Outcome of an evaluation of the Khululeka HighScope training of trainers (TOT) programme

“The parents they say – this is what we missed as children. To let the children lead. To listen to the children. Even me, if I think of my life I think, it could have been different. I could even, maybe … … Maybe I could have been a doctor.”

July 2013

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APPENDICES

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A theory of change:

“One thing repaired changes a thousand others”

“Let's hope only for what has some chance of being achieved! Let a few things be repaired. A few is a lot. One thing repaired changes a thousand others.

So?

The dog down there is on too short a chain. Change it, lengthen it. Then he'll be able to reach the shade, and he'll lie down and he'll stop barking. And the silence will remind the mother she wanted a canary in a cage in the kitchen. And when the canary sings, she'll do more ironing. And the father's shoulders in a freshly ironed shirt will ache less when he goes to work. And so when he comes home he'll sometimes joke, like he used to, with his teenage daughter. And the daughter will change her mind and decide, just this once, to bring her lover home one evening. And on another evening, the father will propose to the young man that they go fishing together . . . Who in the wide world knows? Just lengthen the chain.”

John Berger, from “Here is where we meet” 2005
Cultivating ability:

“... the importance of understanding the processes.”

Observation and Realisation from Origami lessons: The children who do not know how to do origami want to have what I folded, be it a crane or flower, but the children who know how to do origami want just paper from me...

So ... The people who don't know the process/skills want to get Products. The people who know the process and have skills want to get Resources. The latter create Value and thrive.

So ... it is important in Africa to teach children the importance of understanding the processes.

Kyoko Kimura, Origami for Africa

The idea of a practice -
"What is the best way to be?" the little princess asked.
"Be good at swimming..." said the admiral.
1. Opening thoughts

This report offers the outcome of an evaluation into the Khululeka HighScope Training of Trainers (ToT) programme. In the course of the evaluation, I learnt a great deal about HighScope, its aspirations, and the aspirations of the ToT programme. In the preceding 3 pages, I share this learning through the selected quotes and illustration and in this page, I elaborate on these thoughts. The remainder of this report serves to illustrate and explain these insights and conclusions in more detail.

First, I have used John Berger’s phrase “One thing repaired changes a thousand others” to characterise the HighScope Theory of Change, and by extension, the ToT Theory of Change.

Working at depth and with a comprehensive attention to detail and rigour (each quality explicitly ‘scoped’ in the approach), the ToT seeks to support full transformation in the understanding, attitude and abilities of each course participant, with the view that such a comprehensive immersion will enable these trainers to share that same quality with those they train. It is less about ‘trickle down’ or the repeatedly diluted content of ‘each one teach one’ and more about holding a set of values and intentions with such rigour and intensity that those who pass through it are, of necessity, also enabled to work with the same high standard of practice.

Thus, one thing done with rigour and consistency is itself a formative process, enabling in its participants the ability to hold the same line in many, many other situations. In this approach, quality as an indivisible whole is maintained, protected and perpetuated.

Second, and in seeking the ‘key’ to what HighScope, and HighScope ToT accomplish, I found Kyoko Kimura’s expression of the product and process distinction extremely helpful. In this way of seeing, if people understand (and can work with) the process by which things are created, rather than just use the products of another’s creative process, their abilities are extended. And their needs change.

This way of distinguishing between product and process is subtle. Wittgenstein’s ‘indicator’ of how we know that someone has learnt to follow a rule is that they will be able to make the claim “Now I know how to go on.” In other words, we might say that in HighScope ToT, an embodied ability to work with a very particular process, is sought and, in cases of success, created. This ability does not simply require recitation of content or replication of product. In fact, the ability to ‘go on’ implies an ability to self-direct, adapt and innovate, all within the bounds of a particular rule-bound practice1. To ‘get’ the rules of a practice is to ‘do’ the practice. Thus HighScope ToT enables practitioners to work skillfully with very particular processes of development in individuals and whole social situations.

These processes are well illustrated in the third page, above, by the admiral’s injunction that the Little Princess “be good at swimming.” He might also be saying “be good at doing something.” In the case of HighScope ToT, it aims, and very often manages, to enable its practitioners to ‘be good-in-practice’ at things like respect, responsiveness, adaptation, observation and child-led planning.

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1 The HighScope constructivist origins are especially clear in this aspect of the approach.
2. Background to the evaluation, scope and method

In February 2013, I was invited to propose how I might undertake the evaluation of the HighScope Training of Trainers programme which Khululeka Community Education and Development Centre has been running with support from the DG Murray Trust (DGMT), for several years.

Drawing on the Terms of reference drawn up by Khululeka, the proposal recounts:

"The High/Scope approach to early childhood education was developed in the US in 1962, specifically in response to the phenomenon of consistently weak academic scores amongst children from poor neighborhoods. Targeting 3-4 year olds, it offers a developmental approach that emphasizes cognitive development through the plan-do-review process. The approach is also distinctive for its emphasis on parent engagement in supporting child development.

"5 curriculum principles comprise the approach. These are: Active learning; Adult-child interaction; Organising the learning environment; Daily routine and regular, systematic Assessment.

"Khululeka, especially through the person of Phakama Mzileni, has been involved with this approach since 1991 and, since 2003, has been in partnership with DGMT to train ECD trainer-practitioners from around South Africa in the High/Scope approach. To date, 100 trainers have been trained and an informal network of High/Scope trainers evolved."

The proposal was accepted and the evaluation of the ToT programme undertaken towards the middle of 2013. Its overall objective was to “identify and assess the contribution of the High/Scope training to the development of the ECD trainers trained by Khululeka [in these 9 years], and to identify its potential for the future training of ECD trainers (and practitioners).”

Evaluation research included:
A desk study of Khululeka documents and preparation for the contact research
An intensive week of field engagement with Khululeka which included
- observation of the HighScope demonstration school,
- interviews with staff,
- observation of a ToT course,
- workshop/focus group with current course participants,
- interviews with past participants including trainers and Directors
- a field trip to Lesedi in the Free State.
This exposure was followed by further reading and analysis and preparation of a draft report and engagement around this (see Appendix A – Method and scope, documents and people consulted).

The set up of the evaluation ensured a variety of access-points to the method of HighScope and the ToT programme, which enabled me to form an in-depth experience of the work of the ToT in a short space of time.

The detailed objectives of the evaluation covered a variety of specific angles and form the outline of the report that follows (sections 3 to 9), with section 10 offering my conclusions and recommendations.
3. HighScope pedagogy and curriculum, and its usefulness and application in the South African context

“The teacher is the organiser and the planner of the learning environment. Everything the teacher does is knowing - I have these little brains coming through the door. I must give them variety so they can choose.”

“You can do it – don’t be afraid of your own environment it is very rich. If it’s a fancy toy or a home-made puzzle …the skill is the same. They are learning to think and to organise.”

“The teacher must organise using critical and creative thinking ... What KDI can be met using these scraps? ... counting, yes, colours... sorting, shapes ... yes ... So you’ve got – what? – being promoted in your classroom? Mathematics. Yes. It’s not just for Grade R.”

“We are using different size tubes to make striation ... but who must do it first? Us! We must do it first.”

“Song and words. Words are important for language development. It is important that we get the words right for the songs that we use in our classrooms. And relevant songs too. How about ‘We are the world?’ Let’s sing it ... ‘We are the world...’ [everyone singing] ...
... And who has a map of the world in their classroom? ...”

Phakama Mzileni during training

3.1. Features of HighScope

“The HighScope curriculum is a set of teaching practices for adults and content for children’s learning in all areas of development. There is also an assessment system to measure program quality and evaluate what children learn, and a training model to prepare teachers and caregivers to implement the HighScope curriculum.”

HighScope offers a meticulously detailed and specific account of its approach to ECD. Its five key features –
- Active learning;
- Adult-child interaction;
- Organising the learning environment;
- Daily routine and
- regular, systematic Assessment
recur with varying degrees of emphasis throughout the written, practiced and spoken accounts of the approach, be it from people who train in it every day, or past course participants who have long ago absorbed HighScope into their every day working practice.

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2 From the preface “Essentials of Active learning in pre-school”
Inside of each of these features, lies a complex web of interconnected values, relationships, specifications, practices and criteria. My own early impressions, recorded out of the desk study, included the following:

- this is an example of a whole approach, not a simple method
- its key value is respect for children and their experience and needs – the work takes its direction from the situation
- observation and reflection are therefore central practices
- it enables its practitioners to draw their own conclusions in response to specific questions, based on key operating principles. This enables confident ‘empowered’ practice.
- because it is internally referenced much content and materials come from within people and situations.
- this makes it educationally and socially responsive to children and their environments, and cost-effective.
- being value-led, it offers guidelines for how to work with colleagues, other adults, including parents, and members of community (the emphasis on responsibility to circumstances is one that can be practiced with others, not just children, and also promoted with other adults as a method for working with children)

My initial impression, therefore, was of an approach that was almost entirely method driven. However, once I came to learn more about HighScope, I encountered the KDIs (key development indicators) which are a central part of its Daily Routine (see Appendix B). These KDIs offer 58 specific ‘learning goals for young children’ and function as a vital checklist in terms of which individual children’s learning is guided and assessed, and the classroom content continuously assessed, adjusted and balanced.

The presence and detailed specificity of the KDIs, along with the HighScope Educational Research Foundation’s continuous infusion of research and additional materials into the HighScope practice, distinguishes HighScope as more than a powerful, value-based approach to practice, consisting of both pedagogy and curriculum.

3.2 Exploring the HighScope approach conceptually

One of the striking features in the conversations of the evaluation is that everyone who had experienced the HighScope ToT remained powerfully and practically connected to its key working principles, even many years later. And not only do they articulate the ideal value of these, but they also express the activity that the value entails. One Khululeka staff member said “What is sustainable is how these

3 That said, rigour of method, in its own right, is itself a worthy and essential contribution. For example, in “Narrowing the Literacy Gap” note is made of the need for effective methods and promotion of practical strategies, yet no examples of what these might be – neither locally, nor internationally, is given. The HighScope methods – being as specific and detailed as they are, and adapted to the SA context by Khululeka – and its ToT - which develops people’s abilities to pursue the methods - offers a local and contextually well grounded example of exactly what is sought.
practitioners think. That will never be lost. They will never forget the lesson [that enables a change of paradigm].”

This meant that even if they had lost much of the detail, even if they no longer referred to all of the material, there remained something in their identity and in their accounts of their own practice as trainers and/or ECD facilitators that was recognizably and proudly HighScope.

Put another way, HighScope offers a practical and applied expression of a value-based and qualitative approach. It is not easy to pin down such approaches to practical deeds that can be pursued (all too often, we have high-minded ideals that don’t translate into visible practice), and so this feature of HighScope emerges as one of its distinctive assets.

Over the many conversations and detailed reading that I conducted, I began to see that the main features of HighScope – as bewilderingly plentiful as they may appear – are not disconnected from one another. Rather, they constitute the process that altogether makes a HighScope approach, each one essential to the whole picture, just like the inter-locking puzzle used by Khululeka to illustrate this principle.

It is interesting, that this ‘completeness’ may well contribute to the impression that HighScope can be somewhat non-negotiable and inflexible in what it can and cannot ‘allow’ in terms of adjustments to its approach⁴. However, this inter-connectedness of principle and practice is its greatest strength and much can be learned from this rich and practical approach to professional practice development.

The interlocking features of the approach give support to the HighScope claim of upholding a particular quality in the world of ECD. I have identified a few of these ‘internal’ relationships. In these dyads of principle and practice, it is simply not possible to have one element without the other. And it is precisely in these mutually reinforcing sets of relationships that the coherence, strength and distinctive character of HighScope are to be found.

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i. Daily planning enables no pre-set themes; no pre-set themes require daily planning. Even though HighScope does not follow pre-set themes, it is not without content or coherence. Because of the emphasis on daily planning (in relation to the KDIs), content and curriculum fidelity is assured, even though it does not come from outside as a set of themes to be ‘covered.’

ii. Being child-led entails regular child-assessment; regular child-assessment enables being child-led. Regular assessment that does not translate into responsive intervention becomes a bureaucratic waste of time. And, although I did not encounter this criticism, being responsive without assessing would rightly lay the approach open to charges of lacking in pedagogical and developmental content.

⁴ See, for example, Early Childhood Australia Inc “High scope briefing paper,” 2008
iii. **Freedom of children to choose demands labeling of the whole environment; labeling enables freedom to choose.** Again, a principle of freedom can sound very nice, yet fail to be translated into practice. The HighScope principle is translated in many ways, one of the most concrete of which is labeling. And the converse applies too: if labeling were promoted without the corresponding freedom, it would render it pointless.

iv. **Responsivity to context rewards and requires use of accessible materials/waste; an emphasis on accessible materials/waste demands alertness to context.** If materials were all prefabricated and predetermined, there would be less need to be connected to the immediate resource context of HighScope schools; and correspondingly, less connection to resources in context creates a need for manufactured and externally supplied material.

v. **Adult-child interaction (enabling listening, questioning, ‘being’) demands connection between school and home.** While approaches that are less transactional and democratic would also value home-school communication, this would be for different purposes from that of HighScope, which is essentially to promote cultural and social integration and continuity across children’s adult relationships.

These five examples are not the only ‘internal’ connections in the HighScope approach – many others can be picked out - but they are amongst those that were revealed most consistently and prominently across the interviews and conversations that I had. Together these (and other) internal relationships between principle and practice, create rigorous, constructive and accessible practice guidelines that remain relevant for participants, many years after their training.

Used in the field, these internal relationships help trainers to keep their practice engaged, awake and responsive to children, those practitioners that they train and their environments.

### 3.3 The South African context

Research, policy and programming in ECD in South Africa offers a rich and detailed context in which HighScope can be located and against which it can be assessed. Both Khululeka and DGMT are active contributors to this context, which has generated valuable knowledge and perspective in recent years.

In a paper published by Ilifa Labantwana⁵, the “Characteristics of successful early child development interventions” are identified as follows:

- “Integration of health, nutrition, education, social and economic development, and collaboration between governmental agencies and civil society.
- A focus on disadvantaged children.
- Of sufficient intensity and duration and including direct contact with children from early in life.
- Parents and families as partners with teachers or caregivers in supporting children’s development.

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⁵ “Responding to the challenge – What is good ECD?” *Growth Sparks 2: June 2011, Ilifa Labantwana*
- Provide opportunities for children to initiate and instigate their own learning and exploration of their surroundings with age-appropriate activities.
- Blend traditional child-rearing practices and cultural beliefs with evidence-based approaches.
- Provide early childhood development staff with systematic in-service training, supportive and continuous supervision, observational methods to monitor children’s development, and good theoretical and learning-material support. (from Engel et al, January 2007)”

Further, the extensive investment in the Sobambisana Evaluation has also yielded a valuable local evidence base that offers guidance in the task of assessing HighScope in a South African context6.

Overall, this evaluation suggests that some early learning interventions do make a difference to children’s school readiness, including at a cognitive level7. An expanded view of ECD that reaches into home and community (not purely centre-based), engaging parenting practices and proper nutrition, may also make a key difference to children emotionally, physiologically and neurologically, further strengthening their school-readiness.

Additionally, however,
- the contribution of early learning programmes is almost always modest, at best. There are so many other variables at work, so little else secured, that provision of early learning services alone is unlikely to change the trajectory of children’s likely school performance.
- under-nourishment at an early age can do permanent cognitive damage, and then even a comprehensive ECD programme that targets babies and toddlers will make little difference.
- the more comprehensive, or integrated, the programme, the better (especially with regard to parenting and nutrition).
- continued practitioner support and enrichment works well, as does good organisational management.
- moving beyond centre-based early learning interventions into comprehensive ECD, including home-visits/door-to-door community based practice is generally more effective than simply calling people to meetings and workshops.
- local conditions and context affect all things hugely.
- funded service providers need to improve on how they measure and account for support received for these programmes.

In my reading of the evaluation report and its implications for programming, it points to a need for intensive work with government towards creating the policy and institutional environment that best supports the development of children in their early years8.


7 Notably, and interestingly, Khululeka’s is central amongst these.

8 In “The state of provision of early childhood development services in South Africa,” presented to the Third Carnegie Enquiry into Poverty and Inequality in September 2012, David Harrison, CEO of DGMT made five recommendations regarding creation of an enabling policy and institutional environment:
Further, and regardless of who provides it (be it government, or donor supported NGOs) there is clearly a need for greater investment in programming that is -

- long term
- human resource intensive (good practice needs certain basics eg: space and reasonable ratios between adults and children; door-to-door work costs more in the short term than does convening workshops, yet it yields results that workshops cannot possibly achieve; ongoing professional development costs money and requires sustained presence of professional support and stimulation)
- integrated and comprehensive (across government sectors and departments, across children’s life-spans – from conception to formal school, and across children’s experience – in centers, at home and in community)
- appropriate to the variety of local contexts
- well supported, managed and supervised.

Finally, and despite ongoing investment in extending access for South African ECD practitioners to the formal education and training qualification system, many ECD practitioners – both centre and community based – do not qualify to access this system, even at level 4. For these frontline ECD workers, non-formal training and peer networking is their only means of accessing ECD expertise and support as they go about their work.

3.4 HighScope ToT in context

Clearly HighScope ToT has much to offer in the South African context. This includes –

- it was developed specifically to support disadvantaged children to access and perform in school.
  At its core, the HighScope is geared to address cultural and cognitive developmental obstacles faced by especially poor and disadvantaged children.
- Being principle-based, and dependent on the practitioner’s ability to adapt and apply, it offers great flexibility in application in various contexts
- Deliberate and purposeful involvement of parents and care-givers
- low resource demand: use of existing and available resources,
- child –centred and supportive of child initiated learning
- a source of systematic in-service training and ongoing professional support (resources allowing)

- A population-based framework for planning ECD that has clear coverage targets for service delivery.
- Define a clear-age differentiated strategy for early childhood care and education.
- Establish a public funding formula for non-centre-based programmes.
- Break the cycle of exclusion of the poorest children.
- Ensure that there sufficient capacity at provincial level to provide programme support.”

9 One respondent estimated that up to 80% of ECD practitioners do not qualify for access to level 4. See also Freda Brock, “Brief Overview of Early Childhood Development in South Africa” for Bernard van Leer Foundation Learning Community, Sept 2007 and Ilifa Labantwana, “The Early Childhood development Sector in South Africa. The ECD sector - NGOs” (undated).
Khululeka, in addition to the ToT, offers a HighScope Orientation Programme which is a four week/20 module training programme. This is run for ECD Practitioners including those who work within the formal education and training system. But because the orientation programme is not an accredited programme, this programme reaches practitioners - often the most under-resourced and working with the most under-resourced children - who are unable, for various reasons, to access the formal professional development system.

Further, and as part of its adaptation to the needs of the South African situation, Khululeka infuses its other ECD training and its community based work with the principles and methods of HighScope. This has begun a process of systematically taking HighScope out of the ToT classroom and extending its values, quality and rigour into other aspects of ECD and community life, helping to create the context needed to support children once they access formal educational opportunity (both pre and primary school).

However, and technical suitability aside, the key contribution that HighScope – and by extension the ToT – makes is linked to what it accesses and unlocks in both the children and the adults who teach them. This is not simply about ‘fitting in with’ or ‘suitability’ to context. In fact, aspects of this approach contribute to challenging and transforming those norms and practices that are not necessarily beneficial to children.

The distinctive nature of this contribution is best illustrated in the words of contributors themselves:

“People say HighScope is noisy and chaotic, that it spoils the children and makes them rude. That is why it’s important to involve the parents so they understand and can create an environment for the children to come home to.” (Khululeka staff)

“In African culture children don’t ask WHY – they just listen and obey. If you don’t listen it’s disrespect. You don’t even look. That’s tradition.”

“Black people are not used to ‘why.’ We are not used to open-ended questions. Inside, I felt I have a resistance, we are not used to it. Now, I think if I could go back and raise my children well. My last born had 7 A’s in matric. And she is the most difficult! But she can counsel me. She is so confident. So challenging. Even the father, he is not updated on this. He says ‘this child …’ [smiling]”

“Their parents are happy as they see a lot of difference in their children’s lives”

“The parents see – oh – now my children are learning!”

Such a contribution is both liberating and deeply challenging for practitioners and parents alike. And as a result, it speaks to and challenges the intentions of policy makers, donors and educators. What, after all, is being sought in the extensive support given to ECD across South Africa? Is it simply more and more children who are physically and cognitively school-ready? Or is it children – and by extension families – with the social and emotional resilience of self that enables them to really maximize these opportunities?
HighScope, through its emphasis on respect, expression, responsiveness and independent action, enables practitioners, children and even whole families, to tackle some of the most pervasive and limiting impacts of both tradition and Apartheid’s legacy. Through its attention to practice – to what is done - even those from situations of extreme poverty and deprivation, practitioners, parents and children - can be supported to become full and active participants in their lives and communities.

Through its practical and value-based approach, HighScope models not only a novel and valuable approach to ECD. It also embodies and models democracy in practice. Seen in this way, its greatest contribution to the South African context may be that it helps equip children to function as full citizens of a modern democracy.
4. Analyse M&E data for the training, such as assessment documents and on-site reports.

I had the interesting experience of being shown many photographs of various classrooms, all at various phases of transformation to HighScope standards and some showing the process of transformation over time. To my untrained and undiscriminating eye, the photographs were all of interest, but were not easily differentiated. All showed signs of effort, of organisation; of colour and of cheer. However, the ToT team, as well as many of the practitioners I met, could point out with rapid, informed acuity exactly how the classrooms fared against HighScope standards, and why. This tangible integration of the approach into people’s observation abilities and the practical skill of knowing what is needed and why was marked an impressive.

Continuous assessment is an integral part of HighScope pedagogy with classroom practice involving daily observation and assessment of children and their progress. Likewise, The ToT follows the same approach to assessment – being based on observation, primary collection of evidence (including daily observation and recording, collation of this across KDI across and over time, photographs and anecdotes) and customised intervention out of this.

Observation and assessment (against the key working principles and the specific KDI of HighScope) is thus integral to the training method and the key mechanism by which further training and support is offered.

Through its follow-up visits to trainees, the ToT generates extensive in-house assessment material on the specific conditions and accomplishments of each trainee. This serves as both record keeping for the ToT team and a valuable source of feedback to the trainees.

It may be that this material is under-utilised, both as tracking mechanism – and a source of invaluable data for future impact assessments, and also as material that adds to eth development fo a community of practice. Both of these initiatives would require time and resources that are currently not available, but they exist as dormant potential in the records of ToT.
5. Explore perceived benefits of the training for participants, and how this impacted on their approach to training specifically, and ECD in general.

Participants reported extensive benefit from the training. What is remarkable about these accounts is not simply that they are ‘positive’ but that they are so concretely tied to evidence of very specific ToT accomplishment in its own terms.

The observation practice, as basis for the assessment practice (which is in turn the basis for planning) is in full evidence in these accounts.

“We are not just vagabonding out of context! Our planning is linked to the outcomes” (Khululeka staff)

“It helps in the household visits when we play with children. Now we know which KDI we have in a play and it lead me to do the play/game that can help children or that can develop children.”

“It’s a simple thing: observe, listen and record. I don’t have to intervene.”

“The approach is cost effective, easy to implement change the centres very quickly. The centre is well organised even the teacher becomes very organised.”

“Changing from theme planning is SO difficult! It takes time to change the mindset. I showcase the style, for example, sit with the children, listen to their questions like ‘why am I so small?’ Engage with that. The practitioners begin to do that and listen to the children. Their interaction gets much better than it was.”

“This is so needed in Orange Farm with the day mothers. There the conditions are so terrible. On the first visit, there was no interaction. On the second visit, they had different areas, they were playing, they were using resources. The practitioners enjoy what they are doing. They say ‘We were not even aware you need to observe, come to their level, interact.’”
6. Identify changes in practice – at an individual and organisational level.

“One of the key characteristics of any profession is that its members are able to make the direct connection between what they do and the outcome of their intervention. As well as this, they are able to talk coherently about this nexus to the recipient or client (in this case the parent) of their service.”

**Child centred/child-led**

“HighScope has changed our lives and the lives of children who had no opportunity to speak and an opportunity to play”

“It made us to be better organised. Before we would follow the programme routinely. Now we follow the children.”

“HighScope added to my knowledge that I have to listen to the child and the most important one is that I have to give children a chance to plan for themselves ... to understand that children are also human. They can think and make their own decision instead of telling them what to do.”

“This makes children be creative and independent and have choice in what they want to do.”

“Giving me the knowledge on how to support the child, methods of teaching the children on children’s level.”

“Learners always enjoy coming to school. They are always happy and confident, participating freely in all activities.”

“HighScope taught me to observe the child in order to make an anecdotal note”

“The distinction between encouragement and praise is very important. In HighScope you don’t see children being praised. This is important.”

**Conflict resolution**

“Children in playgroups were playing with toys. All of a sudden two quarrel with one toy which was different from the others. Then I

  - silently observe
  - understand why children quarrel
  - listen to them what they were saying and then asked the two “who is going to use the toy first, and then later I give it to the other one?”

It came from them how they are going to use the toy both children agreed they solved their problem.”

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10 Early Childhood Australia Inc “High scope briefing paper,” 2008, pg 1
Questioning, not directing/adult-child interaction

“During work-time at art area Nhlanhla said ‘this is a tree what colour can I use?’ and I ask her that what colour of leaves and stem and again Nhlanhla said ‘the leaves is green and the stem is brown.’”

“I give the children the material and Linda start to sort the colours from the container. I as practitioner ask Linda what she was doing. Linda says I’m sorting the colours. I also ask which colours are you sorting and Linda says green and red.”

Broader reach

“The training assisted the organisation with structuring of the family outreach programme. The households collect free and found material for their children to play with. This creates an opportunity for the primary caregivers to play with their own children and make bonding and positive or meaningful relationship.”

“Attending this training has also assisted us in Administration. We use the HighScope in the crèches with families and in the office.”

“HighScope help me when I am doing a workshop in my village.”

Self-development

“It encourages you to love your work and be awake all the time.”

“They [HighScope] are eye-open. We were eye-folded.”
7. Identify factors that enabled or blocked learning and implementation

The second part of this question is not easy to address as few, if any, contributors to the evaluation dwelled on it. This is in large part due to the factors in ToT that enable learning and implementation and include -

- the curriculum being meticulous in its responsivity to and tackling of issues that are relevant and much sought after by participants.

- the methods of training being suitable for adult learners.

- the exceptional skill of Phakama Mzileni, the ToT trainer, in engaging and animating the course.

- the devoted follow-up and holding of participants through the learning and implementation process by Fioni Murray.

Some contributors reported difficulties in context – both institutional and related to community and it is here that implementation may be blocked or inhibited:

7.1 Classroom practice – numbers and literacy
Some respondents reported being over-whelmed by numbers of children in their classes (over 30, even over 50 for some) – clearly an impossible situation, regardless of the method being pursued. Others had to work with practitioners who were not themselves fully literate.

“If there are too many children then I divide them into groups and concentrate on one group per day. I give the others work to do ... if you give your kids something to do there will be no noise”

“It even works with practitioners who are not literate. It’s fine – they read the pictures like the children do so they can still implement. The one used stones – passing from one container to another - for register so she can see all my children are present. She shows the programme in picture form. They use cell phone for alarms to say now change gear.”

“The problem is over-crowded classrooms- we cannot implement HighScope in these. I tried to get volunteers but they want to be paid.”

7.2 Linking to the formal system
For others, linking what they do with HighScope to the broader educational environment was challenging. These expressed some tension in trying to work within the formal curriculum and also remain consistent within a HighScope approach. Key points of tension included theme-based lessons vs daily planning, accepting less focus on detail (for example, daily observation, labeling, engaging with and playing with children, using found material) and working with different attitudes towards children.

Sometimes, however, the same people did report that there were former ToT participants who had left community based ECD to work as Grade R and even Grade 1 teachers in the formal schooling system. Clearly, the skills that HighScope ToT impart are in demand.
“Some of our centres are under education. When the learning facilitators (inspectors) come they find a big difference in the others compared to the HighScope children [they are weaker].”

“The DoE and DSD have money, but no know-how. We know; but we have no money.”

“Some people leave, they have no passion for the work. The ones with passion, they do it with or without certificates.”

“its not accredited and we have to help the teachers get a qualification”

“Some people stop implementing after training because of a clash between money (the department) and capacity (the NGO).”

“Government trains their people and then they send them to us for practical training.”

7.3 Institutional support
Still others indicated that they did not necessarily have institutional support to pursue a HighScope approach in full. While its impacts remained on their attitudes and sense of what was possible in working with young children, they could not always pursue the approach in full.

“I haven’t implemented it to my playgroups as yet hence in our organisation we using the Open-plan method. So I’m still trying to link the two …”

“Even if it’s not fully implemented we still use components … for example, encourage observation, create a print rich environment and label everything.”

“I don’t use it – but it is really so good. Maybe it can be used for individual teachers to sharpen the saw”

7.4 Continued support from Khululeka
Finally, many respondents expressed a need for further back-up from Khululeka. This would take their practices further and offer them continued professional development support. There is also the expressed need to link HighScope to the formal education and training system – a perennial challenge for non-formal qualitative approaches.

“It would be nice to have more support from Khululeka so I won’t be dull.”

“I would really love a regular conference in [my region]. It would keep me updated and allow us to visit sites and be very supportive.””

“The thing is Khululeka is constantly updating us [with material]”

“We want to go HighScope. Can’t Khululeka do materials at unit standards?”

“We want to go HighScope. Can’t Khululeka do materials at unit standards?”

“The overseas training was not as good as Khululeka’s because they have brought it to our own situation”
8. Quantify the reach of the trainers (number of practitioners trained and number of children reached)

This proved to be one of the more challenging tasks of the evaluation. While Khululeka has meticulous records of all trainees and their progress during and immediately after training, it has no formal tracking system for trainees, nor an impact monitoring system for ToT. It does, however, retain a remarkable network of informal and formal relationships with most organisations and former trainees, and this proved to be most helpful.

Further, where estimates of impact on children are made, these tend to follow a simple multiplication formula (eg: number trained \( \times \) number they train \( \times \) estimated number of children in each practitioner’s class, adjusted for rural (lower numbers) or urban (higher numbers) \( \times \) number of years since training.

Such an exercise yields impressive numbers, but they are not especially accurate or reliable. They do not take account of –

- the fact that children may stay in a practitioner’s class for longer than a year
- differences in the trainer’s job descriptions – some may train exclusively, some may do other work
- whether trainers continue to train over the years
- the fact that many ToT trainees are centre practitioners, not trainers
- the fact that many trainees will adjust what they have learnt from ToT, but not necessarily pursue ‘pure’ HighScope.
- the impact of HighScope on other practices, for example, management, community work and parenting.
- the near impossibility of tracking and quantifying the impact that a paradigm shift or infusion of values might have on a person and their practice.

The subtleties of impact and the dangers of both over and understating it are great in this terrain, especially in the absence of systematic monitoring and tracking or a sustained community of practice that could self-monitor.

Several different attempts were made to quantify, in the course of the evaluation.

8.1 Accounts from individuals and organisations

**Example 1 – Going to scale in the best possible scenario:**
An early trainee (2004) was well-supported by her employer to run an accredited version of the HighScope training, twice. This reached 120 people at level 4. Together, using an average class-size of 25 children, and working with her observation that almost all of these practitioners are still working, we estimated that easily up to 24000 children have been reached through her exposure to HighScope and ToT.

**Example 2 – ECD practitioners doing their thing:**
An ECD practitioner and her colleague were trained in 2006 and 2007. Working with an average class size of 40 children per year, she estimates that they have reached 600 children.
Example 3 – taking HighScope to other jobs and target groups
A 2008 trainee has moved jobs since her training. She has worked out of a HighScope approach with government, parents, children and practitioners. She is confident that she has reached 840 children directly and estimates altogether 3000 have been reached through her exposure to ToT.

Example 4 – repeated training of the whole staff
One director of an organisation accompanies her staff on training in order to have a refresher of HighScope and to support her own supervision of them. This organisation works out of a HighScope approach – including in its family and outreach programme, and every year its capacity to do this is deepened, qualitatively, and extended, quantitatively. In this case, the HighScope ToT impact is organisational and systemic.

The staff of this organisation keep detailed records and account that for 2012-2013, 60 households with 96 children have benefited from the family literacy programme.

Furthermore, since 2003, 108 practitioners have been trained in HighScope reaching 11489 children. Of these trained practitioners, an estimated 80% continue to work out of a HighScope approach.

Example 5 – HighScope: infusion and pure
Another organisation has a range of ECD programmes. Its ‘pure’ HighScope training has reached an estimated 3020 children. It’s HighScope ‘infused’ training – for example where, as a sustainability strategy, it takes on service provider contracts to do enrichment work for existing programmes – has reached 187 practitioners and a further 51 with even less of an infusion, but still some influence.

This organisation has had to run a variety of service-programmes in order to sustain itself. Where it takes on contracts, it continues to work out of a HighScope approach, including promoting labeling, H/S classroom organisation, daily planning and practical strategies for active learning. Whether this counts as an ‘impact’ of ToT is questionable for the organisation, but it does what it can, where it can.

8.2 Creating a classification system
As the evaluation progressed and it became clear just how particular each situation was, and as we learnt the categories by which contributors classified their accounts of impact, we developed a simple classification system for the ToT trainees. Based on the ToT team’s continued close connection to the trainees, this is a reasonably reliable account of the likely reach of ToT over the years.

By this account, ToT continues to have reach and impact in up to 77% of its trainees. It is interesting to note also, that while there has been a natural attrition amongst older trainees due to retirement, moving on in working life and non-adoption, those that have remained HighScope, do so ‘fully.’ This may be a combination of persistence being supported by enabling organisational conditions, as well as the more enduring HighScope trainers and practitioners being also those who pursue it to the full (see Appendix C – TOT Database).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of practitioner</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pure HighScope Trainer</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pure HighScope Practitioner</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It must be noted that the term ‘HighScope infused’ does not imply a dilution of impact, or less impact. In fact, as the individual accounts above suggest, in certain situations, it might even imply more impact, if the infusion of High Scope into organisational and community practices is taken account of, as well as the persistence of a HighScope influence, even where conditions do not support ‘pure HighScope.’

Equally though, the presence of ‘pure HighScope’ practitioners is of value, and essential to the continued existence of the approach in South Africa. It stands to reason that the only way HighScope can continue to reproduce itself (including its adapted impact and infused practice), is to retain an element of precise and ‘pure’ approach in its continued work.

While HighScope ‘infused’ may be the best form of impact in certain situations, ‘pure’ HighScope is essential if any form of the approach is to continue into the future.

In this regard, and of some concern, is that it was the early ToT that seemed to create ‘pure’ HighScope practitioners and the later versions (including those that have been adapted due to service contracts and funding provisions) that result in increased numbers of those whose practices are ‘infused’ with the approach. Such adaptation to the constrained and prescriptive resource environment does not bode well for the continued presence of a core, able to uphold the essential spirit and standards of the approach. Despite ToT’s impressive reach, its own ability to reproduce itself has not been reproduced.

8.3 Attempting the numbers

Bringing these two exercises together: looking at the numbers that individuals managed to generate, as well as the estimates of the ToT team as to who and how HighScope is practised amongst those who have passed through the training, I propose that the HighScope ToT may have reached up to 80 000 children since its inception.

I come to this figure using the following process and figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practitioners</th>
<th>- Average 20 children per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practitioners</td>
<td>12 years x 1 practitioner x 20 children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 years x 8 practitioners x 20 children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 years x 3 practitioners x 20 children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 years x 63 practitioners x 20 children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 year x11 practitioners x 20 children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5720</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Trainers** – Estimate 20 trainees per year are retained in the practice x 20 children per year. Average 400 children per year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Trainers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>19200</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12 x 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/05</td>
<td>21600</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9 x 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006/07</td>
<td>2800</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7 x 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>14400</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 x 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 x 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>4800</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3 x 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>72800</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the depth and quality of this reach will be uneven, and many children are unlikely to be in centres that would pass muster with the HighScope standard, there is no doubt that HighScope contains within it a distinctive, characteristic value and potency that has an enduring impact on the thinking and practice of those who encounter it. There is a good chance that the essential qualitative, child-focused and observational values in HighScope do reach these children. Furthermore, it is highly likely that several thousand will have experienced even more of the ‘full’ HighScope effect and benefit.

There are no doubt better ways of coming to a figure than the method I have used. Perhaps HighScope has reached, in some form or another, ‘only’ 60 000 children. Perhaps it has reached even more than the 80 000 I suggest. Furthermore, the perils of diluted impact through a narrow TOT programme that only trains the trainers without accompanying professional support loom as large here as they do in any other such initiative. And of course, the limitations of ECD impact in the South African context as explored in section 3 of this report cannot be forgotten.

Regardless, for now this remains an impressive feat, and all the more so given that it is largely the outcome of one programme of a small provincial NGO, powered by the dedication and consistency of three women working in concert over nearly two decades.\(^{11}\)

Certainly there are much better ways of tracking, of monitoring, of estimating reach and of determining impact. These do not even have to involve extensive investment in external evaluation and research. With a slightly expanded view of practice, and a programme for support – not just training – the tracking gap can be easily closed. But for now, it is worth acknowledging that however you choose to cut it, ToT as it stands, is a remarkable accomplishment.

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\(^{11}\) The collaborative working relationship between Phakama Mzileni, Fioni Murray and Rene King must surely count amongst one of South Africa’s more inspirational and impressive stories of common cause, dedication and endurance in service of transformation and healing.
9. Compare the HighScope approach with other approaches used in South Africa for the training of ECD trainers

9.1 Approach with caution
This section cannot hope to provide comprehensive comparison of approaches to ECD in South Africa. I am not equipped for such an undertaking, and the terms of the evaluation provided for too many other lines of enquiry to pursue this one in any depth.

Further, such a task is clearly one to be approached with caution. My attempts at searching the literature on this topic yielded no obvious wins. The big problem being tackled is inadequate provision, reach and depth of ECD services in the country as a whole, and so the ‘niceties’ of difference in approach take a back seat, as does the urge to make differences visible, when there is a much larger task at stake. Material on the subject that is easily accessible in the public domain, tends to engage at the level of ‘NGO vs state’ and ‘non-formal vs accredited’ without examination of the differences in NGO approaches.

Where difference in approaches is acknowledged, this might come with a veiled reference, for example, to “tensions created by different priorities, pace, expectations, approaches” but no elaboration offered12.

9.2 The accreditation dilemma
One area in which comparison is made, and was frequently referred to in the course of the evaluation, is the question of whether a programme should be accredited or not. There are strong arguments in favour of accrediting ECD training as part of formalising, professionalising and improving the standards in ECD as a whole.

Furthermore, accredited training is often more desirable to potential trainees. In part as it gives them access to further formal training and therefore, potentially, career mobility. For this reason (and possibly to access subsidies), many RTOs prefer to offer accredited training, even where the accreditation system makes it difficult to train in practice-oriented approaches, tending to favour theory and paper-based approaches to learning.

In this context, HighScope is in a double bind. On the one hand, many contributors to the evaluation beseeched Khululeka to accredit the ToT as they could then justify further use of it, and also spread HighScope more broadly. For these contributors, if even a small part of HighScope ToT were accredited, offering one or two unit standards, perhaps, they would be better able to integrate the approach into their work.

On the other hand, others claimed that the ToT’s lack of formal accreditation enabled it to stay ‘pure’ and therefore retain its value and essential contribution\textsuperscript{13}. Staying outside of the formal system also allows ToT to access and serve those trainers who, through their own educational deprivation, are in any event unable to access the formal education and training system for ECD training and – for this very reason – are most in need of the practical quality offered by HighScope.

The question of accreditation, and accessing those within the formal system, was resolved by these contributors who suggested that the HighScope ToT could always be taken as an elective by those with existing qualifications, who wished to extend their abilities to practice in this particular way. Seen in this way, HighScope in general and the ToT as a vehicle were seen as professional enrichment and specialisation.

> “Each person is unique and even if she is not schooled, she may use her creativity to be flexible to follow what is in her mind, based on children’s interests.”

> “An old lady from a rural area has nothing formal, she can implement HighScope. But the qualified teacher – she struggles with implementation of being flexible and active learning. But the old lady! She can deliver.”

> “At the level of curriculum and content there is Khululeka’s influence on the National Curriculum. But not method! It is hard for the formal system to translate into practice.”

> “We’ve been derailed by the qualification. The amount of time trainers spend on the portfolio when they should be in the field ... [shaking head]”

\section*{9.3 The issue of quality and practice}

Some evaluation contributors did offer specific accounts of their different experiences of the HighScope ToT as compared to other approaches (regardless of whether they are accredited, or not). These accounts combined to confirm the picture already shared in this report, of an approach that emphasises quality-in-practice. It is precisely this feature that, for these contributors, sets HighScope ToT apart from other approaches. Six areas were emphasised as distinguishing HighScope from other approaches –

- Daily planning out of observation of the children
- Techniques for avoiding doing things on behalf of children
- Techniques to resist instruction, correction and praise – question based engagement
- HighScope pedagogy is more easily understood than other approaches
- Combines practical and theory better than other approaches
- Unskilled/less skilled practitioners can work with HighScope easily, unlike other approaches.

\textsuperscript{13} This is not an uncommon response to the difficulties of securing accreditation for holistic approaches that are process, and practice oriented. See for example, Doug Reeler, “CDRA and Accreditation - learning from hard experience.”
“The approach brought a huge light to us. From the children being isolated from the practitioners to being independent and the practitioners taking out their ability.”

“I train in the national curriculum, but my practitioners can’t do planning so I still use Khululeka.”

“The HighScope explanation is too simple [the other] is too complicated. Not everyone is on that level.”

“Others say HighScope is Western, but it is an approach. It is flexible and we can bring stuff in and make it indigenous. It is flexible, We can turn the programme around, like here to suit the climate for the hot days.”

“We used to use the stereotype approach where practitioners do everything for the children.”

9.4 Comparing to the need

Finally, another kind of comparison is to compare HighScope ToT’s offering to the assessed ECD need in South Africa. In “Early childhood development services: Increasing access to benefit the most vulnerable children,” Linda Biersteker offers a list of priority interventions needed to improve poor children’s access to quality ECD services and redress social and economic inequalities in South Africa. These are offered here, as a reminder and concise summary of the emerging consensus of what is needed for effective ECD in the South African context.

The areas in which HighScope ToT makes a direct contribution towards meeting these needs are highlighted in bold, and annotated in italics:

- providing infrastructure and ECD services for children in the poorest quintiles, rural areas and children with disabilities;
  
  Supporting provision of infrastructure and ECD services is the core business of Khululeka and HighScope ToT. ToT’s reach is largely rural, through its work in the Eastern Cape and Free State. In this sense, having such a competent resource based in Queenstown, in a largely rural province and positioned in the corridor between two former homelands, is itself a rare and valuable phenomenon.
  
  ToT’s work in Gauteng brings it into contact with another dynamic – that of the permanently migratory life of the rural and peri-urban communities that gather around the edges (for example Orange Farm) and the heart (for example, Hillbrow) of the metropolis. It is questionable whether these could be called urban communities. They are rather more marginalised and displaced and in that sense, amongst the most fragile of South Africa’s population.
  
  Although not an explicit area of programming, ToT has shown success with children with physical and intellectual disability, this through conscious intent in, for example, the Khululeka demonstration centre, and of necessity in many of the under-resourced centres reached by Khululeka and ToT trainees. HighScope ethos and methods allow for inclusion and deliberate

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encouragement of diversity. Classroom organisation and teacher methods are also especially well-suited to integrating children with special needs as both are responsive to the interests and abilities of each child and the emphasis on parent interaction is essential for integrating children with special needs. Resources allowing, this is an area in which Khululeka could take further into the future, and even develop in more depth in the ToT.

- improving food security and nutrition for pregnant women and young children to prevent stunting;

- funding programmes to help caregivers and families give appropriate care and stimulation, especially for the earliest years;
  This is not ToT directly, but the growth in HighScope infused practices, including those that extend into community, especially through parent and community engagement programmes is evidence of the ‘expanded’ reach that this democratic and responsive method is having. Many of the key values and methods of HighScope are consistent with those of good community development practice, so it is little wonder that the method travels so easily into this expanded domain of ECD work.

- increasing access to group learning opportunities for children over three years – at least on a part-time basis and with a focus on language and stimulation;
  This is the core business of HighScope and the ToT programme.

- supporting efforts to improve the quality of ECD services through the provision of resources, training and monitoring;
  This is partly achieved even in the current ToT set-up, especially in its enduring inspiration and impact. However, there is insufficient monitoring and tracking of the impact of the ToT, and insufficient resourcing given to continued support to and development of the HighScope practitioner community. Were these latter two needs addressed, they could complement one another well – in that continued practitioner support would double as a tracking mechanism and so the evaluation requirement could be met while strengthening the programme itself.

- ensuring that coordinating mechanisms have the authority to hold different departments accountable, and ensuring young children access a full range of services from multiple service points in as integrated a way as possible;

- developing more reliable and comprehensive data on ECD services disaggregated to local level to assist planning and targeting – the planned national audit is a priority and should include ECD programmes and services of all kinds;

- better monitoring and evaluation and further research on which interventions improve child outcomes in different settings most cost effectively to ensure that resources benefit the greatest number of young children.
10. Conclusion, dilemmas and recommendations

Evidence all points to the need in South Africa for ECD that is systemic, linked to ensuring the state’s ability to deliver on the rights of children, and supporting parents and communities to care for children.

Given that the major structural need and solution lies here, how does a curriculum and practice oriented approach fare (especially one that is delivered through centre-based environments)?

I would argue, still very well

- no matter what is accomplished structurally for SA’s children, there will always be a need for examples of practice that lay sound educational foundations in a way that tackles the historical, cultural and socio-economic conditions under which children live.

- that ToT manages to convey this practice in a way that unlocks teacher motivation and mobilises their own resourcefulness is a rare and essential contribution to ECD in South Africa. HighScope and ToT truly is an example that showcases ‘best practice.’

- for now, in any event, we do not have the minimum structural condition in place, and so there is a necessity to continue supporting private NGO initiatives, not only for their example and experimentation, but also for the reach that they are able to accomplish, haphazard and small as it may be.

- the ToT model offers a useful and practical approach to the question of ‘reach’ for a small NGO in that a few people reached, can access many others, who in turn access thousands of children. However, the ease with which impressive numbers can be reached by estimate and multiplication does not account for children who stay in programmes for more than one year, nor for teachers who cease to practice. Neither do these sums reflect on the quality, and the dangers of diminishing quality as trainers train others. However, this easy multiplication also does not account for the many other impacts that holistic and qualitative training like HighScope TOT does have. Again, more tracking is required.

- for those working with the most wretched of conditions, it is even more important to have excellence, quality, and holistic interventions that tackle the full reality of people’s lives. The HighScope approach, especially combined with Khululeka’s integrated community development strategy manages just this.

- for practitioners working in these situations, all too often access to the formal education and training system is not an option for them and so an immersion programme that does not require a level of educational attainment is just-right.

Furthermore,

- the attitudinal and value related shifts that ToT accomplishes appear to have an enduring impact and quality that continues to generate impact many years down the line, even where ‘pure’ HighScope is not, or cannot be practiced.
the developmental approach of HighScope transports seamlessly into other areas of ECD work, for example, parent education, infant care and community education, and Khululeka, is at work incorporating this into their other programmes.

As a basic kernel, or essence, of approach and quality it is impeccable. But it is being drawn in a few directions, and making demands on Khululeka and its HighScope practitioners. This is manifesting in a few dilemmas:

- should there be a HighScope institute in South Africa?
- should HighScope retain its ‘special’ status in the organisation (through the vehicle of ToT), or should it become integrated into all developmental ECD (and by extension, what is best for ECD is South Africa)?
- should HighScope stay centred in Queenstown, or should it go national?
- should the promotion of HighScope through the ToT remain focused on delivery of the non-accredited Orientation – accessible to those who would not access the formal system anyway and those who have accessed it but wish to pursue further enrichment - or should efforts to accredit it be renewed?

These dilemmas are being resolved, partly, in practice as Khululeka deepens its community based work and extends its relationship beyond its own boundaries. But the challenge around national, and meeting a national need will persist and demand a response, as will those debates around accreditation, especially given that extra professional development over and above an accredited course is not really an affordable ‘luxury’ for most NGOs and ECD practitioners. These dilemmas will, in time, need a response from Khululeka.

In the mean time, the ToT will face other challenges, a bit closer to home.

- while the training of the ToT is exceptional, there is a clear need expressed for more systematic and sustained follow up. Even a programme as fine at ToT cannot ride on course delivery alone. Successful uptake of the method demands continued professional development and peer support. How will ToT, Khululeka and DGMT respond to this?

- while HighScope has been clearly established as a successful model in the United States, it would strengthen the South African ‘chapter’ if moves were made to track and evaluate the impacts of HighScope more systematically, especially given the differences between the South African and US contexts. Is there partnership between DGMT, Khululeka and HighScope itself that could find the resources to undertake such an exercise? And if so, could this be linked to the challenge of follow-up, above, in a way that benefits both a research function and the programme objectives?

- ToT is driven by the efforts of its two staff members – Phakama Mzileni and Fioni Murray. Both have been at it for some years, and are set to move on in the not too distant future. How can the work they have begun, and their legacy be best protected and extended? This is a question that poses real strategic and programming challenges for them, for Khululeka and for DGMT as the partner that has supported their work all along.
Therefore, the following is recommended –

1. That a detailed strategy is devised to support the reproduction of the HighScope approach in South Africa. This should include
   - a plan for developing, supporting (both professionally and institutionally) a few new ‘masters’ of HighScope who can pursue the work that Phakama and Fioni have achieved so ably over the years.
   - Support to existing practitioners – both closer supervision and support as well as the creation of a peer/collegial network and, tied to this, creation of national tracking system that can provide easy and accurate access to the actual state of HighScope practice in South Africa.
   - Development of a monitoring system that can use the existing monitoring practice and frameworks, turning the outcomes of these into data that can, down the line, contribute to a systematic evaluation of the impact of HighScope in South Africa.

It is not altogether clear to me just who should undertake this strategy. Khululeka has its own organisational sustainability and mandate to care for and pursue. In our currently constrained funding environment, it is very hard to alone, as one organisation with other commitments, create something with this kind of breadth and long-term vision. Some form of shared vision – across institutions – is needed.

For now, the key institutions are Khululeka, DGMT and HighScope. Are there others? Can a long-term vision be devised and grown that takes seriously the prospect of reproducing and strengthening this approach into the future and beyond the working lives of those who have pursued it so devotedly for so many years?

2. The constrained funding environment in South Africa, and indeed the world, makes it very challenging to begin imagining anything beyond short-term survival strategies. The traditional international NGO donors are all but gone. Government funding comes with its own limitations and distractions from good practice. Local philanthropy – with some notable exceptions – struggles to see beyond legacy projects and do-gooding, and CSI is even worse. Increasingly NGOs are singing so hard for their supper that they are less and less able to actually make use of it.

There is a role here for DGMT. It has ably and consistently supported ToT as one programme within a broader strategy of support for Khululeka and for ECD in general. HighScope offers to South Africa and the sector an opportunity to pursue an avowedly qualitative, values-based and practice-oriented approach to ECD. If DGMT were to see its support to HighScope in the future as something beyond annual project funding, and rather see it as an opportunity to establish something distinctive, and this would establish a key condition for the reproduction of the approach.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation is increasingly a necessary part of life for funded initiatives the world over. However, how this is done has potential to either strengthen the initiatives, or distract them from their core work. Monitoring should be a key part of any social endeavour’s core work, and accessible record keeping of that monitoring too. ToT’s practice monitoring is
exceptional, but currently this does not translate easily into monitoring data that can, down the line, make evaluation processes painless – and even helpful to programme work.

To establish the monitoring practices in any future initiative will take some imagination, focus and experimentation ... and all of this takes time and costs money. It is recommended that DGMT and Khululeka and any other future institutions collaborate closely from the start around monitoring for any future HighScope initiative, and invest appropriate financial and human resources into this. This will ensure that any future investment is well monitored and evaluated in an integrated way, and this will contribute smoothly to the growing body of knowledge about ECD in South Africa.

4. Regardless of the outcome of the ‘big picture’ thinking recommended above, it is further recommended that Khululeka consider its options with regard to the accreditation debate, and communicate its decision clearly to its networks and former trainees. As was said in the body of this report – there are strong arguments in either direction. It may be resolved that a future initiative that is more broadly supported and resourced tackles the accreditation challenge while Khululeka continues to offer the ToT as a non-accredited enrichment and basic training programme.

5. Some specific areas of interest and need emerged in the course of the evaluation, and the ToT team might do well to look at these in particular, as they continue to adjust and adapt their material and work. These include working with children with disabilities, especially in the rural South African context; working with practitioners with low levels of literacy and working with child and grand-parent headed households.

6. Khululeka’s continued work at integrating HighScope principles into their broader community work offers a systematic and organisational example of how HighScope can be taken even further than centre-based ECD. In addition to the broader vision, and specific adjustments to ToT that are recommended above, this innovation should continue to be pursued, developed and supported.
Method and scope, documents and people consulted

1. Method and scope

It is envisaged that the evaluation methodology will include a desktop review of existing documents and M&E data; interviews and focus groups with selected former trainees, Directors of organisations that sent trainers for training and other key informants. Other key informants will include Khululeka members of staff, DGMT and selected ECD specialists.

It would be particularly useful to hear the stories of those trainers who are still using the High/Scope approach, and adaptations of it, and also some who are no longer using it, and the reasons for this.

The evaluation process will include finalisation of the evaluation framework, desk based research, fieldwork, a draft report, consultation with Khululeka on the draft report and a final report. All of this will be completed by 28 June 2013.

This evaluation offers a rare opportunity for reflection on work in pursuit of very contained objectives, spread over a significant period. It thus offers to Khululeka, to DGMT and even (should Khululeka choose to share its lessons) the ECD community in SA and internationally, an opportunity to develop insight into long-term programming interventions and the long-term reach of ToT interventions.

Specifically, the evaluation will address the following issues and themes -

- The evaluation is being conducted, primarily, to inform future policy and programming of Khululeka. The results will also contribute to DGMT’s programme thinking in this field. In this sense it is especially focused on reviewing how promotion of the High/Scope method has worked in the South African context.

- With regard to programming: institutional context (of programme graduates) is a key variable in the success of the programme, and the evaluation will aim to access input from former trainees representing a variety of institutional contexts and capacities. It will also seek to understand the various adaptations that have been made to the method and the extent to which these have been influenced by context (both socio economic and institutional).

- The evaluation will take account of the informal network that has developed around the ToT programme, but will not assess it.

- Attention will be given to Khululeka’s own organisational capacity as a key variable in its ability to pursue the programme.

- Interviews and discussions will aim to understand the range of use of the approach, including seeking to understand and ‘surface’ adaptations as they have emerged. This will offer qualitative feedback on the outcomes of previous efforts and also input into future programming.
2. **Documents consulted**

**Khululeka in-house:**

Khululeka brochures, web-site  
ToT Curricula over the years  
ToT follow up visit reports  
Funding application and reports to DGMT 2003-2013  
Khululeka National certificate in ECD – level 4 – Programme Quality Assessment Tool.


Statement to the Board 2003

Motivation for the HighScope approach 2003 (uncertain)

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Rene King **“Keynote address”** to the International HighScope conference, 2004

Fioni Murray *“Being responsive to the needs of children”*, 2007 ECD conference presentation

**Articles and other evaluation reports:**

Linda Biersteker, Early Learning Resource Unit, *“Early childhood development services: Increasing access to benefit the most vulnerable children”* in Children and Inequality: Closing the Gap, The Children’s Institute, 2012.

Linda Biersteker, Andy Dawes and Luynn Hen, *“The Sobambisana Evaluation, Implications for our ECD programmes.”* Presentation to UNICEF Knowledge Building seminar, November 2011.

Freda Brock, *“Brief Overview of Early Childhood Development in South Africa”* for Bernard van Leer Foundation Learning Community, Sept 2007 Freda Brock, Early Learning Resource Unit

Nicholas C. Burbules and Paul Smeyers, *“Wittgenstein, the practice of ethics and moral education,”* University of Illinois and Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (undated)

Early Childhood Australia Inc *“High scope briefing paper,”* 2008

Ann S Epstein *“Essentials of Active Learning in Preschools – getting to know the HighScope curriculum”*

Andrew Dawes, Linda Biersteker and Lynn Hendricks, *“Sobambisana Initiative Partner Evaluation Report, The Khululeka Community Education Development Centre (KCEDC), Integrated Practitioner,”*


Caroline Fiennes, “Most Charities Shouldn’t Evaluate Their Work” Parts One and Two, in Stanford Social Innovation, 29 and 30 May 2013

David Harrison, “The state of provision of early childhood development services in South Africa” Presented to the Third Carnegie Enquiry into Poverty and Inequality, David Harrison, Chief Executive Officer, DG Murray Trust, September 2012.

Andrew Hartnack, “The Institutional and Policy Landscape for ECD Practitioner Training and Development for those working with 0-4 Year-olds” Learning Brief 44, DGMT.

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Ilifa Labantwana, “The essential Package of Early Childhood services and Support to Vulnerable Children in South Africa” (undated)


Shelley O Carroll and Rebecca Hickman, “Narrowing the Literacy Gap” Wordworks, March 2012

Doug Reeler, “CDRA and Accreditation - learning from hard experience”, April 2006, CDRA

3. **People consulted**

**Individual and group interviews**

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4. **Observations**

Of the HighScope demonstration school/Khululeka Kids
Of HighScope ToT 2013 in process,

5. **Workshop discussion**

Two hours of reflection, evaluative discussion and accounting for use/impact with all members of the HighScope 2013 Tot group, including those who work as ECD trainers and those who work as community practitioners.
HighScope Preschool Curriculum Content — Key Developmental Indicators
(from the HighScope website www.highscope.org)

A. Approaches to Learning
1. Initiative: Children demonstrate initiative as they explore their world.
2. Planning: Children make plans and follow through on their intentions.
3. Engagement: Children focus on activities that interest them.
4. Problem solving: Children solve problems encountered in play.
5. Use of resources: Children gather information and formulate ideas about their world.
6. Reflection: Children reflect on their experiences.

B. Social and Emotional Development
7. Self-identity: Children have a positive self-identity.
8. Sense of competence: Children feel they are competent.
9. Emotions: Children recognize, label, and regulate their feelings.
10. Empathy: Children demonstrate empathy toward others.
11. Community: Children participate in the community of the classroom.
13. Cooperative play: Children engage in cooperative play.
14. Moral development: Children develop an internal sense of right and wrong.
15. Conflict resolution: Children resolve social conflicts.

C. Physical Development and Health
17. Fine-motor skills: Children demonstrate dexterity and hand-eye coordination in using their small muscles.
18. Body awareness: Children know about their bodies and how to navigate them in space.
19. Personal care: Children carry out personal care routines on their own.

D. Language, Literacy, and Communication
22. Speaking: Children express themselves using language.
23. Vocabulary: Children understand and use a variety of words and phrases.
24. Phonological awareness: Children identify distinct sounds in spoken language.
26. Reading: Children read for pleasure and information.
27. Concepts about print: Children demonstrate knowledge about environmental print.
29. Writing: Children write for many different purposes.
30. English language learning: (If applicable) Children use English and their home language(s) (including sign language).
E. Mathematics
31. **Number words and symbols**: Children recognize and use number words and symbols.
32. **Counting**: Children count things.
33. **Part-whole relationships**: Children combine and separate quantities of objects.
34. **Shapes**: Children identify, name, and describe shapes.
35. **Spatial awareness**: Children recognize spatial relationships among people and objects.
36. **Measuring**: Children measure to describe, compare, and order things.
37. **Unit**: Children understand and use the concept of unit.
38. **Patterns**: Children identify, describe, copy, complete, and create patterns.
39. **Data analysis**: Children use information about quantity to draw conclusions, make decisions, and solve problems.

F. Creative Arts
40. **Art**: Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through two- and three-dimensional art.
41. **Music**: Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through music.
42. **Movement**: Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through movement.
43. **Pretend play**: Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through pretend play.
44. **Appreciating the arts**: Children appreciate the creative arts.

G. Science and Technology
45. **Observing**: Children observe the materials and processes in their environment.
46. **Classifying**: Children classify materials, actions, people, and events.
47. **Experimenting**: Children experiment to test their ideas.
48. **Predicting**: Children predict what they expect will happen.
49. **Drawing conclusions**: Children draw conclusions based on their experiences and observations.
50. **Communicating ideas**: Children communicate their ideas about the characteristics of things and how they work.
51. **Natural and physical world**: Children gather knowledge about the natural and physical world.
52. **Tools and technology**: Children explore and use tools and technology.

H. Social Studies
53. **Diversity**: Children understand that people have diverse characteristics, interests, and abilities.
54. **Community roles**: Children recognize that people have different roles and functions in the community.
55. **Decision making**: Children participate in making classroom decisions.
56. **Geography**: Children recognize and interpret features and locations in their environment.
57. **History**: Children understand past, present, and future.
58. **Ecology**: Children understand the importance of taking care of their environment.

Language, Literacy, and Communication KDI 21–29 may be used for the child’s home language(s) as well as English. KDI 30 refers specifically to English language learning.
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### Interview Questions I pose during assessment visits

- Tell me about the ECD programme you offered before you did this course.
- Is your programme different now? If yes, How?
- Is there a difference in how the children use the classroom materials since you have been trained?
- Have the parents noticed that you have changed the programme? If yes, give me examples
- Would you like to share anything else about your programme/children/parents with me.