

CEA IN MEMORANDUM DISCUSSIONS WITH THE WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



From Left: Mr Vumile Nyalashe (WCED), Mr Hendrik De Kock (Mathematics Consultant), Mr Gabriel Mokoena (CEA), Ms Taslima Ahmed (CEA), Prof. Rinelle Evans (Language Consultant), Dr Andile Siyengo (WCED) and Nosisa Gwama (WCED)

The team of four colleagues, Prof. Rinelle Evans, Mr Hendrick De Kock, Mr Gabriel Mokoena and Ms Taslima Ahmed from the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA) met with the Directorate of Research, Western Cape Education Department (WCED), The School Development Unit (SDU) of the University of Cape Town, Chief and Senior markers for this year's round of the Memorandum Discussions at the Cape Teaching and Leadership Institute (CTLI) from the 14th - 15th October 2022. Prof. Evans, supported by Ms Taslima Ahmed, led the Language Discussions while Mr De Kock engaged the Mathematics markers on the new test items. The purpose of the meeting was

mainly to finalise the language and mathematics memoranda with the WCED's chief and senior markers in preparation for the marking of the 2022 cycle of systemic tests. The CEA has been involved in the development and refinement of language and mathematics test items for the Western Cape Systemic testing. The WCED systemic testing, which comprise of language and mathematics tests for Grades 3, 6 and 9 in English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa, has been administered in the province since 2002 to identify areas for improvement and areas of the curriculum that require additional support.

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CEA Welcomes the Acting Director



PIRLS Encyclopedia published

Student shares her experience at



Initiator of Signature Library Visits the CEA

CEA WELCOMES ACTING DIRECTOR



The CEA has welcomed the appointment of Prof. Funke Omidire as the Acting Director of the CEA on contract basis. Prof. Omidire has been at the helm of the centre since June 2022.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF ASSESSMENTS AT SCHOOL LEVEL

CEA Staff Members Attend an Assessment Workshop at DBE

Two staff members from the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA), Mr Mishack Tshele and Mr Gabriel Mokoena, joined delegates at the national workshop on Improving the Quality of Assessment at School Level, organised by the Department of Basic Education at its offices in Pretoria. The purpose of the 2-day workshop on the 31st October and 1st November 2022 was firstly, to present how diagnostic assessment data can be used to improve learning outcomes, secondly to showcase an assessment for learning model that can be implemented in the provinces, thirdly, to receive input on how school-based assessment can be quality assured in the GET (General Education and Training) Phase.

Among key presentations at the workshop were a presentation on using TIMSS data diagnostically by Dr Vjay Reddy. The delegates were later divided into three commissions to tackle various topics on assessments. The first commission was tasked to find out what diagnostic data is available in the provinces, who use the data, how it is being used, what the key gaps are and how to improve data use. The second commission looked at the implementation of the Assessment for Learning (AFL),



Mr Mishack Tshele (Left) and Mr Gabriel Mokoena (Right) at the workshop on improving the quality of assessments at school level

which was interrogating issues such as: What is currently on the AFL in the provinces? How can the implementation of Assessment for Learning be explained? What are the AFL implications on recording and reporting, and what could be the key success indicators of AFL implementation? The third commission was on quality assuring School Based Assessment (SBA) and answered questions on SBA quality assurance processes happening in the provinces, who was responsible for the quality assurance of SBA in the province, the best practices that could be considered and the support materials and tools needed for the quality assurance process.

MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING DIRECTOR

The year 2022 marked the 20-year anniversary of the establishment of the CEA at the Faculty of Education. It has been a period of reflection on all of the CEA's contributions to education projects and discussions and debates in South Africa, in collaboration with its partners. We look forward to a formal celebration in the new year. We cannot think of a more fitting tribute to the CEA's work than the main activity of 2021. That was the year in which PIRLS 2021 data collection took place under the leadership of Prof. Surette van Staden, amidst a continued COVID-19 pandemic. The CEA has continued to work closely with the Department of Education (DBE) and the International Association for Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) on the project. From 2021 - 2022, we engaged with partners in the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) with systemic evaluation data in efforts to ascertain teaching and learning loss due to the COVID-19 lockdown. In 2022, we also worked on the School Monitoring Survey (SMS) project with partners from the National Department of Basic Education and the Tshwane University of Technology, as well as on a project with the Independent Schools Association of South Africa (ISASA).

We are pleased that our postgraduate Assessment and Quality Assurance (AQA) programmes are flourishing. We produced three graduates and two dissertation submissions during this year. This newsletter has highlighted some achievements, but we also need to acknowledge the contribution and hard work of Prof. Surette van Staden, who has accepted a position abroad but still remains a collaborator with the CEA. The CEA's vision is to continue to be a hub of specialist and expert knowledge in the fields of educational research and assessment. We want to thank the Head of Department (SMTE), Prof. Ronel Callaghan, the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Prof. Chika Sehoole, and all our colleagues across the faculty for their support and commitment to the actualisation of this vision.

Prof. Funke Omidire

Acting Director: Centre for Evaluation and Assessment

Prof. Omidire Attends a Quantitative Education Research Conference 2022



Prof. Omidire among delegates at the Quantitative Education Research Conference at the University of Stellenbosch

Prof. Funke Omidire attended the fifth RESEP Quantitative Education Research Conference at the STIAS Conference Centre in Stellenbosch on 12 and 13 September, 2022. There were a number of interesting and informative presentations. The main speaker, Prof. Sean Reardon of Stanford University, spoke about race, class, and educational opportunity in the United States. With his presentation, Prof. Reardon emphasises that economic segregation is the strongest predictor of how unequally schools provide opportunity. Prof. Vijay Reddy spoke on the Impact of COVID-19 on a fragile Education system while the team from DBE, and RESEP explored the learning losses and curriculum responses

A number of presentations focused on language learning and policy. Dr Nwabisa Makaluza presented findings of a study on deriving a quantitatively determined difficulty index for isiXhosa reading texts. Other presentations explored postponing the transition to English as Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) beyond Grade 4.



Initiator of Signature Library visits the CEA

Mr Musa Radebe, initiator of the Signature Library initiative, visited the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA) on 16 February 2022. The initiative aimed to make libraries available to communities where books are not widely available through a network of donations.



Members of the CEA meeting with the initiator of Signature Library

Communities are actively encouraged to participate in book clubs, readings and discussions. The initiative also includes an online art gallery. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/SignatureLibrary/>.

The purpose of the visit was to inform the CEA about the initiative of getting libraries and art galleries set up in poor communities to get people reading and to get them to display their art, all without funding, absolutely community and donation driven.

REPORT-WRITING FOR THE SCHOOL MONITORING SURVEY (SMS)

The CEA is preparing the report for the qualitative study of the School Monitoring Survey, which was commissioned by the Department of Basic Education (DBE). The qualitative data for the study was collected earlier this year from a sample of 90 ordinary public schools across the country, as part of the DBE's mandate to monitor progress towards the achievement of key goals and indicators in the Action Plan to 2019: Towards the realisation of Schooling 2030.

The preparation includes reviewing the transcriptions of about 450 audio recordings from the principals' interviews, the Grade R, Grade 3 and Grade 6 Teacher interviews as well as the School Based Support Team coordinator. The researchers are currently busy with the analysis, which will focus on the 13 indicator's and eight priority areas. The indicators included the following: The percentage of schools where allocated teaching posts are all filled, the average hours per year spent by teachers on professional development activities, the percentage of teachers absent from school on an average day, the percentage of learners having access to the required textbooks and workbooks for the entire school year, the percentage of learners in schools with a library or media centre fulfilling certain minimum standards, the percentage of schools producing the minimum set of management documents at the required standards, the percentage of schools where the SGB meets the minimum criteria in terms of effectiveness, the percentage of learners in schools that are funded at the minimum level, and the percentage of schools which have acquired the full set of financial management responsibilities on a basis of an assessment of their financial management capacity.

My Experience of Working at the CEA



Ms Etinosa Izevbigie

Etinosa Izevbigie shares her experience of working at the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA)

Etinosa, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Educational Psychology, served on several research projects at the CEA, including the large-scale international comparative study, and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), which is conducted under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

PIRLS 2021 ENCYCLOPEDIA PUBLISHED

The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) announced the publishing of the PIRLS 2021 Encyclopedia. *The PIRLS 2021 Encyclopedia: Education Policy and Curriculum in Reading* presents a profile of reading and language instruction in PIRLS 2021 countries and benchmarking systems.

The CEA has been the national study Centre for PIRLS since the country's first participation in the 2006 cycle of PIRLS.

Here is the link to the Encyclopedia:

<https://pirls2021.org/encyclopedia>

I consider myself privileged to have been granted the opportunity to work with the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA) on the PIRLS 2021 study. I was introduced to PIRLS in 2019 as an Honours student where I conducted a secondary data analysis of PIRLS Literacy 2016. I was quite fascinated by the international large-scale study with thought provoking findings. Hence, I was very excited when I was given the opportunity to be part of the PIRLS 2021 study. It was an amazing experience for me as a young researcher to work with and learn from the CEA team which comprises of established researchers. The experience deepened my understanding of quantitative research and the PIRLS study as a whole. I was given the opportunity to go to different schools as a monitor to ensure that the field workers administered the test booklets and conducted the assessment as required to ensure standardisation and uniformity in all the schools. I was also given the opportunity to mark the learner's booklets and participate in the quality assurance procedures as a reliability scorer. Seeing how different learners understood and responded to the questions in the test booklets was quite intriguing.

I am indeed very grateful to the CEA team for bringing me on board as a young researcher. My perception of research is broader and deeper as a result of working with the CEA.

THE CEA IN PICTURES



The CEA joined scores of Faculty of Education staff members who heeded a call to join the Dean in the 85th birthday celebration. The event kicked off with a fun walk around the campus.



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