

FAX : (0159)22326

TE : (0159)22326

P.O. Box 2991

THOHOYANDOU

VENDA

SOUTH AFRICA

2nd October 1992

PROGRESS REPORT ON MR MAANO TUWANI - ACADEMIC SUPPORT TEACHER AT LIIVHA SCHOOL, THOHOYANDOU, VENDA. (May - October 1992)

COMPILED BY : Ms Maryla Bialobrzaska (Principal)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT ' .

At the outset, Liivha school would like to acknowledge the support given by the Anti Apartheid's Movement, Netherlands via the Batlagae Trust. This support has greatly strengthened our small, struggling school and we are deeply grateful for that.

APPOINTMENT OF ME M. TUWANI TO THE POST OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT TEACHER AT LIIVHA SCHOOL. " " ' -

The post of academic support teacher, sponsored by the Anti Apartheids Movement, Netherlands via the Batlagae Trust was advertised in the Weekly Mail, a nationally circulated, progressive newspaper. -

The school received 5 applications which were forwarded to the Batlagae Trust for shortlisting. a f " Va ., ' ,

In consultation with the Batlagae Trust it was finally decided to appoint Mr M. Tuwani into the post. He commenced his duties at Liivha on 1st May 1992.

(Enclosed are copies of the advertisement and Mr Tuwani's curriculum Vitae);  
\_OVERVIEW OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES FULLFILLED BY ME M. TUWANI THUS FAR

- Support of Student Returnees

(Both academic and personal counselling) a detailed report follows.

- Facilitation and co-ordination of language support for students who come from outside this sub-region and who do not speak Tshivenda. (eg. Sotho; Tsonga and Zulu speakers).

- Liaison with Social Workers with regard to students with particularly severe domestic difficulties,

- Facilitation and co-ordination of various disciplinary issues in the school in general

Served on Disciplinary Committee

Supervised learning project on alcohol abuse - .

Elected to participate in workshop on a Code of Discipline for the School in general.

- Responsible for co-ordinating library services at the school, (despite our very poor library facility and resources). \_

- Facilitated the procurement of materials for the academic support programme as well as general supplementary materials for other subjects eg. - English, Biology and History.

- Relief teaching in Std. 6 and Std. 8 History (due to sudden departure of previous History teacher at the end of August).

- Academic Support for pupils in classes from Std. 2 to Std. 7, who had been individually identified by their class teachers as needing extra support.

These pupils are taken in small groups for specific lessons or for additional lessons after the normal school hours. The main focus-is on language proficiency in both English and Tshivenda. (This activity takes approximatelytwr 4 hours per day).

t DETAILED REPORT ON SUPPORT GIVEN TO THE 9 STUDENT RETURNEES AT LIIVHA SCHOOL

The main focus of Mr Tuwanis' appointment was indeed to aid the reintegration of student Returnees, both in the specific Liivha School Community as well as in the community in general.

Mr Tuwani went about this by firstly, conducting individual interviews with returnees in an effort to access how individual students were adjusting to the school, the general environment and their 'new' domestic situations.

Secondly, he made an assessment of their academic work, identifying areas of difficulty.

THE FOLLOWING GENERAL PROBLEM AREAS WERE IDENTIFIED:-

Proficiency in English:- although all the Bbturnees had attended English Medium Schools outside of South Africa it was found that in most cases profeciency in English was not up to standard and support was needed.

'Extra Mural Tutoring in African languages:- The South African Matriculation requirements presently in place require students to master 2 "official" languages for Matric. Only foreign students who have been in South Africa for less than 5 years qualify to be exempted from this requirement. The problems arising are,(a) those students entering school in the lower standards must be helped to meet this requirement in due course and,(b) students who are not Tshivenda speakers have to be assisted with extra mural lessons in which ever African language they speak with the view to the Matric requirements. Although Liivha is committed to eventually expanding its African Languages Department, we are currently severely'restricted financially and therefore are only in the position to offer English, Afrikaans and Tshivenda.

Mr Tuwani has therefore had to facilitate and co-ordinate external tutoring for example in TshiTsonga and SiSotho. i

In concluding this point, the problems arising out of the language policy of the present South African Educational requirements, need to be critically x addressed as this is indeed one of the biggest obstacles preventing individuals from enjoying their full rights as citizens. .

Narrow choice of subjects offeded at Liivha:\_ Subjects offered at Liivha, presently are restricted to the "classical" Science/Art division. Again due to lack of financial support and resources we have not been able to introduce any commercial subjects or agricultural science etc.

This was also noted as a difficulty with some of the Returnees as they are now "forced" to engage in new disciplines without previous exposure to the same .

General :- In general Mr Tuwani has found that the Returnees have managed to adjust and integrate well to their new school. Only one student felt dissatisfied with the fact that she could not follow the same choice of subjects she had had at SOMAFCO (eg. Accounting etc.).

It was also found that the older students eg Std. 8 and upwards, (: 17 years), had greater difficulty integrating into the wider Community they tend not to 'mix freely with local people, this has given rise to some sense of isolation and also exacerbates the lack of exposure to spoken Tshiyenda.

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Two families were found to be experiencing some domestic difficulties, but these appear not to be directly related to issues : surrounding their return, but are rather of a more personal nature.

#### EVALUATION OF THE SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR RETURNEES

The school feels that within the area of academic support within the normal school programme that this support programme has been successful. However, it has found that additional input outside school hours and beyond the school boundaries is very difficult. This being due mainly to time constraints, and students being tired at the end of the school day.

Some of the Returnees live far from the school, making access to them after hours rather difficult - it has been felt that such students resent having to stay behind for extra lessons etc.

Mr Tuwani has found that this group especially have responded very favorably to his encouragement re, the use of the library. It seems students have found their own reading to be quite empowering.

#### NEED FOR ONGOING FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF RETURNEES

It is felt that this group of Returnees has basically adjusted quite well. The main need identified at present is for ongoing financial support to enable students to continue with their studies either at Liiivha or at other schools which might offer a more relevant choice of subjects. a

#### MOTIVATION FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMME AT LIIIVHA

Although it is felt that the short term objective of aiding Returnees with reintegration has been successful - a general need for academic support has been strongly identified.

In view of the great changes occurring in South Africa which effect the Education spheres in particular and especially regarding curriculum development, we feel that the role of an academic support teacher is crucial both to students and teachers alike.

#### RECOMMENDATION RE SUPPORT TEACHER AT LIIIVHA

In the event of the Anti Apartheid Movement, through the Batlagae Trust being able to continue their financial support of an Academic Support teacher at Liiivha, on an ongoing basis, Mr Tuwani has indicated that he would be prepared to step down from this post at the end of December-in order for a new person to begin in January at the commencement of the new academic year - he feels ,. this would facilitate greater continuity.

If this is not possible - Mr Tuwani will complete his contract as per agreement.

Your kind attention to and consideration of the above points is requested.

With warmest thanks for your COeOperation and support

Yours sincerely

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M. Bialobrzeska

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