



**Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership  
Program Performance Report II to USAID Namibia  
December 17, 2004**

**USAID Global Development Alliance  
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## Introduction

This report covers project activities from January to December 17, 2004. This year, Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership (DCGEP) strengthened its local and international partnerships, which have helped fuel the project's growth in Namibia. Thanks to our partners' support, the Learning Center project continues to reach a growing number of beneficiaries, and is recognized in Namibia as a highly sustainable, educational initiative with far-reaching impacts on under-served communities. The demand keeps growing as schools from all over Namibia continue to request the project.



Teacher Alpha Lichacha from Groot Aub Junior Secondary School uses a DCGEP video to explain the solar system.

The first 12 Learning Centers launched in 2003 with USAID Namibia, MultiChoice Namibia, and the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC) have exceeded expectations with the training and technology. The television, video and DSTV are incorporated into classroom use with outstanding results. Teachers report that the television lessons help them become more confident, and their students become more creative in class.

In January 2004, DCGEP, together with the Africa-America Institute (AAI) and MultiChoice Namibia, launched six additional Learning Centers in northern Namibia, bringing the total number of Learning Centers to 18. These new schools are already recording DSTV programs and using the equipment for daily classroom lessons.

The project now plays a key role in supporting the Namibian government’s efforts to fight HIV/AIDS. Some of the teachers trained by the Partnership in the use of TV and video in the classroom also serve as HIV/AIDS coordinators through the MBESC’s HIV/AIDS school programs. The coordinators use the Learning Centers as venues for school and community workshops on HIV/AIDS. As cluster centers, Learning Centers are accessible to hundreds of users within their communities.

These and other accomplishments are discussed in detail in the following sections of this report.

### Namibia Project Status

<b>Location</b>	Namibia
<b>Project began in schools</b>	- April 2003 for the 12 USAID/MCN sites - March 2004 for the 6 AAI sites
<b>Duration</b>	3 years from the start date in each school
<b>Number of Learning Centers</b>	18
<b>Number of teachers trained</b>	371
<b>Number of students reached</b>	15,911
<b>Number of parents and community members reached through workshops</b>	Almost 3,000

### Partners in Namibia

The following organizations provide financial resources and in-kind contributions that enable DCGEP to implement the Learning Center project in 18 schools:

**USAID Namibia:** Founding partner. Donated cash to leverage MultiChoice Namibia’s contribution, thus expanding the project’s reach to 12 schools. USAID helps DCGEP facilitate relationships with key players in the education sector in Namibia.

**MultiChoice Namibia (MCN):** Founding partner. Donated cash and in-kind resources to establish the first Learning Centers in Namibia. In 2004, MultiChoice also contributed DSTV equipment and services to the six new AAI-funded Learning Centers in Caprivi and Omusati.

**Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC):** MBESC provides in-kind contributions through their assistance in facilitating relationships with schools and regional education advisers, providing transportation for teachers to workshops,

providing transportation for the DCGEP Country Representative, giving teachers time to attend workshops, etc.

**The Africa-America Institute (AAI):** Donated cash and in-kind resources to establish six new Learning Centers in northern Namibia in early 2004.

**Discovery Communications, Inc.:** Donates cash and in-kind contributions to all DCGEP Learning Center projects globally, including the 18 Learning Centers in Namibia.

## **Project Impact**

### **1) Project Evaluation Shows Positive Results**

The project is working! An impact and formative evaluation of the Learning Center project in South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe (the first three project countries) was completed in January 2003 by an outside team of experts, including a professor at the University of Cape Town who developed the research methodology and performed the data analysis.\* The evaluation confirms that the project is making a positive difference in the following key areas: student learning and motivation, teachers' professional development, and school-community relationships.

The comparative study was undertaken in the three African countries (South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe), where there were Learning Centers that had completed at least two full years in the project. An equal number of control schools participated. The evaluation found substantial evidence of the positive impact of the project on student learning. Perhaps the most important result was in "language/creativity" because of its centrality in the wider process of scholastic achievement.

The mean performance in all intervention schools was 63.25% and that of students in all control schools was 53.12%. The difference was highly significant statistically, indicating that with almost no possibility of this being a chance effect, students in the intervention schools have benefited substantially from the project in terms of their written language competence as well as inferential and creative thinking in comparison to their peers in the control schools.

The evaluation presents evidence that the Learning Center project's emphasis on creative, flexible, student-centered teaching methods help students become more engaged in the learning process. Among other things, the evaluation found:

- Improved student motivation

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\* A copy of the evaluation study was sent via mail to USAID in early 2003 and via email to new USAID staff in November 2004.

- Improved concentration and memory, in particular the ability to grasp abstract concepts
- Improved English language and creativity skills
- Improved access to teaching aids for teachers and their likelihood to use teaching aids in general
- Increased teacher professional development
- Increased enrollment in some project schools
- Increased retention rates in some project schools
- Improved pass rates in matriculation exams in some schools

The study also reported that teachers used the video material very effectively to illustrate and reinforce classroom lessons. In situations where textbooks and classroom resources are scarce – especially in the rural Namibian schools – the flexibility and reach of video provides a tremendous benefit.

While these were the findings gleaned from the South African, Ugandan and Zimbabwean Learning Centers, there is ample anecdotal evidence that the positive results are happening in Namibia (please see Section 3 below). Funding permitting, the Partnership will commission a similar evaluation study for the Namibian Learning Centers at the end of the three-year period to measure the impact of the Learning Center project.

**"I have been exposed to this type of Learning Centre at the Caprivi Combined School, which I attended last year. I was so happy to see that the learners here have these facilities because they are very helpful. I particularly look forward to the mathematics classes, then I can see some of the tough lessons like algebra on the television. They show very easy methods of how to get a solution for a difficult sum."  
Marvin Basson, Grade 10, Groot Aub Junior Secondary School**

## **2) Increased resilience of the basic education system to cope with the AIDS epidemic**

Schoolteachers, who often double as HIV/AIDS program coordinators, are using the equipment at the Learning Centers for HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns. In societies where a lack of awareness has hampered efforts to control the spread of HIV/AIDS, the video, television and satellite programs at the Learning Centers have become important tools in critical public health education activities. For example, a women's group conducts workshops on Wednesday nights at Amutanga Combined School, a Learning Center in Ondangwa. The group brings informational videos – including HIV/AIDS material – to show to the community.

**"In as much as the whole world is becoming a global village, we are facing the HIV/AIDS challenges, therefore as teachers we need to examine the way we teach. The training received here will empower you to use technology to enhance teaching and facilitate the quantum leap towards addressing the challenges that the profession is facing. DCGEP's training programme will position all of us to ensure that we deal with the challenges facing us."**

Alfred Ilukena, Deputy Director, National Institute for Educational Development

### 3) Evidence of positive impact on learning in Namibia

Teachers report that the project's positive impact is manifested in many ways. Some examples include:

**Students' enthusiasm and motivation:** Learners always look forward to viewing classes, as the television is a new and exciting tool for them.

**Helping bridge the lack of resources in schools:** Television has bridged the lack of resources in rural schools. For instance, the textbook shortage is a problem in crowded schools in Namibia – textbooks are shared between three or four learners at a time. In addition, teachers often have to use their own money to purchase teaching aids. Now, with television in the classroom, teachers have no difficulty reaching out to larger groups of learners.

**Creativity:** Television helps bring to life concepts that are unfamiliar to learners. For example, teachers in northern Namibia use the video on volcanoes to help explain geological topics to children who have never before seen volcanoes. Much of northern Namibia is flat, and children have only seen anthills that are 2-3 meters high. Now teachers can explain what volcanoes are, and students can engage in creative projects such as constructing models from what they have seen on television.

**Increasing teachers' confidence:** Teachers are better prepared, and they would say that they, too, are learning from the television. At times, teachers themselves do not understand the topics that they are teaching. Now, teachers are trained in preparation skills and pre-, during, and post-viewing exercises so they are more confident in class. (Please see story by Matthew Shikongo in box below.)

Video also helps teachers prepare when they are away from school for workshops and other occasions. When this happens, Learning Center teachers record lessons on tape and give them to a substitute teacher so that the learners can continue with their lessons and exercises.



Teacher Matthew Shikongo from Groot Aub Junior Secondary School teaches hydroelectricity using a DCGEP video program.



Valerinus Mutekulu, a teacher at Onamulunga Combined School, shows community members a DCGEP video on bacteria and viruses to talk about health practices.

### TEACHING MADE EASY!!!

My name is Matthew Shikongo. I am a teacher at Ongenga Combined School. I teach Science in Grade 7. I have 42 learners in my class.

We the teachers of Ongenga Combined School would like to thank Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership, USAID and MultiChoice Namibia for donating equipment to our school.

Tomorrow, I will be teaching a lesson in hydroelectricity to my learners. I am excited because I know it will be a very interesting lesson. I am also interested because even though I do not have the resources to make a model of a hydroelectricity pump, I have a much bigger resource that will show my learners how it all works. The television. Ongenga is situated about 100 km from Oshakati. It is a remote village without proper roads but the school does have electricity.

My learners have never seen a river. The school is surrounded by Oshana's ponds. This is not even moving water. This is rainwater that collects in the ponds and lasts for 6 to 7 months of the year before it dries up again. For the children to understand my lesson, they have to know what a river or sea looks like. They also have to understand what a dam is. My task as a teacher will be made easy today because I will show all this using a video and TV. I cannot take out my learners to show them what a river looks like because there is no river nearby.

During my lesson, I switch on the TV. When the video starts playing, there is silence in the class. My learners are fascinated. On some faces there are smiles; on some, eyes are wide open. I replay the video again to make sure they catch what they missed earlier. The TV is switched off and discussions start.

I know they have not only understood but that the visual picture they saw will be one they will not forget in a long time. I know I have accomplished my teaching objectives for the day that I outlined in my lesson plan. This is just one lesson accomplished. I have other lessons to accomplish for the day and most of them I know the television will help me explain where I too do not understand.

We at Ongenga are lucky teachers. There are some science teachers like me teaching topics like hydroelectricity. I know they struggle to explain because there are no resources. Some of the teachers themselves do not even understand the topic itself. It is hard to teach it. As a teacher at Ongenga, I am happy because I go into the class confident. I have watched the video before going to teach. The learners will not ask me questions I cannot answer. I will be able to explain everything because I prepared. The television taught me and prepared me.

Thank you Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership.  
Thank you USAID.  
Thank you MultiChoice Namibia.

## Recognition

The Learning Center project continues to receive recognition from the MBESC and other key players in the education sector in Namibia. The project has also received media coverage and recognition through conferences attended by DCGEP in Namibia and in the United States.

In June of this year, one Learning Center, Amutanga Combined School was featured in a local newspaper during its Education Day celebration. (Please see page 14 for more details about the event.)

On May 26, 2004, DCGEP attended a meeting of the Africa-America Institute's Board of Trustees in Washington, DC. The featured speaker was the **Permanent Secretary of MBESC**, who spoke about the positive impact of the Learning Center project. Ms. Loini Nyanyukweni-Katoma spoke about how supportive the MBESC is of the project, and she expressed her hopes that the project will expand to benefit more children in Namibia.

The Learning Center project was also featured in the April 27 issue of "**The Namibian**" (**please see attached article**). The article focuses on Groot Aub Junior Secondary School almost a year after the national launch of the project, and includes many teacher and student quotes about the positive impact of the project.

On February 17-18, DCGEP participated in the Parliamentary Expo in Windhoek. The DCGEP Country Representative, Ms. Nora Ndopu, had the opportunity to showcase the Learning Center project to government officials and ministers, including **His Excellency Dr. Sam Nujoma**. Dr. Nujoma expressed his interest in the project and his appreciation to the Global Education Partnership and its partners in Namibia for reaching out to schools and communities who otherwise would not have access to relevant, timely information.

On February 18, Ms. Ndopu was invited to talk about the Learning Center project in a live radio program called "**The Chat Show**." "The Chat Show" is a popular daily live talk show that focuses on current affairs. The Country Representative spoke about the project and its partners, namely USAID Namibia and MultiChoice Namibia.

## Detailed Project Activities

### **1) Learning Center Status**

As a member of the Global Development Alliance, DCGEP is pleased to report that the Learning Center project is running on track, per timelines agreed upon with USAID. The school selection process for the first 12 Learning Centers began in late 2002, and equipment installation and intensive training workshops followed in April 2003. Since then DCGEP has been working with the schools to provide training and monitoring, and the sites have proven successful in

integrating the use of television, video and satellite programming in their classes. April 2004 marked the beginning of Year 2 for the USAID/MCN-funded Learning Center project.

Please see the chart below for Learning Center status (schools marked with an asterisk are AAI-funded sites):

Caprivi Education Region	
Brendan Simbwaye Combined School*	Year 1, Phase 1
Bukalo Primary School*	Year 1, Phase 1
Isize Combined School*	Year 1, Phase 1
Ngoma Primary School*	Year 1, Phase 1
Erongo Education Region	
Kamwandi Primary School (Henties Bay)	Year 2, Phase 4
Kavango Education Region	
Kasote Combined School	Year 2, Phase 3
Kayengona Combined School	Year 2, Phase 3
Ncamagoro Combined School	Year 2, Phase 3
Rundu College of Education	Year 2, Phase 3
Khomas Education Region	
Groot Aub Junior Secondary School	Year 2, Phase 4
Kunene Education Region	
Jack Francis Combined School (Outjo)	Year 2, Phase 4
Ohangwena Education Region	
Ongenga Combined School	Year 2, Phase 3
Omusati Education Region	
Niita Yitula Junior Secondary School*	Year 1, Phase 1
Olupumbu Combined School*	Year 1, Phase 1
Oshana Education Region	
Amutanga Combined School	Year 2, Phase 3
Ondjora Combined School	Year 2, Phase 3
Oshikoto Education Region	
Onamulunga Combined School	Year 2, Phase 2 *
Onathinghe Combined School	Year 2, Phase 3

## 2) Six new Learning Centers in northern Namibia

In March 2004, DCGEP, together with the Africa-America Institute, launched six new sites in Caprivi and Omusati. Teachers from all six schools received training in March. Each school is

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\* Although Onamulunga Combined School is in the second year of the project, they are still under Phase 2 training. Their TV equipment had been stolen in 2003, and without the facilities, the school was not able to conduct regular training and monitoring. When the equipment was finally replaced in 2004, DCGEP worked with the school to re-train the teachers. Now, Onamulunga is catching up with the rest of the Learning Centers.

now equipped with a TV, VCR, DSTV and DCGEP video programs, and receives ongoing training and monitoring from a local trainer hired by the Partnership in August.

### **3) New Trainer/Monitor for the Caprivi Region**

After months of an extensive recruitment process, DCGEP hired two trainer/monitors to oversee four sites in Caprivi and seven in Ondangwa. This will enable DCGEP to provide appropriate attention and training support to all Learning Centers in these regions, and assist the schools in becoming self-sustainable with the project.

### **4) Relationships with Education Offices in Namibia**

#### *Education Programme Implementation (EPI)*

EPI continues to provide support and assistance to the Learning Center project in Namibia. The Partnership held consultative meetings with the EPI prior to project implementation. Aspects of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between MBESC and DCGEP were facilitated through the EPI. EPI helped circulate the MOU to the regional education offices, and ensures transportation for the DCGEP Country Representative during her regional school visits.

#### *National Institute for Educational Development (NIED)*

DCGEP has continued to work in partnership with NIED over the last two years. NIED's assistance and support have been instrumental to the project's success, especially in building productive relationships with the regional education offices and with key players in the education sector in Namibia. NIED has also kept the Partnership up to date with the MBESC's priorities and strategies.

#### *Regional Education Offices*

The Partnership works with the regional directors, inspectors and advisory teachers so they are kept abreast of Learning Center project developments. DCGEP is grateful to the regional offices for their enthusiasm and support, especially with regard to providing transportation to the Country Representative during school visits.

The regional education offices have expressed concern about the availability of their own staff who will oversee the Learning Centers in their respective regions, and provide training and monitoring if needed to ensure sustainability after the three-year period. The Partnership is currently exploring staffing options with the regional offices.

### **5) The Partnership helps contribute to national ICT policy**

In February 2004, the Partnership was invited by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture to be a member of the Namibian government's ICT in Education policy steering committee. DCGEP reinforced the policy's support of the role of broadcasting technology in addressing Namibia's educational challenges. The national policy's inclusion of broadcast technology recognizes that the Learning Center project meets a critical need in Namibia. Of the

many ICT partners that the Ministry is working with, only the Partnership focuses on the use of television as an educational tool. The policy paper is in its final stages and is awaiting endorsement signatures from the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, and from the Ministry of Higher Education, Vocational Training and Employment Creation.

#### **6) MultiChoice visits Namibian Learning Centers**

In October, a representative from MultiChoice Namibia met with regional directors, principals, and school volunteer coordinators in Ondangwa to demonstrate new upgrades on the DSTV system. Teachers were instructed on electronic TV guides, electronic bookings for programs, and electronic planning system for classes. Teachers, especially those who do not regularly receive a monthly DSTV guidebook, were enthusiastic about the new upgrades.

A consultant for MultiChoice Africa also visited selected Learning Centers in Ondangwa, Windhoek and Erongo to assess which DSTV programs in the current premium bouquet are widely used in schools. MultiChoice Africa is deliberating whether to continue providing Learning Centers in Africa with the full DSTV bouquet as opposed to a select educational bouquet.

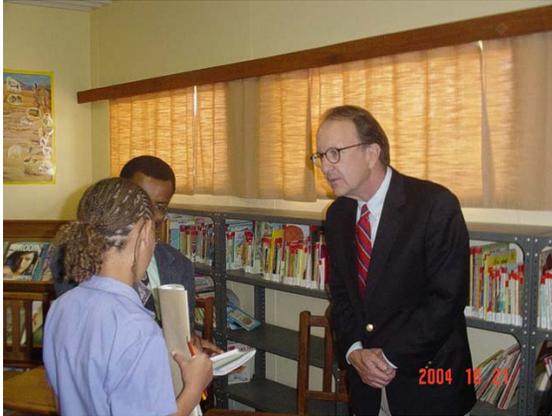
Teachers interviewed by the MultiChoice consultant confirmed that DSTV programs add value to classroom learning. In most schools, teachers confidently use the equipment and record DSTV programs for classroom use. Channel 82 *Activate* remains a popular choice for teachers. In addition, communities view news, sports programs, and movies on DSTV. Some of the most popular channels are:

Channel 40, BBC Prime  
Channel 42, Reality TV  
Channel 53, SABC Africa  
Channel 65, Discovery Channel  
Channel 66, National Geographic  
Channel 67, Animal Planet  
Channel 68, History Channel  
Channel 101, National Broadcasting Corporation (Namibia)  
All sports channels

### **Special events**

#### **1) USAID visits Learning Center in Windhoek**

In October 2004, a delegation from USAID Namibia, including Mission Director Gary Newton, Martin Tjituka, Doug Ball and S.K. Reddy visited Groot Aub Junior Secondary School to observe how the project is making a difference in the school. This was also an introduction visit for the delegation, who, with the exception of Martin Tjituka, had just joined USAID Namibia and wanted to familiarize themselves with the project.



USAID Mission Director Gary Newton chats with a learner from Groot Aub.

The group observed a mathematics class for Grade 10 learners. The teacher, using a video on the Pythagorean theorem he had recorded from Channel 82, went through the lesson using DCGEP's pre-, while- and post-viewing activities for video. The school volunteer coordinators also talked about how the community uses the equipment to watch news and sports channels and for workshops on topics such as HIV/AIDS and other health issues, and how the parents have been supportive of the project.

The USAID delegation talked with the teachers and students, asking them questions about the use of video and satellite programs for their classroom lessons.

The following are typical comments from teachers and students regarding the impact of the Learning Center project:

"I enjoy the programmes very much because from it, I learn quite a lot. I think this can improve my English."

**Josephine Auala, Student, Onathing Combined School**

"Like many in our village, we want information but don't know how to get it. By having a TV and VCR it could give many people information about things in the world."

**Students from Olupumbu Combined School**

"I wish all the teachers could use the television in all the subjects because I like to learn and watch at the same time. Yes. Then it is easy for me to describe it to you. Sometimes our teachers tell us to make things we have never seen, now we just tell them to switch on the TV so we can see exactly what they are talking about."

**Student, Kayengona Combined School**

"I can proudly say that the project is reaching its objective which is to improve education through the provision of appropriate technology and relevant content. As you can see the children are relating very well to the project. They are very enthusiastic and show eagerness to attend these classes. It is also fun to teach in these centres because the video shows what you are teaching."

**Willem Vries, Teacher, Groot Aub Junior Secondary School**

“Through this project we would be able to give our community a gateway to the English language, but more importantly a view of the outside world.”

**Teacher, Olumpumbu Combined School**

## 2) “Media Classroom” launch in Onamulunga School

Onamulunga Combined School celebrated the launch of their “Media Classroom,” which comprises the viewing room and library. At the event, Mr. Mocks Shivute, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, delivered a speech on behalf of the Minister, the Honorable Nangolo Mbumba. In his speech, Mr. Shivute recognized the efforts of MultiChoice Namibia, USAID Namibia and other partners in bridging the educational gap between rural and urban schools by providing resources that the government cannot afford on its own. The school choir wrote and sang a song that paid tribute to USAID, MultiChoice and Discovery Channel Global Education Partnership for their contribution to Onamulunga.

## 3) Education Day in Amutanga

On June 16, Amutanga Combined School in Oshana celebrated “Education Day” to coincide with the Day of the African Child. The theme for Education Day was “Advancing the African Child through Technology.”

The event consisted of lesson demonstrations that compared the impact of a lesson that used technology and another that did not. Students also presented essays and artwork inspired by the Global Education Partnership and DSTV programs. Community members also shared their testimonies about the project’s impact.



Teacher Hilario conducts a lesson in Oshidonga, one of the local languages, for Education Day.

The event was attended by the Permanent Secretary of Basic Education, Ms. Loini Nyanyukweni-Katoma, the Governor of Oshana, Mr. Clemens Kashupulwa, the Director of Education, Ms. Dute Shinyemba and her inspectors, and Wil-Merie Salt, Public Relations Practitioner for MultiChoice Namibia.

## 4) Steps for the Future Workshop

Local Partnership staff attended a Steps for the Future training program for HIV/AIDS facilitators. Steps for the Future is a collaboration between international and Southern African filmmakers. The initiative aims to produce films on HIV/AIDS, train Southern African filmmakers, and distribute the films to HIV/AIDS organizations for use in education and training.

The workshop sought to train participants in the use of video to reach out to people infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. The workshop was an opportunity for DCGEP staff to learn how to enhance our own Video in the Classroom training to support HIV/AIDS education objectives.

The Steps workshop helped to demonstrate the value in using video for HIV/AIDS education and prevention, and provided DCGEP with new ideas for partnerships with AIDS organizations. The Partnership is pursuing greater collaboration with such groups.

### **Project costs and leveraging resources**

Due to the challenge of finding qualified personnel to provide training to teachers in Namibia, DCGEP has not yet fulfilled all cost categories. However, the project has only completed one year of its three-year commitment to the schools. The remaining USAID funds will continue to be spent per line item as agreed, and have already been matched by DCGEP and its partners at more than a 4-to-1 cash ratio. In addition, DCGEP brings in-kind contributions to the project valued at over \$247,200 to date. When added to the Partners' (Discovery Communications, Inc. and MultiChoice Namibia) cash contributions, DCGEP's in-kind contributions mean USAID is receiving more than a 15-to-1 match.

### **Challenges**

#### **Available personnel to oversee the project in the regions**

Per our MOU with the MBESC, regional education officers and/or advisory teachers were going to be appointed to assist in monitoring the project and in providing training if needed. The Partnership has hired two trainer/monitors for the Ondangwa and Caprivi regions (please see next section), but there is still a need for Ministry personnel to oversee the project in each region, as per our agreement with the MBESC. Due to lack of available personnel and time constraints on Ministry staff, only three advisory teachers are able to provide some monitoring to the schools while they are on their regional visits. But these are not without their challenges.

The advisory teacher in Erongo who was trained by DCGEP has been transferred and promoted to another region. The remaining two advisory teachers can only monitor the project as their schedule permits. The Partnership appreciates the teachers' efforts in overseeing the project, and we are continuing to look for ways to ensure that the project is adequately monitored in the regions.

#### **Distances between schools**

This challenge has been partially solved by hiring two trainer/monitors – one based in Ondangwa to monitor 7 sites, the other based in Caprivi to supervise 4 sites. Plans are still underway to hire a trainer for the 4 Learning Centers in Rundu. The Country Representative oversees 3 Learning Centers that are close to Windhoek. Hiring the new trainers has drastically reduced the travel costs for the project.

### **Heavy rainfall**

This year, Namibia experienced heavy rainfall that resulted in flooding in some areas. Two new AAI Learning Centers in Olupumbu Combined School in Omusati and Isize Combined School in Caprivi were flooded, which meant that their equipment could not be installed until June when the floods subsided. In some cases, the rainy weather made driving difficult or impossible.

### **School holidays and community access to equipment**

Schools close between December 3, 2004 – January 23, 2005. The closure affects community access to the Learning Centers, since the equipment is stored with tight security. Even when some schools do remain open, teachers travel during the holidays so there is no one to monitor community use of equipment. We are exploring with the schools and communities ways to ensure access even during the holidays.

### **Looking ahead**

#### **Sustaining the project**

The USAID/MCN-funded Learning Centers in Namibia are in the second year of the project and will be ready to 'graduate' beginning in March 2006. DCGEP is pleased that USAID recognizes the success the project has already achieved. Nonetheless, DCGEP is committed to developing long-term sustainability that, through our experience, requires three years of training and monitoring at each site. In addition to providing training and monitoring, during the remaining project period the Partnership will focus on working with the sites to lay out strategies for sustaining the project after the three-year period. These strategies include local fundraising initiatives to maintain the sites, and working with MBESC, NIED and EPI to explore staffing alternatives.

After the Learning Centers 'graduate', the Partnership continues to provide video programs for as long as the equipment is used, and to visit the sites at least once a year.

Other priority activities for 2005 include:

- Hire a new DCGEP Country Representative to take over project management in Namibia. DCGEP's current representative, Ms. Nora Ndopu, will no longer be working with the organization after December 15.
- Hire a part-time trainer/monitor based in Rundu.
- Work with USAID Namibia and other partners to aggressively seek new partnerships and additional funding to expand the project.
- Through NIED, work with the MBESC to assign a counterpart to the DCGEP Country Representative to ensure continuity when the Ministry takes over the supervision of the project after the three-year period.

- Work closely with all our partners to leverage their donation by increasing publicity activities in Namibia. This involves organizing education-theme events where all partners can play a role, such as Education Day.

## Conclusion

The Learning Center project continues to make significant inroads in Namibia, as evidenced by the Ministry's strong and consistent support of the project and its partners such as USAID. The project continues to fill a critical need in the Namibian education sector, as shown by the Ministry's inclusion of broadcast technology as a crucial factor in addressing Namibia's educational challenges, and as reported by teachers, students and community members at each Learning Center. DCGEP is pleased with the developments and progress in Namibia, and deeply appreciates USAID's partnership. We look forward to continuing to work together in the years ahead.

**"I have spent five years at this school now and I can tell you that it is fun to be here. The teachers are very hardworking and now that we have these teaching facilities, it's really fun to be here. The Learning Centre has brought a sense of learning to the learners and teachers are also very lively and keen to teach. The whole set-up is very interesting and I expect good results from my school this year."**

Jenine Hagen, Grade 10, Groot Aub Junior Secondary School

18 YEARS OF INDEPENDENT REPORTING

# the namibian



STILL TELLING IT LIKE IT IS! VOL.19 No. 78

N\$ 2 TUESDAY APRIL 27 2004

6 Tuesday April 27 2004

## MEDIA

## YOUTHPAPER

### Learners' views

Grade 10 learners at the Groot Aub Junior Secondary School, who took part in a demonstration class in the Discovery Channel Global Education Fund Learning Centre Project gave the initiative their full approval. Here is what they had to say about the project:



Russel Wells (17)

"It is my first year at this school but I must say that I am very impressed with these facilities. I have never attended a demonstration class like this one before but I really enjoyed myself in this class today.

"It's cool to have a television set in class because you actually see what you are taught. It is not nice to learn about something you don't see and some of the teachers don't explain certain issues very clearly."

Natasha Wimmert (16)

"I have just joined this school and I must admit that we did not have this type of facilities at my previous school, David Bezuidenhout High in Windhoek, where I was schooling until last year.

"I really like the way they teach us here because I have access to DSTV and that stuff and I can see what I'm taught. I would, however, like to use these facilities more frequently than we do at the moment."



Youallen Hagen (15)

"I have been at this school for almost five years now and I honestly cannot recall a time when attending classes was such fun. I always look forward to coming to the learning centre.

"We have access to more information than we normally did and the classes are just going on nicely. I mean seeing what you learn provides so much fun I particularly like to watch the animal programmes."

Esmerelda Jantjies (15)

"I am also an old learner of this school. In fact, I started Grade 5 here and I am very proud of the facilities that we have. Some of the learners don't have a television set at home and they really like it here.

"Also to attend these classes makes me understand otherwise difficult subjects and I think better now that I am able to see some of the things that I learn in class on television."



Marvin Basson (17)

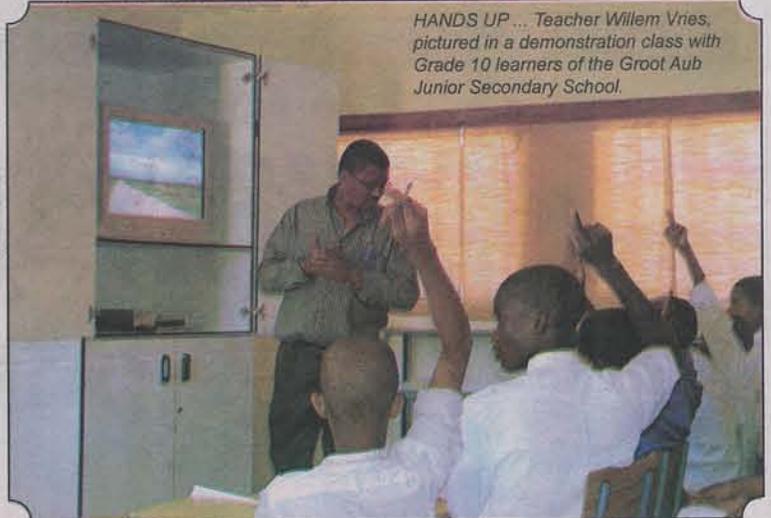
"I have been exposed to this type of learning centre at the Caprivi Combined School, which I attended last year. I was so happy to see that the learners here have these facilities because they are very helpful.

"I particularly look forward to the mathematics classes, then I can see some of the tough lessons like algebra on the television. They show very easy methods of how to get a solution for a difficult sum."

Janine Hagen (16)

"I have spent five years at this school now and I can tell you that it is fun to be here. The teachers are very hardworking and now that we have these teaching facilities, it's really fun to be here.

"The learning centre has brought a sense of learning to the learners and the teachers are also very lively and keen to teach. The whole set-up is very interesting and I expect good results from my school this year."



HANDS UP ... Teacher Willem Vries, pictured in a demonstration class with Grade 10 learners of the Groot Aub Junior Secondary School.

## Groot Aub DCGEF project well on track

Both the teacher and learners of the Groot Aub Junior Secondary School approached for comment on the Discovery Channel Global Education Fund (DCGEF) Learning Centre Project, agreed that it is well on track.

The project is a partnership between Discovery Communications, Multichoice, the United States Agency for International Development (Usaid) and the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture.

The Grade 10 learners of the school were taken through their paces during a demonstration session in the learning centre, which is equipped with a television and video cassette recorder and DSTV.

"The DSTV facilities are used to view educational programmes available via satellite and training and monitoring of these facilities is carried out on an ongoing basis," explained Wil-Merie Salt of Multichoice.

Said Willem Vries, a teacher at the school: "I can proudly say that the project is reaching its objective which is to improve education through the provision of appropriate technology and relevant content.

"As you can see the children are relating very well to the project. They are very enthusiastic and show eagerness to attend these

classes. It is also fun to teach in these centres because the video shows what you are teaching."

The project, which

is spread nationwide and aims to target rural, poorly resourced schools selected on strict criteria, was kick started in July last

year and has proved to be a big hit.

Apart from serving teachers and learners in the classroom, the DCGEF

Learning Centres, are also meant to become venues for workshops on HIV-AIDS, health, micro-enterprise development, rural development and many other issues of local interest and concern.

Members of the Groot Aub community are also allowed access to the centre, like at any of those around the country, where they can look for information that they can use to empower themselves.

- Conrad Angola

HAPPY SMILES ... Nora Ndopu of DCGEF (left), Wil-Merie Salt (second left) of Multichoice Namibia and Lukas Paulus (extreme right) of DCGEF pictured with the Grade 10 learners of Groot Aub Junior Secondary School.

