (see Figure 6). The only factor distinguishing those chosen for the evaluation from the broader set discussed above is that they all completed at least the official year of the PfP partnership. Outright failures, such as the 10 percent discussed above, were not included in the sample because it was of better value to assess partnerships which completed the official PfP activities (which overall happened in the vast majority of cases) so that the impact of the full year and subsequent spin-offs could be assessed. Table 3 shows the locations and contextual dynamics of the 20 schools selected for evaluation.

Table 3: Contextual background of selected schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Partnership Launch Date</th>
<th>Pre-existing Contextual Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kannemeyer Primary School</td>
<td>Grassy Park, Cape Town</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>628 Learners mostly from local coloured working class communities. Fairly good infrastructure but no hall. Was a struggle to get parents engaged. Principal was unconfident and unpopular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hout Bay High School</td>
<td>Hout Bay, Cape Town</td>
<td>March 2014</td>
<td>No fee school. Learners from very poor fishing community where unemployment, drugs and gangsterism are rife. Now have 400 Learners in school built for 350. 15 teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steenberg High School</td>
<td>Steenberg, Cape Town</td>
<td>March 2012</td>
<td>1150 Learners, 58 staff. Poor coloured community where drugs and gangsterism are a problem. Have a long-standing partnership with a UK high school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zonnebloem Boys Primary School</td>
<td>Zonnebloem, Cape Town</td>
<td>July 2014</td>
<td>Very old school on Anglican Church property. Inadequate infrastructure. Now a commuter school with predominantly black Learners from distant townships. 335 Learners, 9 teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dryden Street Primary School</td>
<td>Salt River, Cape Town</td>
<td>July 2012</td>
<td>Old school which is now a commuter school; not many from local area anymore. Over 600 Learners. 19 teaching staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norma Road Primary School</td>
<td>Athlone, Cape Town</td>
<td>July 2014</td>
<td>Commuter school in coloured community: 60% of Learners now from black townships. School has good reputation. Inadequate Departmental funding as Quintile 5 school. Staff were not unified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heathfield Primary School</td>
<td>Heathfield, Cape Town</td>
<td>February 2011</td>
<td>Mixed school with coloured Learners from close by and black Learners from nearby settlements like Vrygrond. Class size is 35-40. Have ties with UK schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Valley Primary School</td>
<td>Durbanville, Cape Town</td>
<td>March 2012</td>
<td>An old farm school on church land. 214 Learners and 9 teachers. No fee school. Learners from very poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sophakama Primary School | Du Noon, Cape Town | May 2013 | 1522 Learners. Mostly isiXhosa speakers from poor families in Du Noon. Struggle with language of learning and teaching.


Stoneridge Park Primary School | Stoneridge, Johannesburg | May 2012 | Originally a coloured school. 1276 learners in a school built for 700. 85% of Learners now commuters from Katlehong. Class size 45 as lack of classrooms.

Yeoville Boys Primary School | Yeoville, Johannesburg | May 2012 | Old Jewish school founded in 1907. Have 1189 Learners with 42 per class. Almost half of the Learners now of African immigrant origin. Good infrastructure but build for half the number.

Iphuteng Primary School | Alexandra, Johannesburg | September 2011 | 1600 Learners from surrounding working class community. Parent involvement was poor and the school systems were chaotic.

Masakhane-Twelelopele Junior Primary School | Zandspruit, Johannesburg | March 2014 | Grades 1-3 only. 899 Learners from local poor community. Many African migrants. Problems with unemployment, alcohol abuse, violence, child neglect. 27 teachers and 35-40 per class.

Bramley Primary School | Bramley, Johannesburg | February 2012 | Old middle-class Jewish school. Changed after 1994 and now has commuter population from Alexandra. Good infrastructure. 1200 Learners, 35 teachers.

Diepsloot Primary School | Diepsloot, Johannesburg | September 2011 | 1340 Learners from poor surrounding township community. 37 teachers. School is in prefab containers with only 29 class rooms. Management team was very poor previously.

Tswelopele Secondary School | Ivory Park, Johannesburg | May 2013 | Over 1000 Learners, with 40 teachers. School in prefab containers. Up to 49 Learners per class. No sports fields. Learners from local township community.

Highland North Boys School | Highlands North, Johannesburg | September 2014 | Old model C school with a long history. Good infrastructure. Learners now predominantly commuting from Alexandra. 658 Learners.

Zonkizizwe Secondary School | Katlehong, Johannesburg | June 2014 | No fee school. Community initially disengaged with education and opposed to the principal. Got 60% NSC result in 2013. Also had high pregnancy and drop-out rates.

Khanyanjalo Primary School | Inanda, Durban | February 2013 | 1400 Learners, grades 1-6. Class sizes are huge – 47 in some classes. School lacks classrooms, especially as grade 7 will commence next year. No fee school.

The Cape Town schools included three secondary schools and seven primary schools widely spread across the metropole. Four are located in suburbs formerly classified as “coloured” on the Cape flats, two are in a predominantly isiXhosa-speaking township to the north of the city; two are closer to the city centre; one is in the town of Hout Bay; and one in the Durbanville Winelands. As unique as each of these schools are, they all share common challenges such as large class sizes; inadequate infrastructure such as halls, classrooms and
sports fields; challenges with involving parents and communities due to disinterest and the scattered nature of school families (commuter schools); and socio-economic challenges in the school communities such as unemployment, gangsterism; drug and alcohol abuse; child abuse and violence.

Figure 6: School location and PfP Partnership launch date

The Johannesburg schools are similarly scattered throughout the metro. One is in a formerly ‘coloured’ area but now draws its learners predominantly from a black township; two are in formerly white middle-class suburbs but are now commuter schools for black children; one is a formerly Jewish school closer to the city centre, which now has many African immigrants as Learners; and five are in black low-income townships. The school in Durban is also in a low-income black township. These schools all struggle with similar issues to those faced by the Cape Town schools, although gangsterism is less of a challenge and there are slightly more working opportunities available in Gauteng. Language of learning and teaching also tends to be a slightly greater challenge in Gauteng because of the multiplicity of home languages spoken by Learners.

All 20 schools also had another key challenge in common, although the extent to which this problem was significant differed. This challenge relates to school leadership style and capacity, among both school principals and teachers in the School Management Teams.
School Governing Bodies (SGBs), in addition, were often under-capacitated and unable to offer the guidance, support and oversight they were intended to provide. In many cases, the multiple serious challenges facing school leadership teams were threatening to overwhelm them, with Provincial Education Departments providing very little by way of support or assistance, yet pressurising the schools to achieve better results and judging the leadership harshly when results were not up to their expectations. Even where a school had competent, experienced, committed and passionate principals and senior teachers, as was often the case among the 20 schools assessed here, these problems could prove almost impossible to overcome.

Richard Carelse, principal of Stoneridge Primary (Johannesburg) illustrates this situation well in his reflection on his leadership struggle:

“I had been the deputy, but I was thrown in the deep end. My personal skills with teachers were at zero. I was more a manager than a leader. Time was short and I was trapped in trying to improve the results and trying to set them right. There was lots of pressure from the Department and financial issues, governance and so on to deal with. I had to perform all these roles by myself.”

In addition, principals and SMTs were often constrained or manipulated by political factors, such as union activity among staff or political activism among the community. According to some principals, the unions posed a significant threat to school leadership. As Mike Thobejane, principal of Iphuteng Primary School in Alexandra put it: “The unions were the biggest challenge. Most schools in townships are run by unions rather than by managers. I was able to deal with the issue of unions very well and decisively and this enabled the school to function.” Not every principal is necessarily a union member or connected to the unions, which can make dealing with disputes (where teachers are members) very difficult, as noted above.

Such leadership challenges impacted staff morale and motivation, often leading to high teacher absenteeism, loss of contact time in class and failure to cover the curriculum adequately. Additionally, staff were often divided into cliques or “camps”, failing to pull together or support the principal on key issues, or conflicting with each other and poisoning the atmosphere of the school. This environment, of course, impacted negatively on results in many of these schools. It must be noted that at some of these schools, the principals had already started to turn around this situation and improve results before their involvement with PfP but, as will be discussed below, PfP has evidently strengthened these gains in various ways.
2.3 Impact and Effectiveness of the PfP Transformational Leadership Development and Principal Support Process

“The way it’s designed, it ignites creativity into individuals. You start to become confident, trusting and so on. If you are not in PfP, you start to fear the District, fear colleagues and other principals. But PfP makes people to open up and share ideas and become more free. I have personally recommended it to ten other principals.” - Noko Leso, principal of Bramley Primary School, Johannesburg.

“The Department never gave me orientation when I became principal, but PfP gave me that opportunity.” – Joe Makhafhula, principal of Diepsloot Primary School, Johannesburg.

“Being involved with PfP allows you to get refocused on your passion. If I was just here for a salary cheque, I would have left long ago. So it gives you a point of call as the Department of Education just frustrates you. But now you can solve your own problems...It hit the nail on the head. It was exactly what I needed and it came at the right time.” – Deon May, principal of Zonnebloem Boys Primary, Cape Town.

The above quotes illustrate the overwhelming sentiment of the principals who participated in this evaluation, in terms of the value of the PfP programme. Before examining in detail the outcomes of the PfP intervention, I will first present feedback from the principals relating to how useful and effective they felt the PfP transformational leadership development process was during their year on the programme.

The first thing to note is that principals overwhelmingly and enthusiastically, to a person, felt that the concept and the year-long programme were relevant, stimulating and beneficial for them and their schools. In some cases, principals admitted to being sceptical of involvement at first, but in these cases their fears turned out to be unfounded and they now admit to benefitting greatly. Joe Makhafhula (Diepsloot Primary School), for example, observed: “At first I thought this would be a waste of time and resources. But after a few meetings I began to see the benefits. This is a position of loneliness because sometimes you have no-one to talk to.” In quite a few other cases, principals said they initially expected their involvement to lead to material gains for the school, but in every case, they came to realise that PfP was much more about their growth and the opportunity to lead the school better. As Tembi Kutu, of Inkwenkwezi High School, put it: “I first thought the partnership was about providing resources, but I soon saw that it was more about working together, sharing ideas and getting support.” Deon May (Zonnebloem Boys Primary) held a similar view: “My initial expectation was, I’m gonna get a lot of money and stuff! But I soon realised that it was more about upping our own game, and not about new furniture and that sort of thing.”

Principals also largely found the programme well run and very few had substantive suggestions for how the programme could be improved. Some had quibbles or minor suggestions, which will be discussed in a later section, but very few had experienced any major problems with the programme.
Specific aspects of the PfP leadership development and principal support process are now discussed. As can be observed in Figure 2 (page 11), the PfP leadership development process has learning in community, and being part of a learning community with other partners (principals and business leaders) as a core component. Leadership circles, consisting of 8-10 partnerships meet each other (at different schools) for 2.5 hours every six weeks throughout the year (totalling 20 hours) to enable this communal learning process, which is facilitated by an LPF. The impact of these “communities of practice” will be discussed in detail below, but first, I will discuss the impact of the ideas and skills learned through the content delivery and experiential learning processes.

A) PfP Content & Experiential Learning

It is worth going into some detail about the content and experiential learning aspects of the PfP programme as they form such a core aspect of the PfP leadership development process.

All of the principals were very enthusiastic about the books which they were asked to read: *Time to Think; Flawless Consulting; The Art of Possibility* and *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. None of them felt that any of the books were irrelevant to their context, despite the fact that they were written with the business sector in mind, and that the ideas in them have been written for a global audience.

However, one or two did struggle to get into the material at first, and it was apparent that some principals had been more enthused by the ideas in the books than others, and of course that each principal had different aspects of the content that appealed to their individual situations and personalities. Furthermore, it was clear that the experiential learning workshops really brought the issues in the books to life for many principals, and solidified lessons they had gained from reading the books. Rebekah Dikgale (Tswelopele Secondary) illustrates this point with the following reflection:

“The books alone were not as powerful as when we had workshops. Some of the books were hard to concentrate on, but the workshops show you what the books are about and then you can revisit the text with a new understanding.”

For some, like Sabelo Makubalo (Sophakama Primary), specific books were more difficult to get into than others: “*Time to Think* and *The Art of Possibility* were more difficult to understand than the other books,” he felt. Nevertheless, the other books really appealed to him: “*Flawless Consulting*: I really fell in love with that one. The issue of inviting people! *And Time to Think*, where they tell you not to let outsiders to dictate was really useful.” For others, such as Heathfield Primary’s Andre Pretorius, the insights took time to sink in before they made sense: “The first time I read *The Art of Possibility*, it was closed to me”. But I picked it up again later and it was great!” He also really appreciated *Flawless Consulting.*

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14 These books are authored by Nancy Kline, Peter Block, Rozamund & Benjamin Zander and Peter Block respectively.
15 In one or two cases it seemed to the evaluators that Principals had not read all of the books, which is perhaps not surprising.
16 By “outsiders”, the Principal was referring to potential school sponsors or partners which try to dictate or impose projects on the school when these might not be of much value.
For some, the books were particularly useful because of the personal lessons and growth they offered. For Andre Kraak (Steenberg High), the books were “Very useful. There are sections I still re-read. It made me reflect, and the case studies are useful.” Similarly, Tembi Ndlovu (Khanyanjalo Primary) felt that the books really helped her to tackle some unhealthy habits and ways of seeing the world:

“Time to Think was incredible! It is amazing how much we have to unlearn! “That, and the community book were good. For example, I could not look people in the eye because of my cultural upbringing as a woman. So I learnt to be more assertive and do this with more confidence.”

Tembi Kutu (Inkenkwezi High) found the Art of Possibility and Time to Think particularly good because he developed his listening skills and learnt to better understand different groups at his school. Meanwhile, Deon May (Zonnebloem Boys Primary) felt that “Time to Think was very specific and useful. I could put it to use immediately. Flawless Consulting was also good and it added real context to things I was facing.”

Other principals emphasised even more strongly that the value of the books and experiential learning went further than personal growth, and led directly to changes in their ways of leading their staff and school communities. For at least half of the principals, the lessons about holding meetings differently were immediately put into practice. Bramnal Swartz (Norma Road Primary) articulates this particularly well:

“When I did Time to Think, I immediately tried to do meetings differently. The first day after training I changed the venue of the meeting and made it more interactive. I made sure it was not just my pre-set agenda, but asked questions instead and divided the room around tables. Then I found that the very things I wanted to discuss, they brought it up themselves! So I saw that sitting around the table with peers worked. So this was a very key tool that I learnt.”

Swartz felt that such lessons were extremely relevant to the local context because authors such as Peter Block are “world experts on leadership”. He says he is “constantly going back to the books as there are some gems in there”, and he even took his school theme for 2015 from the Art of Possibility:

“I chose ‘making a difference’. I read that you must stop seeing negatives and make a difference instead. So I got teachers to reflect on one area where they had made a difference in the last month, rather than focus on negatives. It was a fun reflective exercise with teachers – and I wanted teachers not to expect a child not to learn or succeed, but believe in them. And this attitude ultimately made a difference in the results.”

Annah Lebethe (Masakane-Tswelelopele Junior-Primary) took lessons and applied them to her engagements with parents: “I learnt how to invite parents for meetings in an exciting way – like with coloured paper – not just inform them with boring notices.” Similarly, Lindelani Singo (Yeoville Primary) used the lessons to build his school community: “I love Flawless
Consulting, I immediately began contracting everyone one-on-one! I even contracted the parents so we would know ‘this is what we are expecting of you and what are you expecting of us?’ The principal is in limbo between parents, the Department of Education and teachers, so contracting helps to get people to support you.” Indeed, Mike Thobejane (Iphuteng Primary) felt that Flawless Consulting was the most important book: “It should form the basis for every training session. This came later but should have come at the start so that contracting happens sooner.”

For others, such as Priscilla August (The Valley Primary), very tangible spin-offs grew out of principles she came across in the PfP content:

“The books are very valuable! I would never have read a book like Flawless Consulting because it’s about business. And the Art of Possibility, it really blessed me! Our Story Box grew out of this book and we were able to address our backlog of language and social skills with that. I would recommend the content highly to any principal.”

Similarly, for Joe Makhafhula (Diepsloot Primary), he links lessons learnt to tangible spin-offs: “A chapter of one of the books talks about assumption. It taught me never to assume things. I assumed parents understood English and we used to write a newsletter in English. But this assumption was wrong. This gave rise to the formation of an ABET centre with 350 adult learners at the school! I also learnt listening skills and to engage and debate without being agitated.” And Meneer Makgalaka (Highlands North Boys Secondary) loved the Art of Possibility best: “It taught me that instead of whining and blaming people, to see the possibilities out there. For example, we had a fee paying problem which is much better now – and we also then got white boards and data projectors and a DVD because of PfP.”

As indicated above, workshops were enjoyed and valued by all of the participants. A few more comments from principals illustrate this point:

“Flawless Consulting was the best workshop! It was an absolutely magical experience!” – Bayar Laattoe (Dryden Street Primary).

“The three workshops were ‘wow moments’ for me. There are certain things you are not aware of until they are presented like this. I learnt things like being a good listener; to keep quiet and don’t try to solve people’s problems for them, but just ask questions to help the person.” – Rebekah Dikgale (Tswelopele Secondary).

“They were very good. The facilitators brought it to our level and you could understand issues from the books. We did role plays and so on, and the workshops had different groups each time who you could interact with.” – Richard Carelse (Stoneridge Primary).

“The book workshops blew our minds and taught us that we have to rise above our challenges.” – Elizabeth Masemola (Zonkizizwe Secondary).
The PfP workshops are designed to be brain-friendly, embodied experiences which help participants to access their emotions. It is quite clear that among the 20 principals in this sample, the workshops were experienced in this way. Andre Pretorius (Heathfield Primary), for example, explained: “Putting up the camera and watching how you face someone you have to have a difficult conversation with was awesome. When you play back the video you see how calm you are and that you can tackle difficult issues”. They also taught us to think in colours, like green represents seeing yourself as self as victim; red is for an expert; blue means you are cooperative...” Deon May (Zonnebloem Boys Primary) also found value in these embodied ways of training: “We did this video recording of ourselves speaking. You could see yourself warts and all. It was practical, hands-on training.”

Only two concerns were raised regarding the way the content was presented during the workshops. Sabelo Makubalo (Sophakama Primary School) pointed out that some South Africans whose first language is not English could struggle: “In the workshops the American accent of the presenter was a bit hard to follow on the screen.” Nevertheless, he enjoyed them: “It was a really useful management insight and understanding of yourself. And it is really good to practice with your partner things like sorting out misunderstandings in the workshop.”

One other concern with the workshops was raised by Deon May’s business partner, Nick Wells:

“I did not find the community building workshop as effective as the others. It was not so well attended by the business leaders and it felt more like a motivational talk, but did not really present practical tools for building community as such. So this maybe needs to be more hands-on.”

According to PfP programme managers, steps have already been taken lately to make the community building workshop more practical, based on similar feedback from other participants.

B) Being part of a Learning Community and attending Communities of Practice (CoP) meetings

“It can’t just be you and your partner. You must be close to a group so you can be like coals to keep each other alight” – Andre Pretorius (Heathfield Primary).

Being a part of a learning community, through the Communities of Practice (CoPs), were clearly also a crucial and greatly appreciated aspect of the PfP leadership development and principal support process for all principals. In all cases, principals found it extremely valuable to leave their school environments, go to other schools, meet and build relationships with other principals and other business partners, share problems and solutions together, offer support to one another and learn together. In this process, the principals were also overwhelmingly full of praise for their respective Learning Process Facilitators (LPFs) who facilitated these circles.

Below is a selection of comments illustrating the value that principals got out of the CoPs:
“They helped facilitate the relationship between me and my partner. I also learnt from and shared ideas with different people and business partners. You meet partners who have a different background from the one you are partnered with, so it’s a great benefit as you see things from a different angle.” – Tembi Kutu (Inkwenkwezi High).

“You get to listen to other principals’ problems and solutions and experiences. It was an ‘ah ha’ moment for me as I realised that not every problem was a problem.” – Annah Lebethe (Masakane-Tswelelopele JP).

“They were a pressure cooker release-valve.” Andre Kraak (Steenberg High).

Many of the principals highlighted learning from the experiences of other schools, as Richard Carelse (Stoneridge Primary) did:

“The highlight was going to other schools and comparing these to your own situation and realising ‘hey, I am complaining with a loaf of bread in my hand’. I saw mobile schools and so many bigger problems at other schools, but they were doing miracles, so I was inspired. You got to visit other schools and steal their practices, and implement and refine them!”

Another principal, Joe Makhafhula (Diepsloot Primary) did just this, as he explains:

“I learnt that in order to run an effective garden we needed to include the community. This I learnt from a principal from Orange Farm. Now five volunteers from the community are running our garden! Also on the issue of interviews and deployment, we learnt from others.”

This was particularly important because, according to several principals, their jobs seldom took them out to learn from other schools, since they were mainly “sitting in an office dealing with officials only.” (Sabelo Makubalo, Sophakama Primary). Bramnal Swartz also felt that principals had to keep their professional distance from staff, so that these events allowed them to develop friendships with fellow educationists and speak openly about their challenges. For Tembi Ndlovu (Khanyanjalo Primary), the fact that senior schools were involved with her circle was really useful since she obtained a different perspective than she normally got. Many principals were in fact still in regular touch with principals they met in the CoPs, and Noko Leso (Bramley Primary) testified that she had gone from viewing fellow principals as competitors and “enemies” to seeing them as friends. In fact, even though her relationship with her business partner did not survive beyond one year, she still enjoys a supportive relationship with the other principals in her learning circle:

“In our circuit, we still communicate with each other. We learnt to communicate and share. So this relationship is still going. It’s good because they don’t judge you. Other principals are still in competition mode, but not us.”
Principals also emphasised having their perspectives broadened by these visits and the regular sharing and the shared learning journeys they were on with fellow principals and business partners in their Learning Circles. As Deon May (Zonnebloem Boys Primary) put it:

“It gave us an opportunity to talk about our struggles. Sometimes solutions would come from a different partner than yours even. And also you could see the struggles of the other principals and reach out and network with them.”

According to Juan Julius (Hout Bay Secondary), his circle was the best one ever in the whole PnP programme, and he showed off a publication they had made about the schools in the circle, which still interact regularly on their social media groups and in person. Although CoPs are scheduled for after 2pm when school has ended, most of the principals felt that getting to these meetings could still be a challenge, especially if there were crises at the school or the circle was being hosted at a distant school, but that it was worth the effort in the end.

C) Action Learning

In the section below, which discusses the outcomes of the programme, it will become apparent the extent to which the lessons learnt by principals were put into action to address problems at their schools. During the year-long process, principals and their partners are expected to spend 40 hours in which they specifically “grapple with real challenges and lead change at the school”. With this aim in mind, they are expected to develop partnership plans, which for many was the vehicle through which action learning was implemented. Some held workshops with their senior staff to obtain their ideas and buy-in for projects they wished to undertake or issues they wished to tackle. In the case of some, such as Zonnebloem Boys Primary and Tswelopele Secondary, the staff were involved in coming up with strategic areas for improvement and appointing committees which would take these forward.

As will be apparent below, different principals/SMTs took these projects further than others, or had varying levels of success in this area. They also had markedly different focusses, depending on each context. Thus, for The Valley Primary, addressing a key educational concern (literacy and social skills) was important, while for schools such as Zonnebloem Boys Primary, addressing issues relating to the staff was a priority: “In our group, we were the first partners to realise that we should focus on the people of the school – parents, teachers and so on, not superficial stuff.” (Deon May). For more recently concluded partnerships, action learning and implementation of their plans was still ongoing.

At Stoneridge Primary, the business partner, Nina Welstead, took the action learning aspect to another level, with a surprise inspection of the school to provide feedback from an outside perspective. Much to Richard Carelse’s credit, he took the experience as a positive learning opportunity:

“People from Nedbank came and gave us an honest report. They came unannounced and they found litter and an overgrown garden. They saw little things that we did not notice and it was a blunt report. I read that report for three days and I felt challenged to improve things.”
Such an approach requires a solid and trusting relationship between the principal and the business partner, which was the case here.

**D) Being in a co-learning and co-action Partnership**

Regular face-to-face meetings between partners were appreciated by all of the principals who participated in the evaluation. However, the frequency, focus and nature of these meetings were determined by the dynamics of each partnership and the relationship that was developed. Some partners met every week and were very much the “thinking partners” envisaged by the PfP programme, keeping in regular contact even when they were not scheduled to meet. Others met twice a month and still enjoyed very good and productive relationships, while perhaps less intimate than the former cohort. A few met less frequently and it appears that they met mainly to plan specific activities, or fulfil their partnership plans, rather than to engage in a “thinking partner” relationship. The examples below illustrate varying partnership and coaching dynamics:

Tembi Kutu (Inkwenkwezi Secondary) testified that the partnership with Pauline de Klerk

> “Worked for me: we were able to sit down and share ideas, and I was able to get support on things to help the school. For example, we were trying to motivate the teachers to see their value at school – and their involvement as team members. So we introduced a breakfast for the teachers and prizes for the best teacher.” All in all, he says “I enjoyed the support so much. To have someone to share your frustrations and successes with is so good. It helped to share difficulties: it might not bring a solution, but to air your frustrations is good.”

Others, such as Sabelo Makubalo (Sophakama Primary) learnt key skills from their partner:

> “It was wonderful! Awesome! I learnt from him that it is good to invite people into certain things and not force them. And that emails are important – to give feedback in writing and copy people in is a really key tool.”

Meneer Makgalaka (Highlands North Boys High) also appreciated learning new things through his partner:

> “He was the best! He taught me to run the school like a business, where your learners are customers, and parents are shareholders, and you need to invest in them and offer the best product. I don’t think I had learnt anything about leadership up until that point. I learnt about listening, conflict resolution, how to get staff on board and Irwin also helped me to put the disappointing results into context during our PfP year.”

Tembi Ndlovu’s (Khanyanjalo Junior) partner, meanwhile, played the “thinking partner” role by introducing her to additional material: “He gave me ‘Business Unusual’ to read and it helped me to think further about managing change and growth at the school.”

Similarly, Andre Pretorius (Heathfield Primary) reported: “We became the perfect fit. We really got on well. She taught me modelling: that you must be a model to others. We opened
up and shared deep confidential stuff and learned to trust one another.” The necessity of being honest to build a good relationship was echoed by Priscilla August of The Valley Primary: “We did not know each other but we realised we had to be open and transparent from the beginning. We met weekly. It was so good! It taught me to think and it was based on raw honesty and the sharing of dreams.”

Elizabeth Masemola (Zonkizizwe High) emphasised how valuable and different the PfP model is to others because of the moral support that it provides:

“People in leadership need someone from outside to listen and advise and share their burdens of responsibility. Mentors often ask you to account, but a partner does not judge you. People from the Department of Education just come to find out why the school was failing, but do not help you to address the problem. I had so many problems and didn’t even want to see a Departmental Official. Lots of people made demands and I chased them away. I was overwhelmed and tired when I met Graham. But then I realised that this kind of partnership is what every leader should have.”

Others, such as Andre Kraak (Steenberg High) agreed: “It served as a release valve for me”, as did Rebekah Dikgale: (Tswelopele High):

“I needed someone to listen to my problems and then direct me to people who could help me to solve my problems. So he helped me offload my burden. Another principal who had been on the programme told me I should go for it because you are able to relax and forget about the challenges you are having. So I wanted someone who would help me forget about my challenges.”

And Deon May (Zonnebloem Boys Primary) also had a very positive experience of the PfP year with his partner:

“Nick has been a cool partner, he listened and was patient. He was from a financial background and he was close by, so that worked well. You are very isolated as a principal, so it was very nice to have someone to bounce things off. Nick’s blinkers fell off after a while when he realised the amount of work principals do. So Nick brought his expertise in timelines, dates and deadlines, stakeholder management, and in actioning things to the table. Nick was an igniter – I still had to run with things, but he taught me to fish. So he empowered me to take action and it was a learning experience for both of us. Solutions would come from me, myself! He was like a sparring buddy, not a mentor.”

Although all partnerships varied, in only three instances did was any kind of doubt or reservation expressed by principals. This does not mean that these three were bad partnerships by any means. In fact, the principals gained much. Bramnal Swartz, for example enjoyed a very good relationship with his partner Tony Bush, and gained much from Tony’s skills. However, he initially felt that he was “losing out” because his partner was retired. He felt that other schools would get more out of having an active business leader as a partner. The sponsors of his partnership were also based quite far away from the school, so he did not
get to see them as often as he would have liked. Meanwhile, Noko Leso (Bramley Park) enjoyed a good relationship with her partner, but they were not able to meet as often as in other cases discussed here. And Annah Lebethe (Masakane-Tswelelopele) likewise built a good relationship, but her partner travelled and had family commitments which made meeting regularly a problem. Both of the latter partnerships did not last much beyond the first year. Bramnal Swartz’s concerns therefore have to be balanced with the opposite risk: that of partnering with a very busy business leader who is too committed elsewhere to be an effective partner.

E) Reflection and Sense-making

The PfP theory of change posits that partners will also learn much from reflection and sense-making throughout the leadership development process. This process of reflection – through journaling and compilation of Portfolios of Evidence (PoEs) – was also seen as valuable by most principals. Noko Leso (Bramley Primary), for example, shared the following insight:

“We got to evaluate what we did and I was very proud. And I gained confidence: In 2012 I entered for a national teaching award and I got to number two in Gauteng!. And last year I entered and got to position one in the Province and then I represented the Province nationally and came fourth!”

However, this particular aspect of the PfP year was not met with as much enthusiasm as the other aspects, most probably because principals and their business partners struggled to find the time to engage with the reflection process properly. Bramnal Swartz (Norma Road Primary), for example, said he found the reflection aspect “problematic”, and went on to reflect: “I would have loved to receive a journal upfront from PfP with questions for daily reflection. With the way it was formatted, it was difficult to do it properly with time constraints”.

Furthermore, one principal, Annah Lebethe (Masakane-Tswelelopele JP) had a problem with her PoE, as she explains:

“When I had to submit my portfolio of evidence it was returned. Savannah [LPF] told us to submit everything but she did not check on us or tell us what the expectations were. So it was returned from Cape Town. It was one of the most disappointing things. We wished she could have gone through the tools or given us a model file or something. Only two of the principals in our circle tried again to finish. Of the six of us, most became demotivated and so did the partners.”

Thus, while she enjoyed a good relationship with the LPF (and still does), she felt that the instructions and process around how PoEs should be compiled could have been better in her case. It must be noted that according to PfP staff, procedures for supporting participants to compile their PoEs have subsequently been improved. These are moderated by the University of the Western Cape and Professor Visser, who currently moderates the portfolios, recently
reported that he has witnessed a steady improvement in the quality of evidence being submitted.

2.4 Overview of PfP Impact on the 20 Schools

“A lot of the value for us is not tangible yet, but we got a hell of a lot of value out of the programme that will be there for years to come.” – Bramnal Swartz (Norma Road Primary)

Appendix B shows a matrix, on which all 20 partnerships are recorded and ranked according to how successful each has been in nine different areas. These nine areas, chosen by the evaluators (based on both PfP intended outcomes and observed spin-offs at schools), are the following:

- Leadership impact: Principal
- Leadership impact: SMT/SGB
- Good partnership in year 1
- On-going supportive partnership
- Infrastructure/material spin-offs
- Educational spin-offs
- Values learnt still used
- Community/parent spin-offs
- School direction/vision spin-offs

Four of these indicators are envisaged in the short-term and medium-term outcomes and intended impact in PfP’s theory of change. These are “Leadership change: Principal” (short-term); and “Leadership impact: SMT/SGB”, “Community/parent spin offs” (medium-term); and “Educational spin-offs” (intended impact). The other indicators point to the effectiveness of the PfP model (good partnerships in the first year and thereafter), and to additional impacts which were not necessarily envisaged by PfP at the outset (infrastructure/material spin-offs; school direction/vision spin offs).

The ranking is comparative. Partnerships which scored well across all nine indicators were given a ranking of ten out of ten. Five such schools - Kannemeyer Primary, Hout Bay High, Stoneridge Primary, Dryden Street Primary and Yeoville Boys Primary – were accorded this score. Not only had their school leadership been significantly positively impacted through involvement with PfP, but they had enjoyed all the other spin-offs to a large degree. Those who had experienced most of these positive impacts, but had experienced slightly less impact in one or two areas, were given a score of nine out of ten (e.g. Heathfield Primary, Iphuteng Primary). Where schools had experienced less positive impact across a number of the indicators their scores dropped down. The lowest score given is six out of ten (Steenberg High; Zonnebloem Boys Primary), and it must be noted that six out of ten still indicates a positive impact for the school as a result of being involved with PfP. However, it can be observed that in some of the areas (e.g. “Leadership change: SMT”; “Infrastructural spin-
offs”) these schools (to date) experienced less of a positive impact in comparison to the top-ranked schools.

As can also be observed on the matrix, all schools scored very well in terms of the first indicator: “Leadership impact: Principal”. In only one case (Steenberg High) were the evaluators not certain if the impact on the principal’s leadership had been as great as for other principals in the sample. This is not to say that there was no positive impact in this area for the principal, but rather an indication that the benefit does not appear to be as great as in some other cases. As can also be observed, the top half of the cohort largely also saw significant positive change for its school leadership team (SMTs). While every school did record some positive impact, the bottom ten schools largely did not experience, or were yet to experience, as great a change in this area. Since several of the partnerships had only completed their PfP year quite recently, it is perhaps not surprising that this aspect of school leadership was still to be impacted fully by involvement in the PfP programme.

As will be discussed below in more detail, it is also apparent from the matrix that infrastructural or material spin-offs were not as evident or strong, especially in the bottom-ranked ten schools. Likewise, some partnerships had not continued to the same extent as in other cases, as reflected on the matrix. In the next section, I discuss these impacts and indicators in more detail.

### 2.5 Assessment of PfP Outcomes and Impacts

#### 2.5.1 Leadership Change: Principal

Positive leadership change for the principals who participate in PfP is the key goal of the programme. The stated outputs on PfP’s theory of change model are dominated by techniques and skills to improve the leadership and functioning of principals. These are:

- Techniques to enhance one’s own and others thinking
- Ability to develop generative relationships
- Skills for dealing with challenging people and situations
- Skills and tools for mobilising stakeholders
- Skills for dealing with ambiguity and complexity

The envisaged short-term outcomes (realised after the 1st year) are also all tailored to ensure that each participating school principal is confident and competent. Specifically, the programme aims to ensure that the principal is a person who:

- Collaborates widely with school stakeholders
- Actively engages staff in decision making
- Recognises and celebrates achievements
- Proactively communicates school vision

17 It was also not possible to assess this to the same extent as at other schools because the Principal did not facilitate the evaluation team with easy access to his staff members.
• Actively promotes teachers development
• Proactively engages with school stakeholders

It must be stated at the outset that many of the principals included in this evaluation, by their own assessment, were on a journey of leadership development before they participated in the PfP programme. A few, such as Noko Leso (Bramley Primary) and Annah Lebethe (Masakane-Tswelelopele JP), had completed courses at the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance (MGSLG), or held academic qualifications relating to school leadership and management (Bramnal Swartz; Tembi Ndlovu). Others had leadership experience in a number of realms. For example, Lindelani Singo (Yeoville Boys Primary) was involved with the programmes of SADTU, and in this role had organised workshops for teachers; Mike Thobejane (Iphuteng Primary), was the acting chairperson of the Alexandra Principals Forum; Tembi Ndlovu (Khanyanjalo Primary) was the deputy chairperson of the South African Principals Association; Noko Leso (Bramley Primary) had facilitated the first Outcomes Based Education (OBE) curriculum and trained School Governing Bodies through the MGSLG. These experiences all preceded their PfP involvement. Furthermore, all of the principals had obtained leadership experience in their careers as heads of department, deputy principals, acting principals or principals at their current or former schools.

In a few notable cases, principals had already experienced crises around the time they took over the primary leadership role, which had forced them to grow. Andre Pretorius (Heathfield Primary), for example, had been struggling to break away from the old autocratic model of the pre-1994 era for some years. In the year 2000, he experienced three “breakthroughs”. He met a man – a school inspector called Gret Vlotman – who became a mentor to him and eventually introduced him to the founder of PfP; he attended a course called “The Power to Achieve”; and he went on a course which explored “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Leaders”. From that time, he started to see opportunities where previously he only saw problems. This laid the ground for his later involvement with PfP. Elizabeth Masemola also faced a really rocky start to her tenure as principal of Zonkizizwe Secondary in 2009/10. Having been rejected by the community because of her being a woman, and because she proposed some radical shifts in the way staff and learners operated, she managed this conflict well and got the school back on track by the time she became involved with PfP. Other principals like Brammal Swartz (Norma Road Primary) and Andre Kraak (Steenberg Secondary) had also steered their schools towards a better position before their PfP involvement, although both acknowledged the extent to which the PfP programme had enhanced their skills further.

However, most of the principals, including those mentioned above, were keenly aware that they faced numerous challenges in their quest to lead their schools. Several described themselves as simply “going through the motions”, or being a “boring principal”. Even where principals aspired to be democratic, good mobilisers of community and staff, and good school managers, the multitude of challenges faced by their schools (outlined in a previous section) often prevented them from doing this effectively. In terms of the above PfP outputs and outcomes, many principals were indeed lacking the necessary tools and support to achieve these fully, even where they aspired to do so.
Across the board, then, principals testified that their participation in PfP had assisted them to become better leaders. Even where a principal felt they were fairly well-positioned as a leader beforehand, they acknowledged that they had learnt some new key skills and methods which had helped them to improve. As Bramnal Swartz admitted, "This program sharpened certain tools within my leadership box." For example, he says: “Now, I am more confident when negotiating and have a framework when consulting with people. I am not just winging it like in the past. I am now aware of things and can renegotiate.”

In many instances, other staff members interviewed by the evaluators agreed that principals had been positively impacted by PfP. Many principals became better listeners, active contractors of teachers and the school community, more open to new ideas, more democratic/less autocratic, more relaxed and able to delegate, less threatened, more nurturing, better organised and more confident in themselves and their role in mobilising the teachers and school community. A few case studies will now be presented to illustrate these leadership change dynamics and the impact of PfP in this area.

**Ridwan Samodien (Kannemeyer Primary)** has been teaching for 35 years, of which all but the first 10 were spent at Kannemeyer. He became the principal in 2002, having served as an HoD and the acting principal for several years. While he does not think he was a bad principal, he recognises that he was not very inspirational: “We were just doing our jobs and not going beyond that. There was no real philosophy about the higher purpose for doing it.” Samodien also recognised that he had some leadership deficiencies at that stage: “I was very shy and an introvert. Even as a Head of Department I shied away from the limelight. Only later I saw I could do it.” As a result of this, the school was not viewed very positively by the local community and did not perform particularly well. The staff was not united or working well together, and there was “lots of squabbles and an atmosphere of heaviness”. As he explains: “A few years ago, we were bleeding kids and people were saying ‘that man does not know what he’s doing’.” In fact, the teachers and parents had lobbied the Western Cape Department of Education (WCED) to remove him by this stage.

According to Samodien and many of his staff, this changed when he became involved with PfP in 2011 as one of the first principals to be recruited into the programme. His partner was PfP founder Louise van Rhyn. Through his PfP involvement, Samodien learnt “confidence, respect, relational leadership and how to manage and save relationships.” From struggling to manage people and difficult situations, he experienced a radical breakthrough:

“Flawless Consulting changed my life! We were asked to film a video of a conversation with an imaginary person. I wanted to run away! But I saw the need to go through with it and pick a difficult conversation to work through. My confidence just soared that day!”

Since his involvement, and with the support of Louise, he has now become a confident, inspirational and nurturing school leader, who has been able to mobilise and involve his staff and the whole school community in a new vision for the school. There is now a high demand for places at the school and parents and the surrounding community have become involved in
the school activities such as fund-raising markets, volunteering, school repairs and cleaning, and so on. Samodien argues that “The Kannemeyer of 2010 and the Kannemeyer of today are completely different. It is much healthier now”. And of himself and his style, he says:

“From being this shy person, I have now been on ETV! I show up with high energy every morning. You need to if you want to inspire people. I ask myself, ‘who am I being that those around me don’t have shiny eyes?’ When people show up with shiny eyes, you can see that something good is happening.”

Not every story of change is as radical as Ridwan Samodien’s, but other principals did also experience change in a number of areas.

Bayar Laatoe (Dryden Street Primary), who is close to retirement age, has been teaching for 40 years at Dryden Street Primary, 22 years of which he has been the principal. Having become the principal at the dawn of democracy, he had tried to adjust away from the old autocratic model, and embrace the new democratic way of managing the school and his staff. Mr Laatoe has clearly always been a good school manager, with a focus on discipline, order and tradition. While he still is described as “old school” by his teachers, he has clearly improved in his ways of relating to his staff and the learners, through his involvement with PfP. As one teacher explained:

“He is from the older generation and sometimes it’s not easy to let go of old practices. But now teachers are able to engage the principal on a one-to-one basis. He has changed a lot and has become more accommodative.”

Other teachers concurred that his partner has “calmed him down to see the bigger picture and explore other avenues.” In other words, he is less threatened by new ideas, less prone to controlling everything, and more able to let go and allow his staff to run with innovations. For example, his partner, who is from the UK, introduced the school to a partner school in Hull, England, and Mr Laatoe has allowed many of his senior teachers to travel there to gain a broader perspective and experience of the world. This in turn has motivated the staff and fed back into a positive vibe and improving results at the school.

In addition, Mr Laatoe’s partner has persuaded and coached him into becoming better at using email and other technologies which he was averse to using previously. This has, by his own admission, allowed him to be more successful in communicating with his staff, the parents and other partners and potential partners at the school.

Priscilla August (The Valley Primary), like the previous principals, has been teaching for several decades; 40 years in her case. All of her career has been spent at The Valley Primary. Although she filled in for the various principals previously, she was properly appointed to the position in 1996. She describes herself as “well groomed by the previous principals”, but admits that she never studied to become a principal, and learnt the job through “trial and error”. Ms August therefore struggled with various aspects of her job: “I was accepted by my colleagues, but I had some deficits in my ways of facing parents, facing WCED, organising meetings and functions, so it all became a mountain for me,” she admits. She also aspired to
foster a participatory approach and to be more like a “link in a chain” than an autocratic leader, but she struggled to know how to move away from a more autocratic mode. Having had several fruitless offers for assistance by outside agencies, Ms August was also not easily open to new opportunities or partnerships for the school.

Through her involvement with PfP, however, and a partner who has adopted a very relational approach, Ms August has managed to become much more confident, more able to manage personalities and conflicts, and more open to new opportunities for the school. As she explains:

“Listening was a big learning, and also being able to put myself in the shoes of the person coming to me – even if we disagree. Because respect for the other person bounces off me. I needed to hear and stay connected even in a conflict. And also admit I do not have all the answers.”

This has resulted in a happier teaching body, more outreach to the parents, and new educational opportunities for the school.

Lindelani Singo (Yeville Boys Primary) faced the difficult job of becoming the first black principal of a traditionally white (Jewish) school. He joined the school in 2006 as the deputy principal and was appointed principal in 2009. But the staff of this rapidly changing school (it was by now all black) were racially mixed and racially divided. The old white managers did not accept him and he shared that “the interview was tense”. Thus, Mr Singo’s first job was to try to unite the staff behind a new vision: “I studied the community and saw that we were not meeting so many of their needs,” he says. This was because the old managers were running the school as it had been run for years yet the community was now made up of largely poor black African immigrant families.

Yet in championing this new vision, Mr Singo did not have the confidence or authority to be fully effective. He resorted to doing everything himself rather than mobilising his team to pull together in the same direction. There was also considerable resistance and tension from the old teachers who had not bought into the new vision. He also did not have any partnerships with outside entities to help him address the school’s needs. It was at this stage that he became involved with the PfP programme, which has changed Mr Singo and the school fundamentally. As he explains:

“I used to want to do everything myself. But later, I learnt to delegate. So I am now like a CEO: I just meet with the SMT to find out how we are doing. Before, I would never have done this, as I was running around trying to do everything myself. And if I went out, I would fear that I would come back to a crisis in the school. But now I trust my staff!”

And, he says, “the tension at the school has faded away”, and he now has a unified and motivated staff who buy into his vision for the school and community. As one of his senior teachers explained:
“Yes, he has changed. He is more patient, and he listens to other points of view, even if they are different. Before, he would not understand, but now he listens and understands. And he also gets people involved in his vision: he’s more persuasive and more positive and inclusive.”

And a white teacher who has been at the school for many years had this to say:

“At first he was quiet and mild and meek. He believed in involving people, but he was not good at managing that process. So he realised he needed to get people skills from somewhere. After PfP he’s more proactive, better at solving problems and more confident to speak in meetings than before.”

Other staff emphasised that Mr Singo now encourages staff development and communicates better since his involvement with PfP.

A similar case is Tembi Kutu, of Inkwenkwezi Secondary. Coming into a new school facing problems, which needed a strong leader, he erred on the side of authoritarianism. As he recorded: “People used to complain that I was autocratic, but I had to lead them strongly and ensure things were done. I just made sure I followed the school policies. But I had to be firm in the early days.” Yet his involvement with PfP allowed him to explore other aspects of leadership:

“With PfP, I was exposed to other dimensions of leadership, through the workshops and so on. So I was helped to become more open-minded. That is the contribution of PfP. Also the listening workshop was key, as I learnt not to provide the answer but become a good listener. My facilitation skills also improved and I even facilitated a conflict management workshop at another school.”

A senior teacher concurred that PfP had been positive for Mr Kutu’s leadership style, arguing that it had resulted in a happier and more united staff:

“Absolutely! A lot has changed. He is more democratic now. Once you have a principal who allows educators to raise their views it becomes good. Now when we meet its wonderful stuff! Unlike other schools we have no camps [factions] and we are united.”

For Sabelo Makubalo (Sophakama Primary), being a fairly young principal in charge of a large school was challenging:

“I was very emotional! When people would attack me and challenge me I got very emotional. But I have learnt to control it. People deliberately let you get angry so they have power over you. Now I can see a big difference! I now see that if you get angry you can’t respond in the best way.”

Thus, his involvement with PfP is allowing him to grow into the leadership role and develop the school in a positive way.
Even Andre Pretorius (Heathfield Primary), who had already learnt much about leadership before PiP, recognises that he needed better skills: “I did the basics. I was not an inspirational leader. I had no skills to inspire people: in a way I was dead.” Having started off in a more autocratic and less inspirational manner, Mr Pretorius has now clearly developed a more nurturing role. His grade 6 maths teacher, a Zimbabwean, had struggled to adapt or feel welcomed at the school, and his class results were in the 40s. He, however, feels that Mr Pretorius became more nurturing after PiP and this has resulted in a dramatic change in his performance:

“Before, the principal would just identify things that he felt needed to be done, but now he involves everyone. He is very positive and when it comes to further studies, has given support to deserving educators.”

Partially as a result of this more positive vibe, the grade 6 maths results shot up into the high 80s by 2015.

Another principal who became more nurturing and democratic is Noko Leso (Bramley Park Primary). As she explains:

“I enjoyed the PiP process. I was one person who could not give another person a chance to talk. I would constantly interrupt. I was also a dictator! So I learnt listening and consulting skills. I started to circulate agendas and letting people raise their own issues, instead of just coming with my own one.”

She argued that her managers said she started to relax and she learnt to trust them and just expect reports, rather than micro-manage them. This impression was confirmed by her deputies, who said that she was now a lot more compassionate to staff and learners, and also motivated them and supported them and their career ambitions much more than in the past.

Richard Carelse (Stoneridge Primary) struggled for many years to manage his staff effectively. When asked if PiP changed his leadership he said the following: “100% I can say that! Before, I was just doing default, just complying with the Department. But I wanted to do more for the school beyond the Department’s tick box. So I could see there was more. I said let’s make it a business and get the community involved.”

Now, he says, he has become “more confident and now I have a different relationship with the teachers as I learnt different principles such as ‘checking in’ with people and sharing.” He also learnt to conduct meetings better and listen well:

“I would always give solutions before, but now I sit and discuss with them. And I was impatient before. But now I am not top-down anymore. We would sit and I would listen and then they would own the solution. So I don’t dictate anymore.”

This assessment is backed-up by his senior staff. His deputy went so far as to declare: “If Richard goes, I go!” They also say he has become more confident, more open and accommodating to teachers and parents, and to be firm and persuasive without being rude. They also testified that since PiP the school is much more efficiently run and is “a well-oiled
machine now in terms of management and systems”. This, they say is because the school has adopted a more professional ethos:

“Now organisation is linked to business management. We don’t prepare last minute. We prepare for the new year in November so we are not running around in January. Our profit is not money, but in how kids are doing and how happy parents are.”

Other principals emphasised that they had made a radical difference by re-contracting their staff on an ongoing basis. Graham Haird, partner to Elizabeth Masemola (Zonkizizwe Secondary), explained the following, for example:

“She was already a very strong and capable woman. She speaks out and tackles whoever needs to be tackled, and gets what she wants. But she grew where she learnt some things she did not necessarily know. For example, contracting her staff, which we did in this one course, was a bit of a revelation. She did job descriptions with each one and found that quite useful. So the training added value to a strong base.”

Her deputy was also positive that she has improved in the way she handles staff and the whole school community, as well as learners. As he explained: “In Zulu culture, there is a lot of male dominance. So she has had to adapt to that. She is adapting well, even how to handle the male learners. She used to lose her temper but now she has learnt to manage them in a more effective way.”

These examples show that in a wide array of contexts, the involvement of principals in PfP has had a positive impact on their leadership style and skills. Many are now much more able to lead in many of the ways envisaged in PfP’s theory of change. Of course, the impact varies and is influenced by factors such as the school context and the personality of the principal. In some cases, change was relative, and certainly not all change was as radical as that experienced by a principal such as Ridwan Samodien. However, some principals are still on a leadership journey, and with the help of their partners, are likely to continue to grow.

2.5.2 Leadership Change: School Management Teams/School Governing Bodies

PfP’s medium-term outcomes (realised after two years) envisage that the SMTs will become “aligned and cohesive”, and “effectively plan, coordinate and delegate”. In turn, teachers are meant to become “energised and motivated; express enthusiasm for teaching and learning; (and exhibit) less absenteeism, more curriculum coverage; and more participation in extra-curriculum activities.”

As noted previously, half the schools experienced a very encouraging improvement in the leadership and coherence of their SMTs, while the other half had not (yet) experienced this outcome to the same extent. Nevertheless, there was a positive outcome in every school, albeit of varying significance.18

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18 Again, it was difficult to judge the impact at Steenberg High School because the Principal did not allow the evaluators easy access to members of his SMT. The LPF, however, felt that there had been a positive impact on the school’s SMT.
What was apparent was that some principals had been more proactive than others in involving their senior teachers on the SMTs in the PfP process (e.g. taking deputy principals or others to workshops), in sharing ideas they had learnt with them (e.g. in staff meetings), or in arranging specific leadership training for them as part of the partnership plan. The schools where there was the most positive impact on the SMTs did all three of these things.

Nevertheless, even at schools where there was not a specific process of SMT training, many senior teachers and SMTs still benefitted through lessons shared by principals, through changes in leadership style and re-visioning and planning exercises. At Tswelopele Secondary, for example, Principal Dikgale made a point of sharing lessons she had learnt with her SMT, albeit in an informal and unstructured way. Their SGB meetings now are also influenced by insights gained through PfP, such as more participatory and inclusive consultation methods. Furthermore, the entire staff were involved in developing a school improvement plan, focussing on 10 core areas. They were taken to the offices of the PfP partner for planning workshops and although these were not specifically SMT training exercises, staff members came away feeling a sense of ownership and empowerment over the important issues at the school. As one of the deputy principals shared: “Yes, there has been drastic change in the way the principal now involves educators.”

Dryden Street Primary, too, did not have formal SMT training, but through a partnership set up with a primary school in the UK, the SMT members have been able to travel overseas and observe how educational institutions are run in the first world. They are now much more knowledgeable about creative educational models and have an international support system through other educators they have met in the UK.

Some other schools have benefitted even more directly in this area because capacitating the SMTs was identified as a key goal of their partnership plan and involvement with PfP. At Norma Road Primary, Principal Swartz says he learnt to consult with people more and change meetings so that people’s views could easily be included, and former cliques would be neutralised. He also obtained help from the LPF, Merridy Edgson, who conducted strategic planning workshops and team building with the teachers. As one teacher explained:

“We did Friday afternoon sessions to review the vision and mission. People enjoyed it: it was the first time we got together and looked at it again. We got into small groups and learnt how people saw us as a school, where we want to go and so on. So we came up with a new vision.”

Teachers really enjoyed these sessions and the new team-building initiatives that were subsequently introduced, such as birthday celebrations.

At Stoneridge Primary, Richard Carelse specifically identified training of the SMT as one of his goals for the partnership, because “we were struggling with business plans”. They subsequently had training in budgeting, planning and financial management. Later, their SGB members were also trained on key issues relating to school governance. Richard Carelse is one principal who strongly believes that "PfP is never about the principal, but is about all of the leadership.”
At Zonnebloem Boys Primary they also identified strategic planning as a core process of the PfP year. The staff subsequently went to the business partner, Nick Wells’, offices and collaborated in the drawing up of a school strategic plan. Apart from enjoying getting out and being in a corporate environment for a few days, Principal Deon May also feels that this process benefitted the leadership skills of his SMT. As he explains when asked if his SMT benefitted: “Yes, most definitely. For example, there is one of my HODs who was previously not always on board. But I now have much more buy-in and commitment from him. So I can hand tasks over to them and they are now committed.” Zonnebloem has also benefitted because a project of a local NGO, called the Norkitt Educational Leadership Initiative (NELI), has subsequently taken these processes further, and are currently building capacity with the school’s SGB. As Principal May explains: “Where we have ended off with PfP, NELI took over”.

Similarly, leadership training was conducted with the SMT at Diepsloot Primary, and this has meant they share the principal’s vision for the school and the staff is more united and happy. Meanwhile, at Heathfield Primary the SMT and teachers also underwent leadership training and the deputy principals got life coaching. These interventions have thus had a positive impact at these schools and contributed to an environment where teachers are happy and committed, with positive implications for the teaching and learning environment.

Lastly, at Masakane-Tswelelopele Junior Primary, the LPF conducted a “Ladder of Power” workshop with the SMT. Those who attended reported that this was a positive learning experience. As the deputy principal explained: “That taught me how to run staff and SMT meetings: I am still using those skills.” However, the principal wishes in hindsight that they could have gone further and organised human resources and team building workshops:

“Other partners had organised motivational speakers and so on, but Anthony’s [the business partner] goal was to make Masakane green, so he planted trees and flowers and we got R20 000 to buy uniforms, but we did not do much else with Anthony.”

Thus, she feels that she has not done enough to pass on the lessons she learnt to her SMT: “At the beginning I was still energetic and used to give feedback to my staff and SMT but with time, I stopped.”

2.5.3 Vision and Ethos Change

Hand-in-hand with some of the leadership changes described above, many of the schools also experienced positive change in their overall school direction and vision. For some, this shift was quite understated and part of a pre-existing directional move (e.g. Khanyanjalo Primary). But for 55 per cent of the schools, PfP allowed an opportunity to move the school forward more comprehensively and unite the school community behind a new shared vision and ethos. This can be observed at the following schools:

- **Highlands North Secondary:** Conducted strategic planning and produced a “20-20 vision” for the school.
• **Kannemeyer Primary**: Conducted strategic planning and identified 10 areas of focus, which were delegated to different committees to address. They also identified school values which are now part of the school culture.

• **Heathfield Primary**: Identified school values which are part of the school culture.

• **Sophakama Primary**: Conducted strategic planning and identified four areas of focus, which are being led by different committees.

• **Zonnebloem Boys Primary**: Conducted strategic planning which has energised the teachers, and are now doing more work on the school direction with NELI.

• **Hout Bay High**: Co-opted the PfP business partner onto their SGB to provide support in the area of financial planning.

• **Norma Road Primary**: Conducted strategic planning which has mobilised the staff around the principal’s vision.

• **Tswelopele Secondary**: Developed a school improvement plan with the staff, focusing on 10 areas led by different committees. Planning and submissions are now much better organised and results have improved.

• **Bramley Park**: Produced a skills development plan which has energised the staff and parents, and benefitted the learners.

• **Zonkizizwe Secondary**: Produced a school turnaround strategy which has made the school much more efficient and improved its performance.

• **Stoneridge Primary**: The training of the SMT and leadership development of the principal has resulted in much better running systems, which means that planning has improved markedly.

2.5.4 Impact on Educational Outcomes at the school

According to the PfP theory of change, it is envisaged that from two years after the school’s first involvement with PfP, a medium term outcome should be that teachers become “energised and motivated”, and specifically:

- Express enthusiasm for teaching and learning;
- Demonstrate less absenteeism and more curriculum coverage;
- Demonstrate more participation in extra-curricular activities.

This in turn is envisaged to lead, after three to five years, to improved educational outcomes, specifically:

- Fewer students dropping out before National Senior Certificate (NSC)
- More students reaching curriculum numeracy and literacy milestones
- Students performing better in Annual National Assessments (ANAs)
- Increasing numbers passing NSC
- Students possessing critical thinking, problem solving and digital literacy skills.

It is clearly difficult, in an evaluation with the timeframes that were given, to gain a fully accurate or quantifiable insight into educational outcomes. Many of the schools did not keep accurate (or easily accessible) tracking data on things such as teacher absenteeism, late-
coming or inadequate curriculum coverage, so it was hard to establish a solid baseline against which to measure improvements. A more anecdotal account of such improvements was therefore gained in most cases, based on the perceived changes and improvements noticed by principals, SMTs and teachers. Getting actual ANA or NSC results from the previous few years was possible in most cases. These provided an indication of school performance over the course of a few years and were useful in understanding the performance trajectory of the school before and after their PfP year.

However, even though the earliest partnerships included in the study – from 2011/12 – were just reaching the five year mark after PfP commencement, this is still probably too short a timeframe to judge educational change (specifically changes stimulated by the PfP intervention) accurately, given than many complex factors influence “results” at both a macro and micro level (e.g. curriculum changes; government directives that weaker learners must proceed to higher grades, deficiencies/improvements in foundation phase teaching which impact learners much later on; etc.).

Notwithstanding these limitations and caveats, there were reported positive impacts on the general educational environment of all of the evaluated schools, while 30 per cent of the schools reported actual improvement in school results as a direct outcome of participation. Principals, SMT members and ordinary teachers at most schools felt that, due to the positive impact of PfP on the school leadership, management, vision and resources, there had been a further positive impact on the educational environment and the performance of teachers and learners. Some spoke of more unity and common purpose among teachers, which allowed the staff to feel happy, motivated and focussed on their teaching. As mentioned above, more democratic staff meetings and school leaders who were better listeners and more nurturing of teachers fed into this positive vibe. In some cases, teachers were sent on courses in effective ways to instil discipline in the classroom, which helped the learning and teaching environment. The following examples illustrate the various kinds of educational impact experienced by schools in this sample:

- **Inkwenkwezi High School**: Through the PfP business partner’s NGO, SALT, an educational project called “Finishing Strong” was initiated. This provides remedial maths and science tutoring and mentoring (over weekends) to grade 9 – 12 learners. Starting off with 50 learners, the number has been raised in 2016 to 100, with SALT sponsored by The Western Cape Premier’s Office in this endeavour. Grade 12s are also supported by SALT to apply for tertiary studies, and the school introduced a prize giving at the beginning of the year to motivate learners to improve. This programme is important in the context of falling NSC results over the last three years (2013: 85.4% passed; 2014: 77.2% passed; 2015: 71.9% passed). The school has been struggling with maths and science in particular, but the drop is also due to the 2014 Departmental directive that a learner can only held back in a phase once, but must proceed if they fail a second time, regardless of their readiness or the school’s ability
to support them. Nevertheless, teachers at the school and learners were very positive that the Finishing Strong programme would help them to turn their results around and improve the NSC pass rate.

- **The Valley Primary:** During the PiP year, the principal and her business partner identified foundation phase learning as a key challenge of the learners, given the extremely poor farmworker families from which they come. The partner’s company sponsored a container and educational materials, and volunteers come to the school for half an hour, four days a week, to help grade R and grade 1s with foundational learning, including literacy, vocabulary and numeracy. Foundation phase teachers at the school reported that their learners in grade 2 and 3 have become more confident and their vocabulary has improved markedly since the Story Box was introduced, making their uptake of key foundational concepts easier. The school has also held workshops with the parents, which have included the provision of tools for assisting their children with early childhood learning.

- **Hout Bay High School:** The 2014 Departmental decree for schools to let struggling learners through to write their NSC led to the number of NSC candidates jumping from 64 in 2013 to 92 in 2014, and school’s results dropping from 70.3 per cent in 2013 to 62 per cent in 2014. However, the positive energy around their PiP involvement, including improved leadership, energised teachers, a positive school vibe and extra classes – with food sponsored by the business partner – as well as a garden project which energised the learners, led (according to staff) to the 2015 results rising to 86.3 per cent. In addition, the partnership resulted in the donation of 10 fully functional computers to the school, for use by the learners.

- **Sophakama Primary:** As part of their PiP partnership plan, Sophakama introduced four priority areas of focus: literacy; remedial support; arts and culture; and language of learning. PiP involvement has subsequently led to many spin offs. Since the school teaches in home language (isiXhosa) in foundation stage, the literacy programme is important to help learners in the foundation phase to learn English. Volunteers from a local school called Elkanah come to the school to support this project. In addition, Nalibali (a reading support project) also came to the school and provide reading materials every week. One teacher reported that: “The literacy project is really helping! Most learners have improved a lot, with Grade 2s going up to Grade 3 and Learners now understanding English.”

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19 In 2014, the DoE introduced a new progression policy in which a learner could only fail once in a three year phase (grades 1-3; 3-6; 7-9 and 10-12). Regardless of whether they fail a second time, the directive states that they must proceed to the next phase. Thus, schools who previously used to keep struggling grade 9 learners from entering the final phase (this “culling” often inflated their NSC results), have now been obliged to let failing learners through, regardless of their ability to pass the NSC exams. See Matiwane, Z. (04 February 2014). “Teachers Slam Policy of Promoting Learners who’ve Failed.” The Daily Vox. Found at: [http://www.thedailyvox.co.za/teachers-slam-policy-of-promoting-learners-whove-failed/](http://www.thedailyvox.co.za/teachers-slam-policy-of-promoting-learners-whove-failed/) (Accessed 1 June 2016).
• **Stoneridge Primary**: Stoneridge Primary had not only benefitted from a new energy and unity of purpose in the school, but the business partner’s company (Nedbank) sponsors a reading programme and several NGOs now assist with extra-curricular learning programmes.

• **Zonkizizwe Secondary**: Another school where teacher motivation and unity has improved due to better contracting, communication and listening from the principal. The school’s NSC pass rate was 93 per cent in 2015, with 58 bachelor passes out of 118 passes. The very good results and impressive numbers gaining university access has been helped by bursaries provided to top students for university study by the business partner’s company. This has served to motivate the grade 12s to work harder.

• **Norma Road Primary**: This school completed the PfP year fairly recently, so an educational outcome would arguably be premature. However, the principal argues that results are at “an all-time high” partly because of the new staff unity he has been able to encourage through engaging with teachers in a new way, supporting them and encouraging them to do better. He feels that small differences like this really do make a difference. Furthermore, he argues, he told teachers not to see problem children in their classes, but to believe in them, and he feels this is contributing to better performance.

• **Tswelopele Secondary**: As part of their partnership plan, Tswelopele Secondary focussed on 10 strategic areas for improvement. Although the school is new and is housed in inadequate mobile classes, the staff have tried to foster a sense of pride and discipline in the learners. As a result of this focus, discipline has improved and now “90 per cent of learners look like real school learners and not thugs: we taught them to tuck in their shirts and comb their hair,” says the principal. This new atmosphere - along with prizes sponsored by the business partner – has contributed to improved results. In 2014 the school achieved a 76.4 per cent NSC pass, with 23 bachelor passes. In 2015, the school achieved a 79 per cent pass, with 42 bachelor passes – almost double the number from the previous year.

• **Bramley Primary**: The major focus of the partnership plan for Bramley was a skills development programme. Several extra-curricular activities, such as beading, chess, swimming were chosen, which teachers volunteered to lead. This programme is still going very strong despite the partnership not continuing after the official PfP year ending. Not only do children enjoy attending these activities, but parents have become involved in teaching, and teachers are committed to take extra-curricular activities because they see the benefit for the learners. Beading in particular has also had a positive impact on maths skills for participating learners. It was reported that numeracy improved and teachers were also able to build relationships with struggling learners outside the classroom, which improve their learning ability. As one teacher explained: “Beading teaches kids to add, multiply, communicate and so on. They also
sell their produce to parents and calculate the profit. And they make friends with other children and grow in confidence. It has such a positive impact on results and communications too. And helps them with concentration, task-completion and discipline.” The schools grade 6 ANA results have thus improved by 10 per cent, which teachers credit the skills development programme for.

2.5.5 Parent and Community involvement

Another medium-term outcome envisaged by PfP (after two years) is that the school parents and community will become engaged; that more parents at will attend school meetings and the community will support school initiatives. Three-quarters of the schools in this sample reported that where they had struggled to attract parents and community members previously, since their PfP involvement, they were doing much better. This had, in many cases, to do with the change in approach from simply informing the parents of meetings to inviting them properly; holding exciting events; and making meetings more meaningful and engaging through techniques they learnt in PfP workshops. Of course, many schools continued to struggle because of the existing commitments of parents and the fact that many lived and worked far away from the school. However, at some schools, new and imaginative ways of getting parents to attend important meetings (such as holding displays of their children’s art or school plays at the same time; holding meetings on Saturdays) had worked. In a couple of cases recent school meetings had been very well attended where previously there had been minimal interest. The following examples provide an idea of parent/community impacts:

- **Yeoville Boys Primary**: The school has become a community hub by addressing the needs of parents (many of whom are from other African countries) directly. They have made an arrangement for the Department of Home Affairs, banks and other agencies to come to the school regularly to assist parents to apply for their documents. This has created a very engaged parent community.
- **Kannemeyer Primary**: The new energy at the school brought about by the partnership, and the leadership provided by Ridwan Samodien, has resulted in many community members volunteering to assist the school in various ways. The school also hosts many fundraising and school improvement events which are well attended and parent meetings are very well attended.
- **Bramley Primary**: Parents have become involved in the Skills Development Programme (teaching beading and marketing beaded products) and there are regular school fun days and festivals which are well attended and appreciated by parents.
- **Iphuteng Primary**: The neighbouring community made an agreement with the school that they would not play loud music during school hours, and they guard the school premises after hours.
- **Diepsloot Primary**: Have established a community garden and an Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) centre, which are greatly appreciated by the community, many of whose children attend the school.
- **Highlands North Secondary**: From a position where the school’s alumni (white men) mocked the state of the school on their Facebook page, the principal was able to
engage them and show them the improvements at the school. They now support his efforts and make donations, such as colours blazers, to the school.

- **The Valley Primary**: As part of their PIP involvement, the school has held several parenting workshops with the school parents (predominantly farmworkers), which have been well received.

### 2.5.6 Material Gain or Connection to Assistance with Physical Needs

Not as many of the schools experienced significant infrastructural or material gains as a result of PIP involvement, by comparison with other spinoffs. However, such benefits were still very important for nine of the schools, while another five received a modest benefit and six received minimal or no material gain as a result of their PIP involvement. It was clear that the best partners linked principals to other opportunities or companies and built their confidence to approach funders themselves. Several of the principals talked of having been able to approach and obtain substantive support from other corporate partners since their PIP involvement, having learnt to write concept notes and put together professional proposals (e.g. Zonkizizwe Secondary; Steenberg High). Table 4 (below) provides examples of the ways in which schools have benefitted:

**Table 4: Material gains or partnerships made by schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Infrastructural/material gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yeoville Boys Primary</td>
<td>computers, musical instruments, many new partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dryden Street Primary</td>
<td>computers, wifi, furniture, Grade R playground, partnership with UK school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iphuteng Primary</td>
<td>gardens, feeding scheme, tiles and cabinets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoneridge Primary</td>
<td>Grade R classroom; sports sponsorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tswelopele Secondary</td>
<td>science laboratory, library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kannemeyer Primary</td>
<td>library, science laboratory, many new partners, educational materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steenberg</td>
<td>many new partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophakama Primary</td>
<td>school garden, library books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlands North</td>
<td>overhead projectors, white boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hout Bay High</td>
<td>vegetable garden, computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Valley</td>
<td>Story Box, library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diepsloot Primary</td>
<td>computer laboratory</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In a few cases, there were constraints faced by schools in obtaining their infrastructural needs. In the case of Khanyanjalo Primary, the business partner’s company (ABI) has a policy not to support infrastructural development, and the partner had not been able to link the school to other companies. Yet the school now faces an acute classroom shortage as it takes its first grade 7 classes in 2017, and the principal conceded that she does not know who to turn to for assistance in this regard, having seemingly exhausted all options. This is a pity given that in other cases business partners have seemingly easily found ways of assisting schools to meet some of these needs. In the case of Zonnebloem Boys Primary, the school is housed in very old buildings belonging to the Anglican Church. This puts a limitation on
what can be done in terms of installing new infrastructure or even renovating old classrooms. The business partner was also unable to link the school to any significant material opportunities, either through his company or others. The school thus currently lacks a library, a computer laboratory and even a feeding scheme, although there are plans to establish a multi-purpose centre in the future.

There is clearly a limit to which PiP partners can link schools to the most ambitious of infrastructural projects (such as schools halls), but in some of the schools, it would be fair to say that more could conceivably been done to meet some of their more modest material needs.

2.5.7 Continuing supportive partnerships

All of the 20 partnerships lasted the full official year of the PiP programme, and in only two cases among these 20 did the partnership not continue at all beyond that. In these two cases, business partners were too busy to continue, or experienced events in their personal lives and careers which prevented them from continuing. This was not necessarily for lack of enthusiasm: In the case of Masakane-Tswelelopele, the partners declared that “theirs was a partnership for life” upon completion of the PiP year, but then life seems to have got in the way.

There are four broad kinds of ongoing partnership among the 20 evaluated schools:

- Completely inactive (Bramley Primary; Masakane-Tswelelopele)
- Minimally active but still ongoing on paper (e.g. Zonnebloem; Steenberg)
- Ongoing with sporadic communication and sporadic project activity (e.g. Norma Road; Khanyanjalo; Highland North; Iphuteng)
- Very Active: partners meet and communicate with each other regularly; continue to be “thinking partners”; partners still link the school to opportunities; they are often considered “part of the family”; the principal and the Partner often enjoy a close friendship (Kannemeyer; Hout Bay; Dryden Street; Zonkizizwe; The Valley; Diepsloot; Sophakama)

Over half of the schools still enjoy very supportive and beneficial partnerships, although not all of these are in the “very active” category. It seems that the “very active” partners enjoy a particular kind of chemistry and commitment to their friendship and each other’s lives which has sustained them, despite other commitments and the passage of time. Alice Kramer and Juan Julius (Hout Bay High), for example, continue to meet every week and are particularly close. Mr Julius boasts that he and Alice Kramer are “if not the closest and most active partners, then among the top ones”. Likewise, Ridwan Samodien and Louise van Rhyn continue with a similar relationship, even after five years. Elizabeth Masemola (Zonkizizwe) admitted that she was very close to her partner, Graham Haird, often spending time with his family. She joked that “If he was not a white man, my husband was going to moer (clobber) him”. There is no doubt that an ongoing supportive “very active” partnership has created more benefits and spin-offs for the schools where this has happened, and continue to provide invaluable support and input to the school leadership.
2.5.8 Impact on Business Partners

In addition to the impact of the PfP leadership development process on the 20 schools, I conclude this section with a brief discussion of its impact on the business partners of the 20 principals. It was not only these principals who gained from being part of the PfP leadership development and principal support process. Most principals and also business partners themselves testified that business partners gained from the relationship. This was, for most, because they got to see first-hand the challenges that under-resourced schools and principals faced, and to move out of their comfort zones and get involved. Many principals emphasised that business leaders did not realise that principals have to do many different jobs – such as human resource management, finance, IT and so on – and it made them gain a new respect for under-resourced schools. Sabelo Makubalo (Sophakama Primary), for example, said the following:

“He learnt that things in schools are not done as they are in his factory. He has an HR manager, an IT specialist, financial manager and so on. Here, the SGB and principal are responsible for everything and we are not trained! He also saw that things are done by force in schools – that we have to follow government directives and polices, so we can’t do what we like.”

While before their PfP involvement they might have based their opinions on negative press reporting about “struggling” schools, their partnership helped business partners to realise the dedication, commitment and passion that did exist in these schools, despite the problems they faced. In terms of the output named on the PfP theory of change (“understanding by business leaders of the challenges faced by under-resourced schools and communities”), it is certainly apparent that, according to principals, business partners had gained in this area. Richard Carelse (Stoneridge Primary), for example, said this of his partner: “She said to me ‘I learnt more from you about humanity than any book has taught me’.

The case of Chantal du Chenne, the partner of Mike Thobejane at Iphuteng Primary (Alexandra), also shows how partners could grow through the process. Thobejane was invited to join the PfP programme in October 2011 while he was the principal at HA Jack Primary School in the suburb of Highlands North, in October 2011. But he then moved to Iphuteng Primary in Alexandra in January 2012. But Chantal (from Vodacom), was a white woman who was not comfortable with going to Alexandra township because of the image she had of the area. She had agreed to HA Jack because it is in a suburb similar and close to where she lived. As Thobejane explained:

“It was difficult for her because she had developed her boundaries and Alex was out of that boundary. So she had to speak to her children to get advice on whether to continue. But they encouraged her and she agreed and started visiting the school. On her part she learnt to break social boundaries. She had to step out of her comfort zone and face the realities of township education and its challenges.”

Because Chantal was willing to take the risk and move away from what she had agreed to initially, the partnership survived and was very successful.
Nick Wells (business partner at Zonnebloem) also testified that he had grown through the process:

“The partnership challenged me too and built my confidence. I was not sure initially, what I could offer, or what contribution I could make. But I realised that I could help to be a thinking partner and a sounding board for people like principals. So it built my leadership skills too. And my eyes were opened to the challenges faced by schools, and I would definitely like to be involved later.”

Thus, the PfP programme has the potential to develop a more conscious, motivated and confident business leader who can give back to society more effectively.

In some cases, the impact went even further, as Andre Pretorius shared:

“One partner is an English guy. Partnering with a school made him change and now he runs his own company differently: he is more relational and caring, and they start to become better people who are not just focussed on money. Many are in powerful positions so can become immune to others. But they get jogged by something else and get brought into new communities which are not so affluent when they get involved with PfP.”

The case of Elizabeth Masemola and Graham Haird, partners at Zonkizizwe Secondary, also illustrates the impact a relationship with a principal can have on a business partner. While Elizabeth struggled to connect her Learners to post-school opportunities, Graham also had some human resources issues with his company which she helped him to deal with. As Elizabeth explains:

“It was a two-way process in that I also advised him to deal with the dynamics of his company. The space was contentious and poisonous, so it was not a happy staff. So I advised him about his staff and that they had to understand the cultural context and greet one another and recognise each other properly. And from his side, his exposure would have never allowed him to come across the space I operate in. So he thanked me for exposing him to another life he would never have seen as a white, elite, South African guy.”

And Graham also testified to the benefits that he and his company have gained:

“She taught me quite a lot too! Her son worked at our business for a while and ultimately it did not work out. So Elizabeth had some perspectives on the racial dynamics and cultural issues at work, which she told me. I then took my team to hear her so that we could learn from this. She basically told us that we did not know how to use the situation to our advantage and get the best out of our people. So we made some changes after that.”
2.6 Challenges, issues and suggestions raised

This evaluation has found only a small number of minor challenges or issues relating to the programme. Some have already been raised throughout this report in the relevant sections, as have the ways in which SSA has already attempted to address them.

Although the feedback from principals and business leaders on all aspects of the programme was overwhelmingly positive, there were a few small suggestions made.

- In one instance (Mike Thobejane, Iphuteng Primary), it was felt that the Flawless Consulting workshop should come first, before the current Time to Think workshop. This suggestion was made because Principal Thobejane felt that the crucial skills, such as contracting, should be shared as soon as possible in the process. However, as Louise van Rhyn points out, the content is shared in its current order specifically to take participants through a well-planned developmental process. Time to Think comes first because it prepares participants for the lessons they learn in later workshops.
- Nick Wells (business partner of Zonnebloem Boys Primary) felt that the community building workshop was not as effective as the others, stating: “It was not well attended by business leaders and felt more like a motivational talk. There were not so many tools shared to build community as such, more fuzzy ideas. Maybe this needs to be more hands on.” As noted in a previous section, this concern has already been taken on board by SSA, and the community building workshops have been improved.
- Tembi Ndlovu (Khanyanjalo Primary), while very happy with the programme, felt that PfP could develop short “toolkits” for principals, which summarise the key lessons and techniques from the content and workshops. She argued that the books are too long for time-pressured principals to return to on an on-going basis, and the lessons learnt at workshops might be lost after a while.
- While positive leadership change for principals was observed (to varying degrees) across the board, it was clear that leadership change among SMTs and senior teachers was more hit-and-miss at the evaluated schools. Some principals and their partners were very good about sharing lessons with SMT members, and including them in some PfP activities, or even arranging leadership training as part of the PfP process. But in eight cases, the flow of leadership change from the principal to SMTs was not as strong as it might have been if a more explicit way of including SMT members had been adopted.
- In more than one case it was felt that the unions provided a threat to the way schools were run, and the work of school leadership teams. Their suggestion was that the PfP programme should find ways to include union officials so that this threat could be mitigated. SSA staff pointed out to the evaluators that they have been building very close links to Provincial Departments of Education and other key actors in a bid to win support for the programme across all relevant groups, including unions.
- A small number of principals felt that their LPFs could have checked in with them more regularly during the PfP year. One (Mike Thobejane) went so far as to suggest that LPFs should sit-in on meetings between the partners as an observer once a quarter and play a more active role in guiding the relationship. Since Mike Thobejane’s
school completed the process SSA has in fact introduced triad meetings (principals, business partners and LPFs), which are very much in line with this suggestion.

- Richard Carelse (Stoneridge Primary), citing his own experience, felt that SSA should consider a programme which specifically helps newly appointed principals to cope in their first few months after appointment: “Especially for new principals, there is a huge need for training on financial management. If PfP could get mentors to come in for the first month and help them with financial management, HR and so on, that would be really useful!”

- Lastly some of the principals, particularly those whose partnerships did not continue as intimately as others, felt that they would prefer more follow-up from PfP after the official year had ended. They felt that they would like to continue receiving visits from their LPFs and continue feeling a sense of inclusion in the PfP programme.

3. Conclusions & Recommendations

The matrix in Appendix B suggests that there is a best partnership scenario emerging from the PfP programme. The top five schools which have been scored at ten out of ten are examples of this scenario, scoring well across all of the indicators and demonstrating a number of spin-offs which go beyond what PfP initially set out to achieve. It is clear that when two engaged and committed partners are brought together from the different worlds of under-resourced school and the business sector, and taken through the PfP leadership development process, positive results can accrue for the school. Where these partners build a long-lasting, strong and committed relationship – based on mutual respect, honesty, compromise, closeness, trust, frequent contact, an attitude of learning, the ability to think-through problems together, the potential to build each other’s links to new opportunities, and friendship – the results for principals, their schools and even the communities they serve, can be profound. Figure 6 shows this “best outcome” impact.

The closest relationships, which kept going after the PfP year ended, were able to transcend the challenges of distance, busy lives and professional commitments, difficult local conditions, and differences in approach or opinion. Schools where partnerships had not continued at the same level were still found to have benefitted, but not to the same degree or their full potential.

These lessons suggest that both partners must be fully committed and ready to enter into such partnerships from the outset. Where a business partner might be on the verge of a promotion or about to enter a very busy phase of her/his career or family life, it is advisable not to enter a partnership. This is a lesson PfP has already been applying in its selection of business partners. Similarly, PfP has already been ensuring that principals are not close to retirement or resignation before entering a partnership. Not only must selection of both parties be sound in this regard, but potential partners must also be well-matched to ensure that the partnership will enjoy a long and fruitful lifespan. This is not an easy thing to accomplish as many partnerships grow organically and partners talk of having to “find each other” before their relationship bloomed.
As noted in the previous section, SMT members and other senior teachers do not necessarily benefit enough from leadership growth in all cases. It is therefore recommended that the PfP programme considers a more systematic way of enhancing school leadership growth beyond the principals, as benefits do not trickle down in all cases. Granted, PfP should be careful not to dictate to each school what issues to address in partnership plans, but a check-list of highly
recommended partnership activities – such as SMT leadership and skills training – could ensure that this benefit is enhanced. Indeed, in some of the schools, it seems as if their partnership plans were too narrow from the outset, as they focussed on one or two pressing problems – or in one case, the CSI thrust of a business partner – rather than more imaginatively on a broader range of issues. In other plans, they seem to have focussed on too many issues and therefore lost focus or failed to achieve a quality impact in fewer areas. Thus, some more guidance for partners on the optimal number of issues to address and the kinds of interventions that make the best possible impact – based on PfP’s growing experience of what works – would be advisable.

As was raised in the findings section, the current way in which reflection and feedback is obtained from partners, while appreciated by some, was not universally appreciated. Most participants saw the value in the reflective process, but struggled to find the time to engage properly with it. This is a pity from both their learning perspective and the perspective of SSA, which loses out on their feedback. SSA is currently planning to develop a smartphone application which will allow principals to provide immediate, quick, guided feedback on an on-going basis during and after the PfP year has ended. This is a very good idea which it is recommended is followed through with, as principals would certainly prefer this method of reflecting over writing reports.

Finally, many principals and some business partners expressed the desire to continue to be involved with PfP, despite having long completed their official year. principals whose partnerships did not continue as they had hoped wished to be visited occasionally by their LPF or someone from PfP, or even connected to a new partner. Some of those who were still in partnerships expressed a desire to assist PfP in various ways. There is clearly a sense of PfP identity and affiliation which needs to be tapped into. It is therefore recommended that an alumni association is considered, which could provide a platform for PfP alumni to continue meeting and energising one another. This could also be a forum for sharing updates of progress and for more motivational speakers or training workshops to be arranged, to maintain the learning and momentum in these principals as they continue to handle their tricky school situations.

This independent evaluation has found that the PfP programme has had a very positive, albeit varied, impact on participating schools. There is no doubt that principal support and leadership development, along with the creation and support of partnerships between under-resourced schools and sectors of society which have access to skills and resources, is a crucial catalytic intervention in the education system which can have profound positive impacts on struggling schools. The PfP model is a very sound, home-grown and affordable intervention which seeks to achieve these goals and, has enjoyed considerable success so far, as this evaluation has found.

As PfP pushes towards its goal of involving 10 per cent of schools in South Africa in its programme, it is hoped that many of the lessons emerging from this evaluation will feed positively into the process, and PfP will be able to build on the successes of its model to date and mitigate any limitations effectively. It will also be crucial as it seeks to take the
programme to scale to hold on to the key ingredients of what makes successful partnerships work in each local context, so as not to sacrifice quality in the quest for quantity and a more systemic impact.
4. Appendices

Appendix A: Evaluation Tools

Partners for Possibility – External Evaluation 2016

Interview Guides: Principals

School & Principal: .......................................................... Date:.................................

1. What is your background – in terms of teaching and leading and / or management experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How long have you been teaching?</th>
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<tr>
<td>What qualifications do you have relating to teaching / management, or other?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you have any prior work or leadership experience in other sectors or any non-work leadership experience (e.g. church, scouts, voluntary, community)?</td>
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2. How long have you been at this school?

3. For how much of that time have you been in a leadership role at this school (SGB, deputy principal, senior teacher, acting principal, principal)?

4. What kind of school did you inherit from your predecessor? What were the main challenges you found here when you arrived?
5. What was your understanding of leadership and what was your leadership style like when you first became a principal?

6. How did you become involved with the PfP project?

7. How did your relationship with your business partner develop over the year you worked together and since then?

8. What was your experience of the year-long process, and what did you gain or enjoy most?

9. What were your expectations when you were first asked / applied to go on the PfP programme and were these met, or exceeded, or not?
10. Did you feel that the relationship involved learning and growth on both sides of the relationship (i.e.: What change do you think you inspired in your partner, if any)?

11. How useful was the Learning Process Facilitator (LPF) in facilitating your relationship?

12. Were you able to participate fully in all the activities during the year?

13. How would you rate the benefit you received from the following activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Communities of Practice:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(learning circles with other principals)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Content:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Time to Think; Flawless Consulting; Peter Block; Art of Possibility books etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Experiential Learning:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>(Time to Think; Flawless Consulting; Community Building workshops etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Action Learning:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>(to grapple with real challenges and lead change at the school)</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Coaching:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(face-to-face &amp; virtual engagements with partner).</td>
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</table>
14. Did you notice any tangible ways in which your leadership style changed (with people, resources etc) or things you started doing differently after the PfP relationship commenced?

15. Did you ever experience any problems with the programme, the LPF or your Business Partner during the process, and how did you address these?

16. Are there any ways that you think the PfP model or aspects of it must change in order to be more effective or beneficial for principals and schools?

17. Have you managed to pass on personal benefits you gained to SMT members, general educators, Learners or the wider school community?

18. Has there been a secondary positive impact beyond your personal development, on the wider school or even community. If so, what? If not, what do you think prevented this?
19. In what ways does the relationship between yourself and the business partner continue to benefit you, the school and the business partner?

Partners for Possibility – External Evaluation 2016

Interview Guides: Senior Teacher / SMT / educators / volunteers

School & Name/position:..........................................................................................Date........................

1. How long have you been involved with the school and what were the biggest challenges when you arrived?

2. Why did you think it was important for your principal to be involved in the PfP?

3. What were your expectations of what the principal and the school / school community would get out of the process?

4. Have there been any changes in the principal’s leadership style you have observed that you would attribute to this partnership?

5. Are there any differences in the way the principal interacts and engages with Educators and other staff?
6. Have there been any changes in the way the school and your systems (e.g. timetables, school events, curriculum) are run since the principal’s involvement with PfP?

7. Are there any differences in the way the principal engages with Learners since his/her involvement with PfP?

8. Are there any difference with how the principal engages with the community/parents, partners, donors and others coming into the school?

9. How has the school changed in the last few years and would you say the PfP partnership has had any role in this (improved discipline, improved school pride, improved results, better work environment etc)?

10. What else needs to be improved at this school and how could a programme like PfP assist with this?
Partners for Possibility – External Evaluation 2016

Interview Guides: Learners / Representative Council of Learners (RCL)

School & Principal: ...Date...

1. How do you view your school (good, bad, improving, failing, to be proud of etc)?

2. How do you think people in the community view this school and its Learners?

3. How would you describe the Leadership style of the school principal?

4. How does the principal involve Learners and RCL in solving the school’s challenges?

5. Have you noticed any changes in the principal’s leadership style or the way he engages teachers and Learners in the last two years?

6. Are there any programmes which have been or are still being run in this school that you feel have been particularly helpful in assisting the school to address the challenges it has faced?
Appendix B: Matrix of Impacts

(See following two pages)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnership Assessed</th>
<th>Overall Score</th>
<th>Leadership impact - Principal</th>
<th>Leadership impact – SMT/SGB</th>
<th>Good partnership in year</th>
<th>On-going supportive partnership</th>
<th>Infrastructure spin-offs</th>
<th>Education spin-offs</th>
<th>Values learnt still used</th>
<th>Community/Parent spin-offs</th>
<th>School direction/vision spin-offs</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Kannemeyer Primary School</td>
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<td>Hout Bay High School</td>
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<td>Stoneridge Park Primary School</td>
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<td>Dryden Street Primary</td>
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<td>Yeoville Boys Primary School</td>
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<td>Heathfield Primary School</td>
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<td>Iphuteng Primary</td>
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<td>Highlands North Boys High School</td>
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<td>Partnership Assessed</td>
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<td>Education spin-offs</td>
<td>Values learnt still used</td>
<td>Community/Parent spin-offs</td>
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<td>Khanyanjalo JP School</td>
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<td>The Valley Primary School</td>
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<td>Sophakama Primary School</td>
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<td>Diepsloot Primary School</td>
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<td>Inkwenkwezi Secondary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bramley Primary School</td>
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