Western Cape Community of Practice

Learning Brief
Nov '22

Reflect. Plan. Network.

The third and final CoP in the Western Cape took place in November and was the first in-person CoP in the province since 2020! This CoP reconnected us as After School Programmes (ASPs) as we reflected on the year individually and as a collective and considered our plans for 2023.

Journaling is a powerful tool to **focus the mind and deepen insight**. It can help identify stressors and shift us towards a more positive attitude. Prompting questions can help get you started, such as: *What am I leaving behind in 2022? What can I impart to colleagues, partners, and the sector as a gift for 2023?* Don't limit yourself though, you can write on any topic, in bullet points, prose, pictures, or poetry. The processes of **reflection and planning** are imaginative processes that require us to think beyond our present situation. Check out this [Reflective Practice Toolkit.](#)

Intentional Learning

The objective of **reflective journaling and practice** is not merely to observe but to learn from what you observe. Employing a framework such as, what, so what, now what, can help us **identify learnings**, both enablers and inhibitors and move us to where we want to be. Reflection can be done at an individual level and can also be used in group settings with your teams, peers, or learners. Reviewing as a group can help to **highlight shared learning and action**. **Reflections and adaptability** are key to ensuring continued growth and success of any ASP.

ASPs planning for success in 2023!

There are **several planning approaches, tools, and techniques** that can assist us in planning for the year ahead. Planning is not simply setting up goals and objectives for a given period of time but is an iterative process.

The process involves repeated trial-and-error cycles, where ASPs adjust each cycle according to what they learned in the previous iteration or year. Throughout this process, ASPs are afforded opportunities to **design planned changes and enhancements** towards their organisational goals. The consideration of feedback in this process helps ASPs **conduct successful processes** that ensures they are adaptable to ever-evolving changes within the ecosystem.

PLANNING TECHNIQUES

Action planning
- This type of planning is far more focused on day-to-day activities of ASPs.
- Helps teams set and track daily, weekly, and monthly goals.
- For example, in ASPs action planning is most useful when you need to plan for a small project. To draw one up, simply list the tasks that you need to carry out to achieve your objective, in the order that you need to complete them.
- Individual, team, or project activities are organised and set out in a timetable.
- It's a useful tool for monitoring and evaluation after the task has been completed.

Tactical planning
- For ASPs tactical planning is most useful when a strategic plan has been put in place and a team or business needs to determine the steps needed to reach the strategic plan's goals such as which mathematics curriculum to follow in academic programmes or which therapeutic programmes to implement for psychosocial support.
- It builds on the strategic plan by breaking the tasks down into short-term, actionable items and plans.
- Requires that actionable items are arranged in the order of priorities.
- Shows orientation and movement of programmes as guided by managers within ASPs.
- Drawn up by managers as they have better knowledge of their departments and ASP pillars.

Operational planning
- Aligns different functions of the organisation, for example Sports programme or Life Skills programme, with the overall goals and objectives of an organisation.
- Programme Managers are mostly responsible for operational plans as they are the custodians of their respective ASPs.
- Includes planning levels of resources, processes, where people are needed and programme budgets.
- Simplicity and clarity are key as the plan must be easily understood by all involved in the running of ASPs.

Looking ahead

Three key lessons emerged for ASPs. The first is the importance of **prioritising goals**. Secondly, is the need to **breakdown plans** into manageable chunks. This is crucial for spreading the workload amongst team members and being clear on roles and responsibilities. Thirdly, take time **planning your budget and resource mobilisation plan** against your goals. ASPs are encouraged to **acquire, assign and manage resources** in a manner that supports long-term growth of programmes.

THE LEARNING TRUST
BEYOND THE CLASSROOM