



Talk Maths in Tororo

Project14 Evaluation

AIM OF THE PROJECT

Our aim was to assess the success of last year's pilot project, to address on-going needs and begin discussions on the future of the project. An additional aim was to donate to all 5 pilot schools a box of maths resources and provide curriculum workshops to discuss teaching and learning in different areas of maths.

TO ACHIEVE THESE AIMS:

The visit lasted just over 2 weeks. One day was spent visiting all 5 schools giving out the resources and having initial discussions about the next two weeks.

Four curriculum workshops were organised and well attended on shape, place value, multiplication and division. It was also nice to see some pupils attending the shape workshop. During these workshops emphasis was given to the learning journey and progression of calculation in these areas of maths and how you can use the new resources to support it.

Two meetings were held for school coordinators to discuss on going needs and the future of the project.

A meeting was held with the District Education Officer to inform him of our progress.

WHO WAS INVOLVED?

We consulted with many stakeholders including: Head teachers, school coordinators, pilot project teachers, new teachers to the project, pupils, parents, the Inspector for schools and School Management Committee and PTA representatives

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Pupils, teachers and Head Teachers are still extremely enthusiastic for the Talk Maths project. Word of its popularity has spread and we now have a large waiting list of schools wishing to join.
2. Almost all teachers have established successfully the TM philosophy with their new classes. In particular, Proscovia and Margaret form Okwira school have been working hard to communicate to the pupils that mistakes are not something to be feared and have successfully created a positive learning environment.
3. TM strategies were still being used by most teachers involved in the pilot project. Some teachers have adapted the teaching strategy into their everyday teaching practice and some are using this to teach excellent lessons.
4. All schools are working hard to achieve this year's target: to achieve a whole school approach to Talk Maths. Rugot school has achieved this target by sharing good practice with all teachers in the school who are now successfully using the ideas. Morkiswa has successfully trained their P7 mathematics teacher in TM strategies. Kisoko Boys school has been extremely enthusiastic and many teachers I saw were trying TM ideas, however, perhaps due their part involvement in the pilot project, it was clear they needed more support. Other schools have been organising in-school workshops but with less success. This was an area of particular interest to me as I wanted to see if the teaching ideas could be sustained and passed on by teachers in the project. **I am pleased that my findings suggest that the training does have lasting impact and that it is possible that Ugandan teachers could take on the role of TM instructor with the right support.**
5. Some teachers who have adopted TM strategies into their everyday practice are using the ideas across the curriculum. This was most evident in Rugot, Morkiswa and Kisoko Boys school.

6. Schools were thrilled to receive the resources and it will be interesting to see which are used most frequently. Construction instruments were very well received as many pupils were studying shape at the time and P7 candidates were taking mock exams and many did not have the correct equipment. The wooden thermometer was also a popular item. With regards to the base10, Cuisenaire, numicon and pattern blocks, workshops were designed to ensure teachers knew how these resources could be used to support learning. I was particularly impressed with Rugot school who I visited at the end of week 1: the P7 class had been making cubes from the shape workshop, which were displayed from the ceiling, Steven used the base 10 resources in his lesson and Florence had created her own numicon to use with her P1 class.
7. I think it is still too soon to evaluate the academic impact on pupils. However, Head Teachers informed me that last years PLE results were an improvement and many school coordinators reported an improvement in in-class test scores. What is still evident is that the biggest impact on pupils has been on their motivation and confidence in maths, with the largest change being with girls. One interesting story reported from Kisoko Boys School was of a high achieving boy, who was scoring 70% in tests. He asked why he should share his ideas if he was already doing well. Emmanuel then explained the learning benefits for pupils when they share their ideas and the boy began participating in the TM classroom. He now scores 90%.
8. TM champions are extremely popular with pupils and teachers and are being used to award pupils for participating, taking risks, helping others, sharing ideas and taking responsibility for their learning, not just academic success. TM champions were being awarded once a month as schools did not know if they had enough resources. All agreed that once a month was working well.

ACTIONS TAKEN

- The budget was reworked to cut TM champions down to once a month for older classes and once a unit (3 weeks) for younger classes. This enabled us to provide bigger transport costs.
- As the project grows it was clear we needed a more formalised system for schools to follow. Documents were created to trial for next year, including a school phase's system, a mentoring programme for new teachers, a school visit form and lesson evaluation form. These documents should help schools to support each other and new teachers and therefore support schools in achieving this year's target. Every attempt was made to make these documents useful rather than onerous and I shall look to gain feedback to improve them next year.
- It was decided that School Coordinators needed something more formal to document their involvement in the project so we shall be creating a letter of appointment and identity badges. Schools can use their certificates from the pilot project.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS FOR NEXT YEAR

- Places on the next project could be given to Kisoko Boys school as they were not involved in the original pilot project. Their enthusiasm suggests they could be an excellent TM school but they currently need more support.
- Places on the next project could be given to pilot schools to support their move to phase 2.
- I will continue to work with pilot schools rather than new schools to support teachers in running their own workshops and training programmes.
- For new schools to become part of the project we will need additional teachers to come next year.