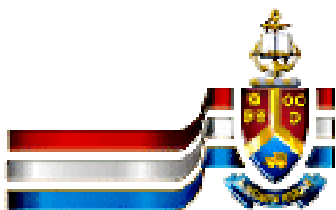


# Situation Analysis of a Health Promoting Schools Intervention with School District Tshwane North, South Africa

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# Outline

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- ❑ Challenges to for HPS Implementation
- ❑ Recommendations
- ❑ Future Research
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# Introduction

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- ❑ Education is key to increasing health and wealth
- ❑ Health directly impacts educational outcomes
- ❑ HPS = framework for different sectors to work together to improve both health and education
- ❑ September 2005: School District partnered with University of Pretoria to establish district HPS approach
- ❑ Challenges: discipline, violence, HIV/AIDS, professional stagnation, and a general sense of 'toxicity'



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# Objectives

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- ❑ To **train** a core group of district support staff
- ❑ To **facilitate** the initial phase of HPS Project
- ❑ To **analyze** the issues, populations, policies, and interventions at the schools
- ❑ To **assess** the usefulness of the HPS Evaluation Tool
- ❑ To **describe** the lessons learned

# Background: HPS

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- ❑ **Ottawa Charter (1986):** Settings Approach
- ❑ Schools important settings to improve the health of learners, educators, communities
- ❑ **HPS Definition:**
  - “A school constantly strengthening its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning, and working”*
  - World Health Organization*
- ❑ **Quality HPS interventions:**
  - Interdisciplinary (health, education, sanitation, etc)
  - Multi-strategy (policy, skills, environment, etc)
  - Community based
  - Participatory (promote advocacy and empowerment)
  - Broad in scope (involve students, teachers, administrators parents, support staff, community members)

# Background: South Africa

- ❑ Total population: ~46 million
- ❑ 60% (13.5 million) children live in poverty
- ❑ 5.5 million people infected w/ HIV in South Africa
- ❑ Soshanguve: township located 45 km north of Pretoria
- ❑ Dense and rapidly growing population (~438,000) in informal settlements with limited access to:
  - adequate health care
  - high quality education
  - basic services/infrastructure
- ❑ Schools face many challenges:
  - HIV/AIDS
  - Poor nutrition/ill health
  - Unemployment/poverty
  - Child-headed households
  - Drugs/alcohol
  - Insecurity



# Methods

## □ Qualitative Data

- Whole School Questionnaire
- Focus Groups
- Feedback Surveys

Thematic analysis

## □ School situation

**analysis:** identify major strengths, challenges, and possible HPS project entry points

## □ Case-oriented

## □ Action research framework

## □ Population and Sampling

- Schools selected based on their level of interest and participation in the project
- Chosen in collaboration with District and School Based Support Teams



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# HPS Evaluation Tool

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## Whole School Questionnaire:

- Revised version of Reddy & Swart HPS Evaluation Tool
  - Physical and social environments
  - Curriculum
  - Policies
  - community involvement
- Completed with educators, learners, and community members at each school
- Established each school's strengths, weaknesses, and possible HPS entry points



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# Research Process

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- 6-day training of central district support officials in HPS and project planning; 10 participating schools selected
- Researcher worked with 3 schools who agreed to participate in the project without the district officials to conduct HPS situation analysis
- Results fed back to stakeholders



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# Results: Situation Analysis School A (High School)

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## Strengths

- ❑ Strong principal
- ❑ Active learner advocacy group (Knowledge Seekers)
- ❑ Positive relationships b/w educators & learners

## Challenges

- ❑ Insecure/unsafe physical environment
- ❑ High rates of HIV/AIDS in community
- ❑ Substance abuse
- ❑ Teen pregnancy

## Possible Entry Points:

- ❑ Mobilize Knowledge Seekers to partner with local clinic and CBOs to educate community and learners on HIV/AIDS and sexual health
- ❑ Involve parents, community, and local businesses in constructing fence to secure school

# Results: Evaluation Tool

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- Easily understood and adopted by educators and administrators interested in initiating a HPS project at their school
- Process initiated important dialogue among stakeholders about key issues related to the health of everyone connected to the school
- Results accurately described schools and communities



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# Thematic Analysis: Poverty

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- Extreme poverty cited as main challenge to teaching, learning, and living in the target communities
- Poverty linked to many community challenges including HIV, hunger, prostitution, drugs/alcohol, and crime

*Poverty is the main problem. Well, poverty and HIV, I think they are family... That is why we have children who are affected – they become orphans or live with their grannies or must leave school to care for their family members who are sick. They lose this time. I think that is one of the reasons that prompt our girls to fall pregnant because they normally just sleep around maybe with the hope of getting something to eat. It is mostly a financial situation.*

**- Community Member**

# Thematic Analysis: Poor Physical Environment

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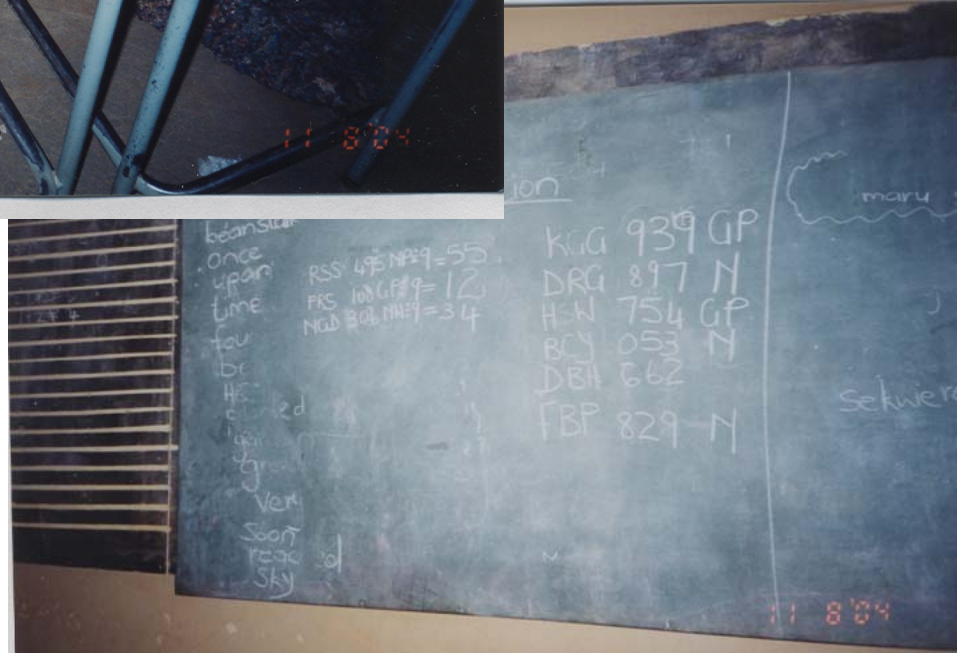
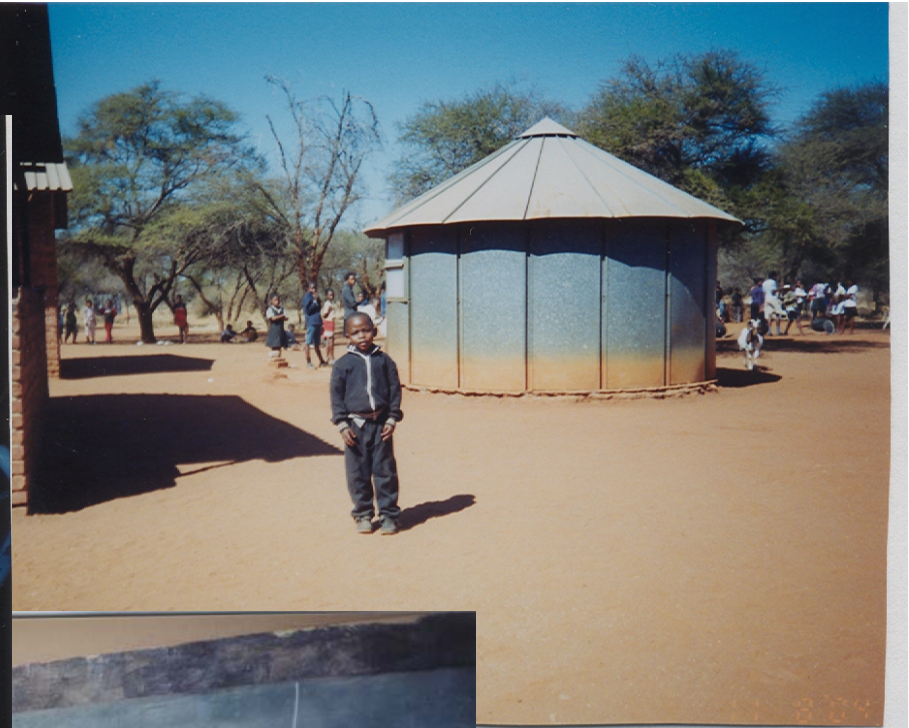
- ❑ Major issues: classrooms, sanitation, school insecurity, poor sporting grounds, lack of resources
- ❑ Perceived as lack of support from district
- ❑ Unsupportive environment = burnout

*I don't find the environment positive, safe, or stimulating. People are too much needy, so they become poor...something is missing.*

## **- Learner**

*Because of the poor resources, I am unhappy to be working under these circumstances. I could go to a well-resourced school and become the best teacher ever. There are so many issues that we work against here that would not be there: desks for learners, more computers, shortages of books for learners, sports fields, and so many other issues.*

## **- Educator**



# Thematic Analysis: Social Isolation

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- Few true community partnerships
- Lack of mutual support between the educators, parents, school, district, government, and community organizations

*The parents are not supportive. The community doesn't care about the school. If the school gets vandalised, the community who is all around here will pretend not to know anything.*

## **- Educator**

*Because we are sitting out there in our homes, we have a problem which nobody cares about. The school can be a platform to address people who are trapped in a tunnel. The tunnel is dark, but there is light at the end of the tunnel. Many of us are trapped in that tunnel. Let the school be an institution which is the light at the end of that tunnel.*

## **- Community Member**

# Thematic Analysis: Little Hope for the Future

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- Learner attitudes perceived to be very short-sighted
- Focus on present led learners to engage in risky health behaviors such as unprotected sex, drugs/alcohol, and crime

*I think they only live for today, they don't think of tomorrow. That is why they engage themselves in alcohol and drugs.*

**- Learner**

*It stems from the environment – they get out there and lose the lessons we teach. We must change the environment to change the attitudes.*

**- Community Member**



# Thematic Analysis: Leadership

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- Importance of high quality leadership at all levels (educators, principals, district, local and national government)

*There is discipline and respect due to the principal. It is directly related to her...since this principal came, ohh, the bright colours just came.*

**- Community Member**

*The district is only good at writing reports, not giving support. They just come in when there is a problem.*

**- Educator**

*We're not expecting them to come here and give us, what we need from them is their support to empower us so that even tomorrow when they are not here, we are able to do, to lead for ourselves.*

**- Community Member**

# Challenges to HPS implementation of HPS project in School District

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- ❑ Differing vision for HPS project between University and School District
- ❑ Top-down initiation = Resistance from schools
- ❑ Inefficient organizational structures and bureaucracy, poor leadership, and internal office politics within School District
- ❑ Few existing active channels of communication and partnership between community and schools

# Recommendations

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- ❑ Create a dedicated position within the district responsible for HPS (with budget)
- ❑ Integrate HPS into teacher training
- ❑ Support administrators, educators, and key stakeholders at school sites with HPS professional development and continuing education
- ❑ Create opportunities and for the formation of true community partnership with schools
- ❑ Promote utilization of HPS Evaluation Tool for initiating and monitoring school-level HPS development



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# Preconditions for HPS Interventions

- ❑ Ensure that there is a clear vision, high quality leadership, and buy-in at all levels of the project
- ❑ Provide adequate personnel, time, and financial allocations
- ❑ Offer initial and continuous training to educators and administrators throughout the project



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# Conclusions

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- HPS a powerful vehicle to mobilize many partners to initiate positive health, education, and empowerment changes in schools and the larger community
- When schools act together with parents and link with community services, the result is a more comprehensive and integrated system which is more likely to create sustainable improvements in participants' lives and their environments.
- With appropriate support, schools can overcome tremendous challenges using the HPS framework



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# Limitations

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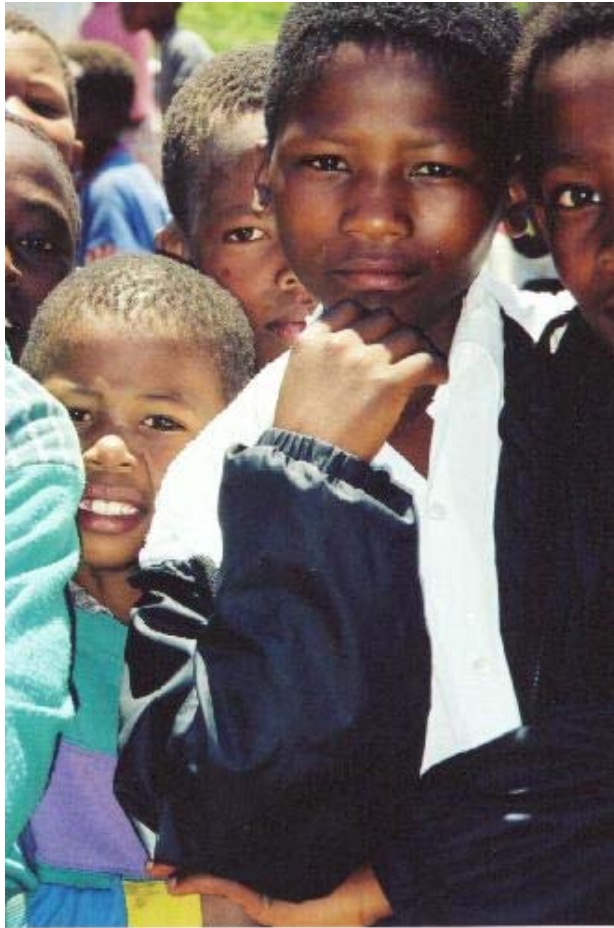
- ❑ Selection bias: schools chosen by district; researcher met with dedicated and motivated learners, educators, and community members who may not be representative of other stakeholders
- ❑ Data collected in English by a White, American male
- ❑ Internal issues within district office prevented meaningful implementation of HPS



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# Future Research

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- ❑ Further case-studies of HPS in developing countries, under-resourced, or otherwise challenging environments
- ❑ Strategies for developing community partnerships



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# Thank you!

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