



**Africa A+
Schools**

Engaging Curious Minds

South Africa

AFRICA A PLUS SCHOOLS

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



ARTS ENRICHED EARLY LEARNING

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Creativity is now as important in education as literacy and we should treat it with the same status. – Sir Ken Robinson (Educationalist)

This statement could be a description of the work of Africa A+. At the heart of our work is a desire to develop the child's innate creativity. This aligns closely with our mission and goals as seen on our Orientation page. These goals underpin all that A+ does. One might consider why the A+ style of intervention is necessary? By addressing the child's innate desire to work creatively and explore the world around them, we allow them to develop valuable skills such as problem-solving, entrepreneurship and even the capacity to be adaptive in ever changing times. A+ starts by tapping into the teacher's own creativity to enable them to pass the message onto their learners. When this is coupled with showing our teachers how to make use of recyclable materials or *loose parts* as we call them, then the magic happens! Despite the pandemic, 2021 saw A+ implement teacher training in the Kouga Municipality, providing a positive result at the end of our first year of fieldwork as seen on our Monitoring and Evaluation page. All our programmes were kept on track, according to funder deliverables. Contact was maintained between sessions using WhatsApp. This allowed continued support between sessions of engagement.

Our policy of training facilitators *in context*, means that we work within the Kouga communities to address the issues that are specific to their schools and their contexts. Our novice facilitators have now entered their second year of a three-year training cycle, and we can already see their confidence growing. This is demonstrated by their mutual sharing of WhatsApp clips and photos showing their implementation of practice.

2021, saw an expansion of our work into the Malungeni district (in the former Transkei) with two on-site workshops and preparation for a three-year project. The enthusiasm of our participants meant that we left the second workshop with the community eager to do more.

With generous support from a private donor, we have been able to establish a recycling depot in Humansdorp. This is a valuable way of demonstrating to teachers that they do not have to have expensive resources to provide stimulating activities for their learners. I would like to commend our trainers, Anya, Carole and Yolande, for the way in which they have helped the Kouga teachers to tap into their own creativity in practical classroom pedagogy.

A+ has spread its academic wings by participating in the SARAECCE National conference in July 2021, as well as contributing two papers to the SARAECCE e-publication due out early next year. These contributions have raised the voice of the NGO sector in the world of academia.

We have continued to stand by our goal of improving teachers' abilities to work within the Fourth Industrial Revolution by making regular use of WhatsApp to effect training in the periods between face-to-face sessions, shared examples of best practice, reminding facilitators to submit their reports and using links to google forms for gathering of M & E data. Sharing of classroom activities

on WhatsApp had the effect of validating and building the confidence of teachers who rarely receive praise for their work. This type of empowering of teachers is a vital healing process as a result of the apartheid legacy.

We continue to enjoy a productive and lively collaboration with the Centre for Early Childhood Development (CECD) in Cape Town, as we work towards quality ECD education in Kouga. Our organizational strengths are complementary and allow us to provide a comprehensive service in a multi-disciplinary sector.

A+ is growing and spreading expertise that make a significant difference. My praise goes to the A+ facilitation staff for their professionalism, dedication and lateral thinking.

I am excited about the next twelve months of achievements.

Giulietta Harrison (Director)



ORIENTATION OF AFRICA A PLUS

Our context

Most schools in South Africa still struggle to provide a quality future-orientated education that prepares children to be successful citizens who contribute to society. Schools need to realise curriculum outcomes and nurture children's critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, communication and creativity (being imaginative, innovative and having an entrepreneurial mind-set) skills. We work particularly in impoverished communities to upskill ECD teachers in ways to develop the whole child.

Our Vision

A quality education system that delivers capacitated, engaged educators and active parents and caregivers in order to prepare today's children to be citizens of tomorrow.

Our Mission

To create an A+ Schools support network that unlocks the potential of schools to provide a quality learning experience for all.

Our Goals

1. Nurture creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking, collaboration and an entrepreneurial mind-set.
2. Grow quality early education to prepare children to be tomorrow's adult citizens.
3. Practically implement training of ECD and Grade R teachers.
4. Making creative learning resources accessible to support creative learning and teaching.

THE A PLUS TEAM

Africa A Plus Schools consists of a core staff who build capacity within the communities that they work. As a relatively new NPO, we have a highly specialized staff who use their expertise to improve teaching and learning in the areas that they work. Below is an organogram illustrating our staff.

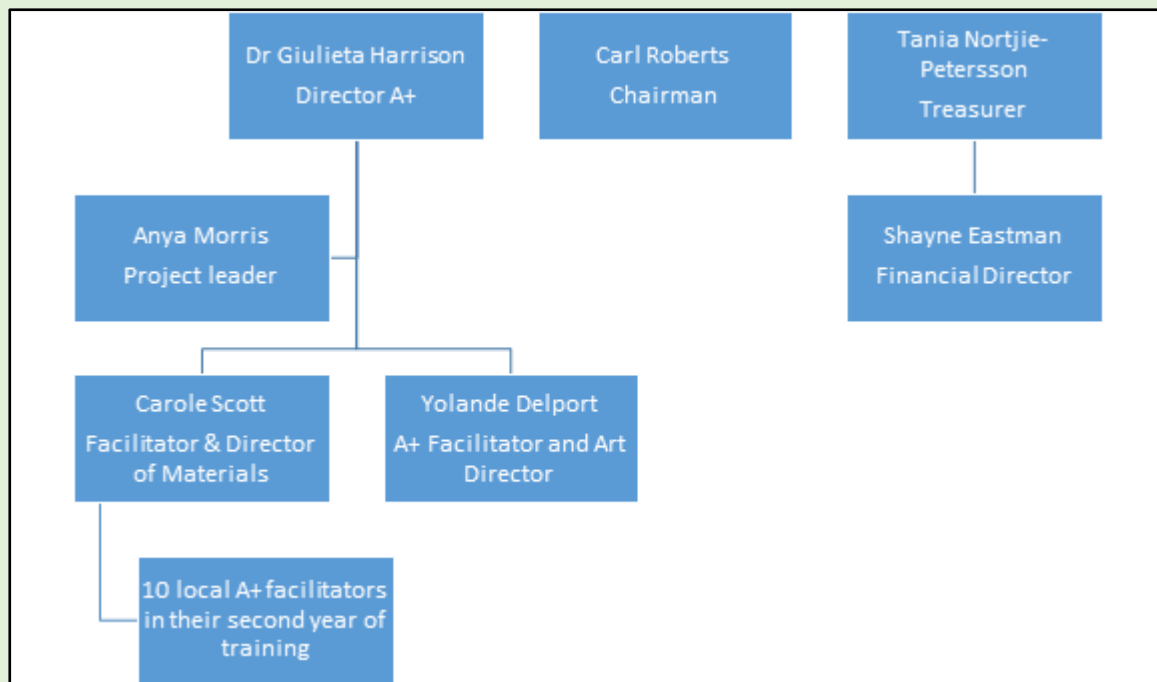


Figure 1 Africa A Plus Organogram

Members of the Africa A Plus Board

- Carl Roberts (Chair 2020 – November 2021)
- Thomas Pettersen (Chair from November 2021)
- Dr Giuletta Harrison (Director A+)
- Tania Nortje (Treasurer)
- Anya Morris (Project leader)
- Carole Scott (Materials Director)
- Professor Avi Sooful
- Linda Biersteker

THE A PLUS APPROACH: ART AND CREATIVITY

Africa A Plus offers an approach that supports Learning through Art. Art includes all forms of art; visual, music and performance art.

Why the need for this approach? The artist on a daily basis engages with and applies the 21st Century Skills we and our children need to become happy, successful and caring beings. Through the lens of Art, our learning engages us in critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communicating ideas and processes. We learn to access and share information and are motivated to be flexible and innovative.

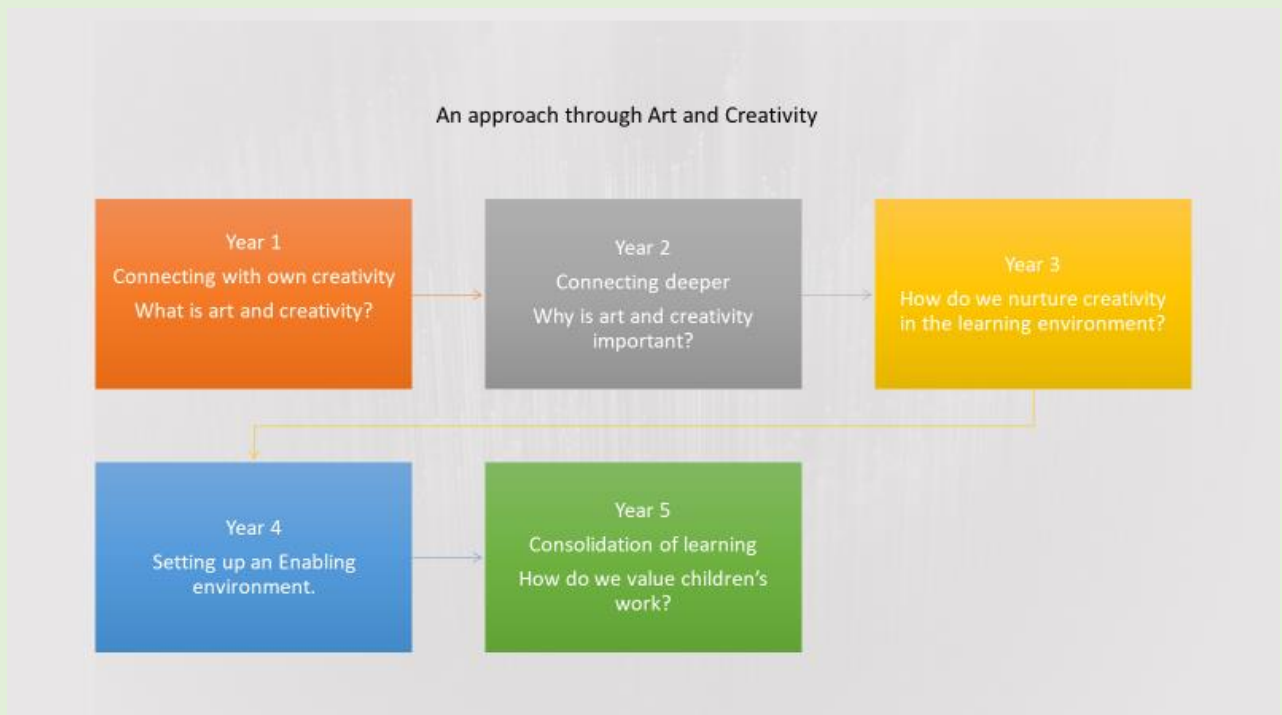


Figure 2. The A+ approach to Art and creativity in education

The first of an A + cycle works on connecting with our own creativity, through hands-on experiences and learning about abstract art. The activities encourage the process of art making and focus less on the actual product of the activity. Coaxing our ECD teachers back to play, exploring through touch, and opening the mind to wonder and joy. Engaging the right brain and silencing the left brain that so often whispers the disabling thoughts of: "You're not an artist, you can't do this or you are not clever or talented enough to enjoy art."

The following questions are raised during the processes:

" Were you focused? Were you thinking about your problems, such as no money, family and work problems? Did you worry what others thought of what you were doing?"

These questions receive positive answers "Yes we were focused! I did not think about my problems, I did not worry about what others were thinking, I was completely absorbed in what I was doing!" These confident replies support the wholesomeness that art can contribute to our personal and learning environments.

The purpose of connecting to our creativity first is to enjoy the process of creating and secondly, experiencing what our children probably will experience when engaging with similar activities and materials. Witnessing the mind playing and creating new opportunities for wonder and exploration as well as the potential of interdisciplinary learning, is key. Beginning to realise how much learning can happen through our hands, while working and playing with materials.

Further connection with our own creativity is then deepened through exclusive workshops held by local artists. This year the first workshop offered a deeper understanding of music and the role it plays in the development of children. A second workshop helped the teachers to connect with their inner child through experiential movement and a third workshop offered an introduction to working with clay.

Creative activities are demonstrated during on-site visits to ECD centres during field trips. We have experienced challenges during Covid-19, such as more materials needed to be purchased because of non-sharing, the social distancing required making the execution of some activities challenging. But it brought a huge plus too as it forced us to revisit young children's right to play as their primary mode of learning, and challenged us to think creatively to allow this to happen. The posting of creative ideas on WhatsApp during the non-contact time that was brought about by Covid-19, created a wonderful platform for teachers to share their activities and to learn from each other. This practice was so successful that it was decided to continue with it despite no budget allocation.



Figure 3. Cohort 1 experiencing contour drawing for the first time and learning about colour.



Figure 4. Cohort 2 enjoying 1 of 3 elective workshops offered during Summer Institute 2021.



Figure 5. Problem solving: How to create a painting activity if there is no paint?



Figure 6. Online support: Info-byte on printmaking using recyclable material.

The input on Art and Creativity was submitted by **Yolande Delport, Creative Director.**
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A PLUS NETWORK

In the Cape Town Metro we have five A Plus affiliated schools who have completed our three year programme where 76 staff reach 467 children.

ECD Centre	Number of Children	Number of Staff
Gerard's Early Learning and Development Centre	140	28
Fish Hoek Pre-primary	102	20
iThemba Pre-primary	80	8
Rainbow ECD Centre	105	7
Chameleon Campus	40	13

Africa A+ remains in contact with the five preschools in Cape Town by:

- Posting information and updates on two WhatsApp groups; one group is for the five ECD principals and staff, and the other group is for the A+ facilitators. These groups were established in 2015 and are in regular use.
- Facilitating annual conferences in January in Cape Town. A conference was not held in 2021 because of COVID protocols.
- Facilitating on-site A+ workshops on request. No workshops were requested in 2021 because of COVID protocols.

Africa A+ hopes that 2022 will allow for more hands-on interactions with the Cape Town A+ preschools.



Figure 7. The joy of learning together. School leaders from A Plus preschools in Cape Town.

PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES

Kouga Wind Farm Trust Project

Africa A+ Schools is working in a five year partnership with the Centre for Early Childhood Education (CECD) to improve the quality of 33 ECD centre programmes in Wards 1, 4, 5, 6, and 15 of the Kouga Municipality. These 33 ECD centres are situated in Humansdorp, Sea Vista (St Francis), and Oyster Bay. The project is funded by the Kouga Wind farm Community Development Trust (KWT).

The aim of the KWT project is to:

- Increase young children's access to quality ECD services in marginalized communities around the Eastern Cape
- Enable children to grow and develop to their full potential, thereby reducing inequality.

CECD is providing the infrastructural upgrades and assistance with registration with the Department of Social Development. Africa A+'s role is pedagogical, i.e. professional development (training), and support (online and on-site implementation) that will enable each ECD centre to provide children with a quality early education no matter the context that the school and community find themselves in. Africa A+ is also developing a team of local facilitators who will continue to support the 33 schools beyond the five year project.

A baseline study of 33 preschools in 2019 informed the planning of the five year cycle of intervention. The first year began in August 2020 with the enrolment of 15 ECD centres known as Cohort 1. Year 2 began in August 2021 with the enrolment of a further 12 ECD centres known as Cohort 2. In Year 3 the remainder of the 33 ECD centres and any new centres in the Kouga area will be enrolled as Cohort 3. Years 4 and 5 will focus on consolidating learning and implementation of learning. Table 1 below lays out Africa A+'s activities planned for the five year cycle of intervention at the 33 ECD centres:

Table 1: Intervention activities planned for the five year cycle

Time frame	Activities: ECD centres	Activities: Local Facilitation Team
Year 1 (1 August 2020 - 31 July 2021)	COHORT 1 ECD centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruit 15 ECD centres - Teaching & Learning survey: baseline - Summer Institute: five days of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) COHORT 1 school leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership Retreat 1: one day of professional development for principals 	LOCAL FACILITATION TEAM Training by Africa A+ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitators' Retreat 1: 2 days professional development - Recruit 10 local ECD facilitations - Participation at Summer Institute - Participation at all Cohort 1 ECD centre training activities and workshops - Facilitator workshops (3) - On-line support (bi-monthly) - Individual reviews Facilitation tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support designated Cohort 1 ECD

		centres - Write weekly reports
Year 2 (1 August 2021 - 31 July 2022)	<p>COHORT 1 ECD centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching & Learning survey: follow up 1. - Summer Conference 1: three days of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) <p>COHORT 2 ECD centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruit 12 ECD centres - Teaching & Learning survey: baseline - Summer Institute: five days of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) <p>COHORT 1 & 2 school leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership Retreat 2: one day of professional development for principals 	<p>LOCAL FACILITATION TEAM</p> <p>Training by Africa A+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitators' Retreat 2: 1 day professional development - Assist at Cohort 2 Summer Institute - Participation at Cohort 1 Summer Conference 1 - Participation at all Cohort 2 ECD centre training activities and workshops - Facilitator workshops (3) - On-line support (bi-monthly) - Individual reviews <p>Facilitation tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support designated Cohort 1 & 2 ECD centres - Write bi-monthly reports - Assist at workshops and training
Year 3 (1 August 2022 - 31 July 2023)	<p>COHORT 1 ECD centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching & Learning survey: follow up 2. - Summer Conference 2: two days of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) <p>COHORT 2 ECD centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching & Learning survey: follow up 1. - Summer Conference 1: three days of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) <p>COHORT 3 ECD centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruit 5 (+ new) ECD centres - Teaching & Learning survey: baseline 	<p>LOCAL FACILITATION TEAM</p> <p>Training by Africa A+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitators' Retreat 3: 1 day professional development - Co-facilitation at Cohort 3 Summer Institute - Co-facilitation at Cohort 2 Summer Conference 1 - Participation at Cohort 1 Summer Conference 2 - Participation at all Cohort 3 ECD centre training activities and workshops - Facilitator workshops (3) - On-line support (bi-monthly) - Individual reviews <p>Facilitation tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support designated Cohort 1, 2, & 3 ECD centres - Write bi-monthly reports - Co-facilitate and assist at workshops

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summer Institute: five days of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) - Leadership Retreat: one day of professional development for principals <p>COHORT 1, 2 & 3 school leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership Retreat 3: one day of professional development for principals 	and training
<p>Year 4 (1 August 2023 - 31 July 2024)</p>	<p>COHORT 1 ECD centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching & Learning survey: follow up 3. - Summer Conference 3: one day of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) <p>COHORT 2 ECD centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching & Learning survey: follow up 2. - Summer Conference 2: two days of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) <p>COHORT 3 ECD centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching & Learning survey: follow up 1 - Summer Conference 1: three days of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) <p>COHORT 1, 2 & 3 school leaders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership Retreat 4: one day of professional development for principals 	<p>LOCAL FACILITATION TEAM</p> <p>Training by Africa A+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitators' Retreat 4: 1 day professional development - - Participation at Cohort 3 Summer Conference 1 - Co-facilitation at Cohort 2 Summer Conference 2 - Participation at Cohort 1 Summer Conference 3 - Participation at all Cohort 3 ECD centre training activities and workshops - Facilitator workshops (3) - On-line support (bi-monthly) - Individual reviews <p>Facilitation tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support designated Cohort 1, 2, & 3 ECD centres - Write bi-monthly reports - Co-facilitate at workshops and training

Year 5 (1 August 2024 - 31 July 2025)	COHORT 1 ECD centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching & Learning survey: follow up 4. - Summer Conference 4: one day of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) COHORT 2 ECD centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching & Learning survey: follow up 3. - Summer Conference 3: one day of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) COHORT 3 ECD centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching & Learning survey: follow up 2 - Summer Conference 2: one day of professional development - Support site visits - Workshops - On-line support (bi-monthly) COHORT 1, 2 & 3 school leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership Retreat 5: one day of professional development for principals 	LOCAL FACILITATION TEAM Training by Africa A+ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitators' Retreat 5: 1 day professional development - Participate at Cohort 3 Summer Conference 2 - Facilitate Cohort 2 Summer Conference 3 - Facilitate Cohort 1 Summer Conference 4 - Participation at all Cohort 3 ECD centre training activities and workshops - Facilitator workshops (3) - On-line support (bi-monthly) - Individual reviews Facilitation tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support designated Cohort 1, 2, & 3 ECD centres - Write bi-monthly reports - Facilitate workshops and training
	End of project exhibition/seminar	

The Cohort 1 ECD centres have had a year of interventions while the Cohort 2 schools who enrolled in September 2021, have had one intervention. Emmanuel was closed for 8 months of the year but was invited to continue attending the workshops. The principals at Pink Panther, Haasbakkies, Eagles Accolades, and Jeugkamp find it challenging to attend workshops as they have second jobs owing to Covid-19. Table 2 below is a tally of the Africa A+ intervention activities for 2021 (January - November):

Table 2: Tally of the Africa A+ 2021 interventions

Cohort 1 ECD centres	Staff	Children	Training (workshops)	Support visits	Support online
Arise and Shine	3	13	4	5	Since COVID lockdown: (1) Two or more info-bites per month to two WhatsApp groups: - Cohort 1 - Cohorts 1, 2, 3 (2) Monthly telephonic support to individual principals
Eagles Accolade	4	17	4	4	
Emmanuel Daycare	3	5	2	2	
Haasbakkies Daycare	3	18	2	3	
Jeugkamp	3	18	5	3	
Kate van der Merwe	4	48	2	3	
Kiddies Clubhouse	3	48	6	3	
Kokkewiet Creche	3	20	3	4	
Kruisfontein Educare Creche	4	49	5	3	
Lelethu Ikhaya Day Care	3	48	5	4	
Magaba Daycare	1	14	2	3	
Noluthando Day Care	2	13	2	3	
Nolutho Day Care	2	19	3	5	
Pink Panther Projek	3	9	5	3	
Simanye	Closed down in 2021 but will re-open in January 2022 according to principal				

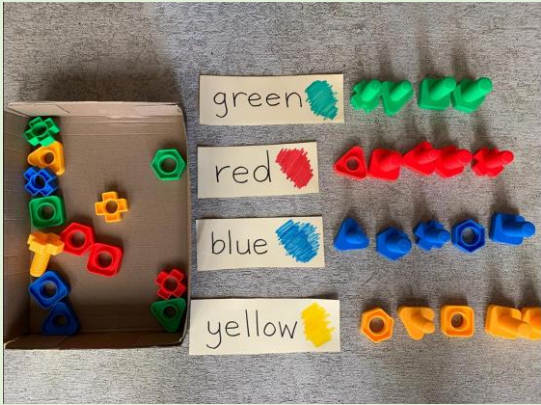
Cohort 2 ECD centres (enrolled September 2021)	Staff	Children	Training (5 day Summer Institute)	Support visits	Support online
Angels Day Care	3	20	1	None to date: Support visits will begin in 2022	Since COVID lockdown: Two or more info-bites per month to Cohorts 1, 2, 3 WhatsApp group
Chioma Safehaven Daycare	4	15	1		
Faith in Action	4	23	1		
Grace Kids	9	75	1		
Kleine Engele Dagsorg	4	26	1		
Makhulu	1	9	1		
Masikhule Pre-School	6	53	1		
Mickey Mouse Daycare	6	55	1		
MJA Daycare	3	29	1		
Noncedo Daycare	2	6	1		
Rainbow Centre	1	89	1		
Wielie Walie Educational Centre	9	62	1		

The activities listed in Table 2 are described in detail for the remainder of this report section:

On-line Support

The on-line support initiated at the beginning of the COVID lockdowns has strengthened and the following activities have become an integral part of the Kouga Wind Farm Community Development Trust project:

- Info-bytes i.e. small parcels of ECD information posted throughout the month on the Kouga ECD WhatsApp group. The purpose of the info-bites is to share ideas, disseminate knowledge about early childhood development, encourage the facilitation of creative art with children, and support the implementation of playful learning experiences. The two photos below are examples info-bites posted on the Kouga ECD project WhatsApp group:

 <p><i>Figure 8. Sharing information via WhatsApp.</i></p>	<p>Grow with ECD is offering a Learner Assessment webinar and are willing to invite centres not on the GROW programme. They will also record the meeting and make it available to centres that registered for the webinar, but could not join (a link to a YouTube video via email).</p> <p>https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=VocNj6e4aE-3zBPKBs2oKmx61l9cWDBFocsoj8F4niJUMUZLUUxL ODFOQk5NTFhOOEwyNFRDUFpVTi4u</p>
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- Telephonic support i.e. bi-monthly phone calls between the Africa A+ facilitators, the local facilitators, and each ECD principal.
- Posting images of the activities done by the ECD centres on the Kouga ECD WhatsApp group. The purpose of posting is to affirm the teachers who are implementing what they have learned, and to encourage other ECD centres to try new ideas.

These on-line support activities have built relationships and encouraged the implementation of quality learning experiences for children. Although unplanned and unbudgeted, the on-line support is so successful that Africa A+ has decided to sustain it for the duration of the five year project.

Training (workshops) and On-site Support

When lockdowns were eased the Africa A+ facilitators completed field trips in: March, April, June, August, Sept/October, and November 2021. The activities facilitated by Africa A+ during the 2021 field trips were as follows:

- Cohort 2 ECD centres: At the start of Year 2 (August 2021) the second cohort of 12 new ECD centres joined the project. During the Sept/October field trip, a **teaching and learning survey** was done at each Cohort 2 centre to serve as a baseline from which progress can be measured and monitored. The photo below of two Cohort 2 ECD centres in Humansdorp illustrates the diversity encountered in Year 2:



Figure 9. Grace Kids (Humansdorp).



Figure 10. Chioma Safehaven (Humansdorp).

The 12 Cohort 2 ECD centres underwent their first five days of professional development training during the **Summer Institute** held from 4th - 8th October 2021. The highlights of the Cohort 2 Summer Institute were the enthusiasm and engagement of the ECD teachers and the building of an ECD community. The following comments from three participants are in their own words:

- *I am inspired by getting out of my comfort zone....*
- *Today I enjoyed how to be 'creative'. Now I can let go of all my fears and give what I have inside me.*
- *I would like to learn more about how to invest into our children's lives and making them become better and stronger people in knowing that we are different [participant's response to an activity on diversity and inclusion]*



Figure 11. Sharing our collective thinking.



Figure 12. Discussing our thoughts.

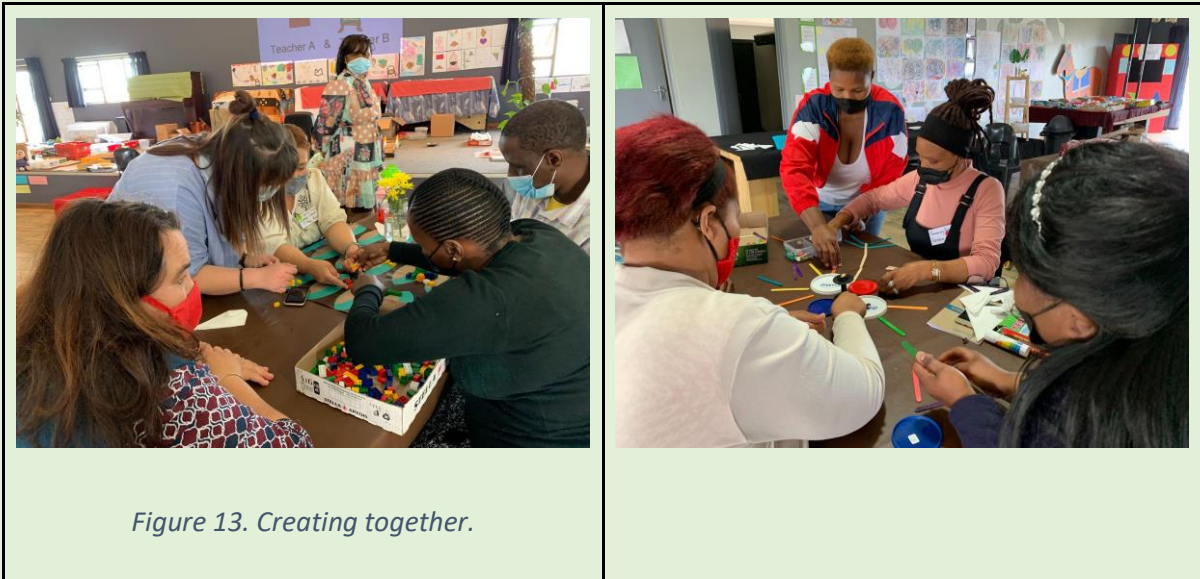


Figure 13. Creating together.

➤ Cohort 1 ECD centres

Lockdown prevented travel and facilitation from January to March so Africa A+ began an online information and support programme. From March the Africa A+ planned and facilitated:

- **48 on-site support visits.** The focus of each 2021 visit is for the facilitators to model playful pedagogical ways of working with the children.
- **6 ECD workshops.** The content of each workshop is informed by the ECD schools Next Steps (a list of written changes each school would like to make in 2021)
- 1 day of **leadership development**
- 3 days of professional development; the **Summer Conference 1** from the 17th - 19th November 2021.

During 2021, the Cohort 1 ECD centres have been getting to know each other as an ECD community and they are starting to support each other by sharing ideas and resources. The participants' enthusiasm to learn, their commitment to training and their growing confidence and creativity have been a highlight in 2021. The challenges have been the deaths of a local facilitator and a principal, two centres¹ closing because of economic unsustainability, and the struggle to transfer and implement the knowledge and skills experienced and learned during training. It is preferable not to plan any workshops for November or December as the ECD centres are very busy with additional responsibilities.

¹ Emmanuel has re-opened and Simanye intends to re-open in January 2022.



Figure 14. On-site visit to Nolutho Educare in Kwanomzamo, Humansdorp on 16 November 2021.



Figure 15. Cohort 1 participants at the Summer Conference 17 - 19 November 2021.

➤ Local facilitation team

Nine local facilitators are being trained by the Africa A+ facilitators. The purpose of creating a local facilitation team is to ensure that the gains made at the 33 ECD centres are sustained after the five year project is complete. The local facilitator training activities for 2021 consisted of:

- Inviting the local facilitators to **participate in all the 2021 Cohort 1 and 2 training and support activities**. This enables the local facilitators to become knowledgeable about ECD and to learn facilitation skills from the Africa A+ team
- 3 facilitator **training workshops**
- 1 day **Facilitators' Retreat** (one day of professional development)

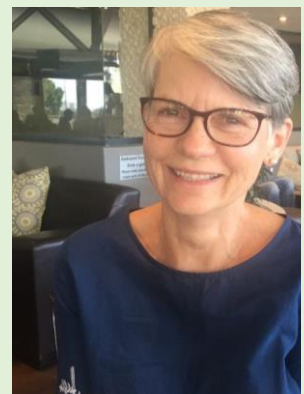


Figure 16. Ntombomzi Ndamse, Nomlungelo Mtsele and Natasha Visagie being creative during the Facilitators' Retreat on 2 October.

ITEC, an ECD training organisation, was asked to sponsor Kouga ECD practitioners who could not afford ECD Level 4 training fees. To date seven of the Kouga ECD project participants are enrolled in the ITEC Level 4 training.

2021 has been a happy and productive year of development for the Cohort 1 ECD centres. We look forward to furthering their learning and getting to know the Cohort 2 ECD centres in 2022.

The 2021 training report was prepared by **Anya Morris, Programme Director**
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Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of all A+ projects, a baseline study is done at the beginning of the work which is followed up by an annual assessment for each year of the project. An impact assessment was conducted at the end of the first year of the Kouga Wind Farm project and showed a noteworthy improvement despite the constraints of the pandemic. It addressed 14 indicators that were examined during the baseline study in 2019 and then followed up on at the end of year one. All the score data from the 16 indicators, from all ECD centres in Cohort 1 were analysed. This was a total of 230 indicators in the (16) baseline assessments, and 175 indicators in the (11) follow-up assessments. Indicators were scored on a four-point scale, with each indicator having its own scoring key.

- Score of 1 = Poor/No evidence of the indicator in place
- Score of 2 = Fair/Some evidence of the indicator in place
- Score of 3 = Good/Moderate evidence of the indicator in place
- Score of 4 = Very good/Ample evidence of the indicator in place

The graphic below illustrates the M & E after one year of intervention. We would like to acknowledge and thank CECD for the impact report (CECD, 2021).

This graphic shows the average outcomes for nine of the 16 indicators that were tested. There are a number of areas that show a notable improvement: Curriculum; Experiential learning; Literary & Performing arts and Infrastructure. The improvement of infrastructure was largely linked to providing resources such as boxes of teaching and learning materials and art materials as well as some upgrading of classroom buildings where the infrastructure was problematic. The improvements in pedagogy indicators however were less expected given the constraints of the pandemic. This is a testament to the hard work of the A+ team who have begun to shift the mind-sets of the teachers and facilitators, assisting them in understanding the curriculum and the power of using creativity to teach. This is very encouraging, as it foreshadows the possible impact which could be achieved in the upcoming years.

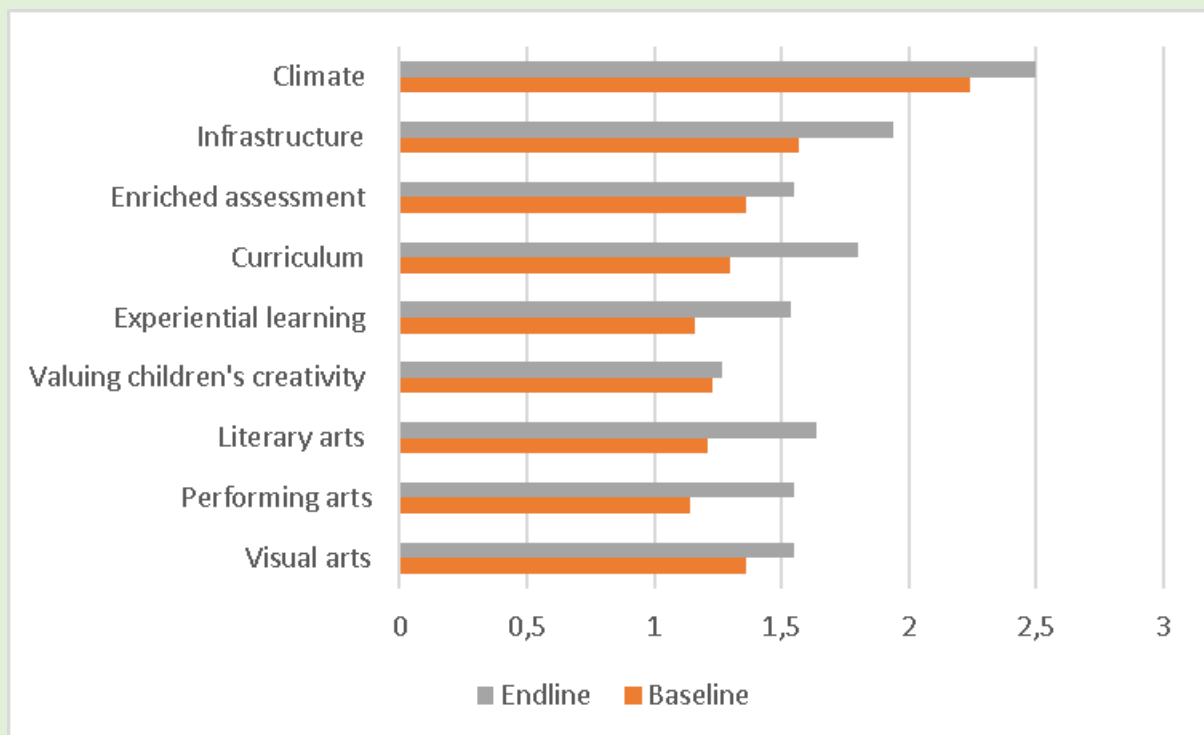


Figure 17. Monitoring and Evaluation of Kouga Wind Farm Project Year 1.

Malungeni



In March of 2021, Professor Spiwo Xapile, Director of the African Centre for the management of HIV/AIDS in the world, University of Stellenbosch, pastor at the JL Zwane Presbyterian Church, Community leader and founder of The Platform NPO, invited Africa A+ and iZinto to submit a proposal to introduce their work in Malungeni. Malungeni is a rural village located in the Ngqeleni district of the Eastern Cape. Prof Xapile believes that early quality education is vital for the health, wellbeing and economic stability of marginalized South Africans. He would like his community, parents and teachers and ECD practitioners in and around Malungeni to see the child as being front and centre of a movement toward this change.

This past year saw two trips to Malungeni. We made the first road trip in May with the aim of introducing the practitioners to the concept of using *loose parts* (iZinto) for teaching and learning. We spent four days visiting the two schools in the morning modelling activities with the teachers and children and facilitating workshops in the afternoons. The workshops were well received, however many of the participants were not working in schools but were interested in working or starting an ECD centre themselves.

Our October 2021 trip was planned for 30 participants but this time the pool of participants was drawn from the entire district. It was arranged for all three facilitators to attend to preview a possible three year programme. On arrival in Malungeni we learned that we had 100 participants with only two practitioners repeating from the May 2021 workshop. It was a relief that we were three facilitators as we had to scramble to adjust and plan for so many participants. The focus of our workshop for the four days was to introduce working with A+ through creative learning and teaching activities and to provide art activities for the practitioners to explore their own creativity.

Some highlights included:

- The level of enthusiasm by the participants to engage in the activities
- Visits from local dignitaries that included the ECD forum, the Chief, the local Councillor and the mayor.
- Dr Xapile addressing the practitioners daily, offering words of encouragement and support.
- Amazing food prepared by local cooks with some vegetables grown and donated by the community
- The community housing the participants attending from afar.

The challenges included the fact that there was one toilet at the hall to accommodate over 100 people. Loadshedding interrupted some of our planned activities and we had to continue in the dark without use of the projector.

We are excited to continue with the work in Malungeni and plans for workshops in 2022 are in discussion.



Figure 18. Malungeni Community Hall.



Figure 19. A practitioner shows her joy at completing her clay sculpture.



Figure 20. Image of "The Dot" using loose materials.



Figure 21. ECD practitioners immersed in creative activities.



Figure 22. Working with circles and dots.

iZinto



iZinto, an emerging initiative, collects and curates discarded materials for creative repurposing in ECD centres and schools. It works in collaboration with practitioners through on-site dialogues, modelling and interactive workshops. iZinto is an arm of Africa A+ schools and integrates two ideas. The first is Simon Nicholson 1970's theory of loose parts in which he states, "In any environment, both the degree of inventiveness and creativity, and the possibility of discovery are directly proportional to the number and kinds of variables in it." The second idea is the Remida, a materials centre in Reggio Emilia Italy based on the educational philosophy of Loris Malaguzzi which suggests

that children need to be given opportunities to explore materials and express their learning in multiple ways.

iZinto has expanded from the storage unit in Tokai funded by Richard Burnett at Securistore, to include a large warehouse space in Humansdorp funded by an angel donor. A Go Fund Me page was set up to help fund the project.

A recent field trip to the Humansdorp warehouse saw the fitting of shelving and the setting up of categorized materials ready for participants to access. We would like to thank our angel donor for providing the funds for this set up. iZinto continues to collect materials from local businesses in the area and a meeting with the local newspapers for more exposure about the project is, planned.

The iZinto storage unit in Tokai provides materials for our work in Cape Town and Malungeni, Eastern Cape. We have no storage facility in Malungeni and materials have to be transported into the area. We hope to find a larger facility in Cape Town in 2022. The Humansdorp iZinto Materials Centre serves the Kouga district ECD's. Once it is fully set up, the space will be able to house materials for the centres and also serve as a space to facilitate workshops.



Figure 23. Securistore Unit in Tokai, Cape Town.



Figure 24. Storing materials at Securistore Unit.



Figure 25. Setting up shelving in Humansdorp Recycling Depot.



Figure 26. Beginning to stock the shelves.



Figure 27. Colour coding materials for easier access.



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SARAECE Conference Presentation



Carole Scott and Anya Morris presented the Izinto and Malungeni work at the virtual South African Research Association for Early Childhood Education (SARAECE) National conference in July 2021. The topic was 'The pedagogical potential of discarded materials'. The presentation described the creative re-purposing of discarded materials in May 2021 at two ECD centres in Malungeni, a rural village outside Mthata in the Eastern Cape. This presentation together with a paper by Yolande Delpont on the A+ use of WhatsApp, have been submitted for an e-book publication by SARAECE due out in the first quarter of 2022.

FUNDERS AND DONORS

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- **The Platform for the Construction of Preferred Futures**
- **Mr and Mrs Petersson**
- **GoFundMe**
- **Richard Burnett at Securistore**



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